

Darfur Crisis Aims To End Nile Water Agreement With Egypt

by Lawrence K. Freeman

On May 5, after this article was completed, the Sudanese government and one leading rebel faction signed a peace accord; some other rebel groups have yet to sign. While this represents progress, the underlying problems analyzed in this article remain to be solved.

Sudan's government has been under attack for the terrible humanitarian crisis in Darfur, which the U.S. government erroneously alleges is genocide committed by the government in Khartoum. Negotiations to end the killings in this western portion of Sudan have been going on for weeks in Abuja, Nigeria, between the government of Sudan and the three rebel groups. The African Union, which has been mediating the peace talks, prepared the draft peace agreement, the signing of which appeared imminent by April 30, the deadline previously agreed to by all parties.

At the last minute, the Sudanese Liberation Movement (SLM) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) reneged on their commitment to sign a peace proposal, after the government had indicated that it was ready to sign the African Union draft. On April 30, a spokesman for the SLM, Saifaldin Haroun, said: "We will not sign this agreement. We will only sign the agreement that includes all our demands, certainly not this one. This is the position of the two movements."

But this draft agreement, that they now refuse to accept, is the same one that all parties had accepted throughout their negotiations over weeks. Salim Ahmed Salim, the special envoy to Darfur from the African Union, described the draft as "just and honorable for all parties." The question is, what was behind the last-minute torpedoing of the peace agreement by the rebels? Who is pulling their strings? And this begs the larger question: What is the real purpose of the orchestration of the Darfur crisis?

It's All About Water, Not Oil

Many Africans and governments in the region foolishly repeat the propaganda that the underlying issue is an oil grab, because Sudan and Chad have been added to the list of African nations exploited for their oil deposits. Contrary to such simplistic and populist thinking, however, the most important geopolitical goal is to gain control of the flow of water from the Nile River, and to use this as weapon for the destabilization and potential destruction of the nation of Egypt.

In discussions with Lyndon LaRouche, the world-

renowned physical economist, about attacks on Sudan over the Darfur conflict, he said emphatically: "The issue is not oil, it's water! They want to use Darfur to break up Sudan in order to bring down Egypt, which is the most stabilizing factor in the whole region." The destruction of Egypt, LaRouche said, is the real goal of the British oligarchy; this would be used to create chaos and war throughout Africa and South-west Asia.

This strategy to control water—to privatize the Nile's water, which would also effect Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya—is integral to the continuing policy of genocide that is already killing tens of millions of Africans living in the sub-Saharan region (orders of magnitude more than the numbers dying in Darfur). Aside from the agents and lackeys deployed to use the horrible humanitarian crisis in Darfur to tear apart Sudan, many innocent, but duped participants in the "Save Darfur" demonstrations do not realize how they are being used to prevent a serious campaign against genocide in Africa.

The Nile River is the longest in the world, but not the



largest. It has a volume of 84 billion cubic meters, emerging from Lake Victoria, south of Sudan, and running north through Egypt before emptying into the Mediterranean Sea. The Nile Basin affects ten nations in Eastern and Central Africa. In 1959, the Egyptian and Sudanese governments signed the “The Agreement for the Full Utilization of the Nile Waters,” dividing the shares of the river’s water between them, with Egypt getting 55.5 billion cubic meters and Sudan 18.5 billion cubic meters, and approximately 10 billion cubic meters lost to evaporation and other factors.

Even under the restricted use by these two nations only, with populations of 70 million and 35 million respectively, there is not enough water for irrigation, livestock, and human consumption in this extremely arid region. The densely populated city of Cairo, the Nile Valley and Delta, where the majority of Egypt’s population lives, and Egypt’s agricultural sector need every drop of the water they can get, and more.

Any cut-off of water to Egypt would be an attempt to destroy the nation. If the Sudan government is overthrown, as those behind the Darfur crisis intend, then a partitioned Sudan would lead to the abrogation of the 1959 water treaty agreement with Egypt, because there would be no central Sudan government to fulfill it.

LaRouche warned that people should get off the oil issue: “There is a worldwide water shortage and they are out to steal your water,” he said. One African diplomat commented along these lines, that the next war in Africa will be fought over water. There are many rivers in Africa, which could be better used and managed through large-scale infrastructure projects, but the continent desperately needs more clean, fresh water for agriculture, animal herds, and human consumption. The only method now being used to increase the water supply is to dig more wells, deeper and deeper, which predictably are extracting more polluted and undrinkable water.

The answer is desalination, powered by nuclear energy, which is the only way the African continent, like the rest of the world, will avoid a water shortage.

Military Invasion of Sudan?

In an April seminar in Washington, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick, for the first time, raised publicly the possibility of a military invasion of Darfur. “Either you get approval or you invade,” Zoellick said, referring to the resolve by the Sudanese government not to allow a 20,000 United Nations military force into Darfur. When this reporter questioned him about what conditions would precipitate a military incursion, Zoellick backtracked, explaining that it would be a lot better to get the Sudanese to cooperate, and bring the parties along so you don’t have to invade.

More recently, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called for NATO to play a larger role in Darfur, and President Bush called upon Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir to accept the entry of UN troops into his country, but Khartoum has adamantly refused. Sudan would be endangering its



EC/ECHO/Peter Holdsworth

Refugees waiting for water, caught in the crossfire in Darfur. The fight over scarce water resources is at the heart of the conflict.

very existence by allowing the presence of UN troops under these conditions. By everyone’s account, the 7,000 African Union troops deployed in Darfur have performed admirably, especially given the limitations of funding and logistics from the Western donor countries. The African Union mandate expires at the end of September; why not continue an expanded African deployment with full financial and logistical support, instead of bringing in foreign troops?

Strategy To Break Up Sudan

What is behind the military conflict and killings in Darfur? In early 2003, just as the 20-year-long war between John Garang’s Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement/Army was approaching a resolution, which eventually led to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in 2005, the JEM and SLA launched attacks against government outposts. This ignited a cascade of killings that has led to the loss of tens of thousands of innocent lives and the displacement of many more.

The Darfur region is a key piece in the geopolitical efforts to break up Sudan into micro-ethnic/religious divisions. There has been an historic conflict between farmers and the cattlemen in Darfur, because of—what else?—*the lack of fresh water*. The international community has steadfastly refused to make any investment in infrastructure that would provide the necessary fresh water to this arid region, and ameliorate the conditions for war. No one really gave a damn about the conditions of life for the people living in Darfur—until the rebel movement ignited the already existing tensions in this area with armed attacks on the government. Predictably, this has turned into a bloodbath.

All the reporters, the so-called concerned leaders of the African-American community, and the manipulated public, should consider learning the truth about what is really going on in Sudan—if indeed they are committed to finding out the truth.