

# **EMBRACING THE PROMISE OF PEACE**

## **CITIZEN VIEWS ON SUDAN'S FUTURE AFTER THE CPA**

*Findings from Focus Groups with Men and Women in Northern Sudan*  
(Conducted June 16-28, 2005)

Prepared for the National Democratic Institute  
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## **PREFACE**

The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the Government of Sudan (GOS) on January 9, 2005, was a historic moment for Sudan. The agreement signals vast changes for SPLM-controlled areas in the South, including the development of a semi-autonomous government. The peace process was unexpectedly jolted, however, when Dr. John Garang, founding chairman of the SPLM and the recently sworn-in first vice-president of the Government of National Unity (GNU), was tragically killed in a helicopter accident on July 31, just weeks after the ratification of the Interim National Constitution (INC). Despite this impressive leadership transition, violence did erupt in some cities in the immediate wake of Dr. Garang's death, particularly in Khartoum and Juba. While both the GOS and the SPLM have pledged their continued commitment to the Naivasha peace agreement and the INC, it is clear that this remains a critical time in the efforts toward a sustainable peace.

Whether anticipated or not, the government's steps toward peace for the country also have Sudanese in other parts of the country contemplating the impact of the CPA on their own lives. To varying degrees, Sudanese citizens in the North realize that the INC could expand rights; the GNU could move all of Sudan toward political pluralism; and national elections in 2009 could change the political landscape significantly. This report explores the opinions of the people in northern Sudan as they react to and absorb the many changes Sudan is currently undergoing, drawn from a series of 21 focus groups NDI conducted in eight locations across northern Sudan from June 16-28, 2005. In total, 193 Sudanese participated in the groups. (See Appendix A for a breakdown of participant attendance by group.)

**Definition of 'Northern Sudan'.** For the purposes of this report, 'northern Sudan' is defined as encompassing areas under the control of the Khartoum government at the time the research was conducted in June 2005. Although the conflict in Sudan has long been popularly portrayed as 'North versus South,' some locations in the South remained under the control of the former government in Khartoum. For this reason, Juba – which is now the capital of Southern Sudan – is included in this research and in this report, and is, for our purposes, included in 'northern Sudan.'

It is also important to note that references to 'northern Sudan' in this report are not intended to suggest that northern Sudan in any way represents a homogeneous or monolithic entity. In fact, it is quite the contrary: part of the value of this research is to demonstrate the diversity of people, viewpoints, and – occasionally – grievances that characterize this unique country. For example, people in the eastern or western parts of Sudan may not identify themselves as 'northerners' or as residents of 'northern Sudan,' although people in those areas were included in this research. This research was conducted before the inauguration of Sudan's new national unity government, so references are made to government-controlled areas and SPLM-controlled areas throughout this report, even though those distinctions are technically no longer valid; these two terms are synonymous with "northern Sudan" and "Southern Sudan" respectively.

**Focus Group Results & Usage.** Focus groups are semi-structured group discussions directed by a moderator and following a pre-set guideline. Unless otherwise noted, the conclusions offered here represent views commonly, and repeatedly, cited during the groups. The interaction between participants in a focus group setting provides insight into *how* citizens think and feel and is an even

more powerful means of understanding *why* these attitudes exist. Information gathered in this way takes into consideration citizen values and needs and is critical to helping decision-makers test their assumptions and incorporate the will of the people into policy-making.

**A Snapshot of Public Opinion.** Any research, including focus groups, is only a snapshot of public opinion at the moment it is undertaken. Public opinion is dynamic and evolves as people experience and react to major events, not the least of which is the death of SPLM leader, Dr. John Garang, and the riots that erupted following his death. These events occurred after this research was concluded but prior to the report being written. It should be noted that some opinions cited in this report may have shifted significantly following this most jarring of events. Therefore, the conclusions reached in this report can only be said to represent opinions in June 2005.

**A Qualitative Research Tool.** Focus groups are a qualitative, not a quantitative, research tool. Although focus groups are a superior research method in teasing out the meanings behind commonly-held attitudes, the total number of participants in focus group research is always relatively small. Thus, unlike quantitative research, it is not statistically representative of the larger population. References in this report to what “most” or the “majority” of Sudanese in government-controlled areas think, for example, are a reflection of the attitudes of the participants in our research and cannot be said to be a statistically significant sample of attitudes in the population at large. Through many years of use of the focus group method, however, it has proven to be an accurate, if somewhat blunt, tool for determining citizen attitudes.

**Location of Groups.** The focus groups outlined in this report were conducted in northern Sudan. Although some focus groups were conducted among persons of southern origin, none of these were conducted in SPLM-controlled areas of the South. Twenty-one group discussions were spread across eight locations: Khartoum Center, Omdurman, Khartoum North, Port Sudan, Dongola, Nyala, El Obeid, and Juba. (See Appendix A for a list of focus group locations.)

**Composition of Groups.** Focus groups are organized to be as homogeneous as possible to ensure that participants are comfortable in expressing their opinions and to determine whether perspectives differ based on the type of participant in the group. In this instance, the groups were stratified by gender, sect, ethnicity, age, religion and education. Single ethnicity or sect groups were organized where appropriate and possible. For example, if social divisions in the area where the group was conducted were based on sect, then groups with participants from a single sect were organized. If social divisions were based on tribal/ethnic group affiliation, the organizers of the groups endeavored to ensure that participants were from a single ethnic group. In urban areas, especially, individuals interact and live within close proximity to each other and so some of the groups contain participants representing a mix of sects and tribes/ethnic groups.

**Research in Northern Sudan.** Research in Sudan is a difficult undertaking due to the many logistical challenges of traveling around the country. An even greater challenge, however, lies in ensuring that participants feel free to speak openly and forthrightly about their thoughts and feelings. This is especially true in a conflict society such as Sudan, and it was clear that some participants were cautious in speaking fully on subjects such as corruption and political parties. Despite repeated assurances from the group moderators about the confidentiality of the research, at least a few participants, particularly women, felt uncomfortable at times. It is likely that this

impacted the findings of this report to some degree. In the Nyala (Southern Darfur) groups, NDI staff and moderators encountered problems with the local authorities, who insisted on assisting in the selection of focus group participants and listening to the group as it was conducted. This was a problem specific to Nyala that did not occur in any other location. Finally, the researchers were blocked by local authorities from organizing focus groups in the Nyala IDP camps, and government security officials requested the research be terminated before groups could be conducted with Khatmiya men in Khartoum North, as well as in Shendi and Malakal.

NDI's focus group work in northern Sudan was funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The research was carried out in partnership with the Ahfad University for Women in Khartoum. Having a local partner who understands the indigenous cultures and languages invariably improves the quality of data gathered, and this experience was no exception.

NDI Senior Program Officer Joseph Andrews was the primary organizer of this research, led all programmatic and logistical preparations for the focus groups and served as the chief liaison with Ahfad University. Traci Cook, an experienced opinion research consultant, designed the research framework, drafted the focus group guideline, supervised the research in the field and authored this report.

NDI has conducted previous research in Southern Sudan and will continue to conduct focus groups in that region over the next three years, generally at intervals of once every six months. However, this research is the organization's first foray into northern Sudan, where the diversity of opinion among citizens was striking as was, in some cases, only a rudimentary grasp of the major tenets of the peace agreement that will alter their lives forever. What citizens do grasp is that peace is within reach and that the outlook for Sudan's future appears brighter for the first time in decades. Through this research, the people of northern Sudan are given the chance to voice their hopes and fears for this new future and their desire to play an important part in it. NDI is pleased to have this opportunity to contribute in a small way to what is hoped to be a new era of communication between the citizens of Sudan and their leaders.

Finally, the Institute would like to extend its thanks to the Sudanese Government, its Embassy in Washington, D.C., and – especially – to the people of Sudan for their assistance, support, and participation throughout the completion of this project.

### **THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE**

People in northern Sudan are hopeful the positive effects of peace will include an opportunity for a greater voice in their daily lives. If the participants in this research are any measure, it is clear they are ready to be engaged and active citizens.

- *Peace and national unity are putting us on the right way.*
- *We are all Sudanese; we are all family to each other.*
- *The government doesn't have the right to tell people how to worship.*
- *The notion that links the North to the South to the East to the West is that we all want a democracy.*
- *Islam is compatible with democracy because Islam itself is freedom... Islam has much in common with democracy.*
- *If there's no fraud, if the votes are really counted, elections are great.*
- *[Shari'a] can't be applied for non-Muslims because it is not part of their religion...*
- *We want all Sudanese to be together. We don't want our country to be divided into two. We have to work together.*
- *We need to be united, but should give a choice for our brethren in the South on whether they want to join a united Sudan or not.*
- *Sir, a national unity government must include all of Sudan...Not just the North and South. All of Sudan.*
- *Sudan is a very vast country so you can't have a centralized government.*
- *Equality and development [will solve conflict in Sudan].*
- *At first we were really worried [about the SPLM] but all praise be to Allah, we now have peace. We are really happy now and we don't have any animosity towards anyone.*
- *Let everyone live where he wants. Sudan is one.*
- *We [women] do very much seek equality as the constitution recommended.*
- *They [United States] impose their policies on other countries...they have a certain agenda in the Southern Sudan.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1. Progress toward ending conflict in Sudan is helping foster a sense of cautious optimism and the hope for a peace dividend among various peoples in northern Sudan.** Most Sudanese participants express a measure of hope that their country is finally on the right track after many difficult years. The primary, and indeed virtually the sole, reason cited for this belief is recent efforts to resolve the various conflicts in Sudan, especially the signing of the CPA. Participants in the North expect a peace dividend that includes the hope for greater progress, more development, better government, enhanced personal freedoms and increasingly democratic structures in the country as a whole. Despite a general optimism, some participants question whether the peace is truly representative, and wonder how it can be said that peace has come to Sudan, even as conflict continues to plague other areas of the country.
- 2. Sudanese nationality is a defining part of personal identity for almost all participants throughout northern Sudan, although the importance placed on it varies by ethnic group and region.** Regardless of ethnic group or region, participants in northern Sudan say that being a Sudanese citizen is one of the fundamental ways they define and describe who they are. The difference for participants in areas where there has been or is ongoing conflict is one emphasis. In these areas, participants are more likely to rank tribe or region as the single most important factor in shaping their identity, with nationality coming in second or third behind religion. There is also a fairly broad recognition of, and support for, the right of almost all ethnicities within the Sudan to call themselves Sudanese.
- 3. The everyday hardship of securing clean, safe drinking water drives participants' desire to have the government address the issue as the country's number one development priority.** In an unstructured discussion about development issues, participants most often cite health care, education, employment (in urban areas) and agriculture (in rural areas) as their top priorities. Interestingly, though, even more basic needs rise to the top when participants are asked to compare development priorities. By an almost two to one margin over any other issue, participants cite increasing access to clean water as the most important development initiative the government could undertake. Food security ranks second to water in participants' priorities and health care ranks third.
- 4. Despite Sudan's status as a significant producer of oil, any benefits from petroleum industry are all but invisible to Sudanese participants.** All participants understand that the discovery of oil in Sudan opened up a new and important source of revenue for the government. Most participants, however, express a high level of frustration that revenues from the extraction of oil have produced little or no benefit for the regular citizen.
- 5. Participants are generally supportive of key human rights principles but do not feel many of these rights are a reality for Sudanese citizens in the current environment.** The questions about basic human rights during the focus groups were all asked in general terms, yet, time and again, the answers given were about the current state of these rights in modern day Sudan. Participants' support for equality under the law and basic human rights is strong, but they do not feel the same commitment from their government. A few limits on

conflict-related speech, and on women's property ownership and movement because of cultural or religious traditions, are supported by participants.

- 6. Democracy is embraced as a system of government that offers a unique ability to capably address the diversity of Sudanese cultures and the conflicts that have resulted from it.** With democracy, Sudanese participants see an opportunity to link all of Sudan's diverse cultures under one system of government. The increased participation of all groups in governing, they believe, will help resolve decades-old conflicts that have appeared intractable. In participants' minds there is no conflict between democracy and Islam. In fact, quite the opposite. The Islamic practice of *Shura* (consultation) and Islam's respect for the individual are repeatedly cited as evidence that not only are Islam and democracy compatible but that democracy is a fundamental part of Islam.
- 7. While elections are valued as a participatory tool, past experience and the unsettled nature of the Sudanese political situation raises participants' concerns about whether any election could be free, including the scheduled 2009 national elections.** In general, participants believe elections are positive events that can give them, and the many diverse peoples of Sudan, a voice in government. However, there is a significant amount of caution expressed about holding elections without appropriate safeguards. Some participants, particularly those in conflict areas, see past elections as flawed and the results as illegitimate, and are worried that future elections would only repeat the same mistakes.
- 8. Although many participants see *Shari'a* as appropriate law for Muslims, there is an unequivocal rejection of the application of *Shari'a* to non-Muslims in Sudan.** Many Muslim participants see *Shari'a* as a positive, and even necessary, part of the law in Sudan, *but* only for Muslims. There is virtually no support for the application of *Shari'a* to non-Muslim populations in Sudan, and participants have no expectation that Christians or persons of any other religion should be willing to live under *Shari'a*.
- 9. Opinions on a possible split between northern and Southern Sudan as a result of the 2011 referendum are extremely varied; while the idea of a divided Sudan was unthinkable to some participants, others felt that having such a choice was appropriate.** No clear idea from participants emerges about what the 2011 referendum will mean for Sudan. Some have limited knowledge of the CPA and are surprised to learn that southerners will be given a choice between unity and secession. Others are hopeful peace will be implemented in a way that ultimately makes unity attractive. Urban participants have a better handle on southern opinions and so are more likely to see secession as inevitable.
- 10. The formation of the Government of National Unity and the development of the Interim National Constitution are good but leave some participants with the feeling that they are on the outside looking in.** There are no complaints about a Government of National Unity as a concept. However, participants in conflict areas other than the South and those who are not National Congress Party members feel excluded from the process, and so there are varying degrees of acceptance of the GNU. Feelings about the development of the Interim National Constitution mirror those on the GNU. A better constitution would be welcomed, but some participants in the East and West see the INC as having relevance only to the North and South.

- 11. The performance of the Sudanese government draws mixed reviews from participants. The executive branch fares the best, getting credit for its efforts toward peace, while the work of the National Assembly is either unknown or looked upon as unrepresentative.** The reputation of top leaders in government has been bolstered significantly by recent peace efforts, although the peace effort does not trump other negative aspects of government rule for all participants. While various ministries are lauded for performing well and bringing real benefits to the citizens of Sudan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs fares the best in the eyes of participants for its central role in negotiating the CPA and its work in restoring Sudan's reputation internationally. Participants exhibit little knowledge of the Sudanese National Assembly, and there are fairly neutral views of the military. The police and court system have a mixed reputation.
- 12. A decentralized, federal system is the government of choice for participants who believe it is the only way to competently govern a country with the geographic and cultural diversity of Sudan.** Participants in at least two-thirds of the groups express a preference for a federal system that devolves power to the regions and/or the states. For many, decentralized government is the only right and just way to govern a country with the cultural complexity of Sudan and is the only practical solution for a country with the geographical reach and logistical challenges of Sudan. For people in conflict areas, a federal system is equated with freedom and offers an opportunity for self-governance, which perhaps can lead to a better life.
- 13. Discussion of political parties and political party leaders makes Sudanese participants uncomfortable, but of those willing to express an opinion, a multi-party system is preferred to the rule of a single party.** Perhaps more than any other subject, the topic of political parties and political party leaders is particularly uncomfortable for many Sudanese participants. On the issue of multi-partyism, just over half the groups express an opinion and the majority of these indicate their preference is for a system that allows the involvement of more than one political party. Some women fear conflict may be exacerbated by the participation of multiple parties and so, as a group, they may be more likely to support a one-party system.
- 14. Participants see a connection between the various conflicts in Sudan, although they attribute these conflicts to a wide variety of causes. Participants from conflict areas tend to view underdevelopment and oppression as the primary underlying causes of violence more than other participants.** For many participants, there is a thread that connects all of the conflicts in Sudan, but for any individual person the origin of the conflict varies. Government shoulders the blame for some; larger issues such as inequality and discrimination are the cause for others; some participants view conflict as an ethnic or tribal problem that is nothing new for Sudan; and others see the hands of foreigners playing a large role in conflicts.
- 15. Reasons for the conflict in the East are much the same as elsewhere in Sudan, with about half of the groups attributing it to underdevelopment, inequality and tribalism.** About half of the groups have specific opinions on the conflict in the East of Sudan and when they do, these tend to mirror perspectives on conflicts in other parts of the country, including the South and Darfur. Underdevelopment, along with inequality and marginalization, are again seen as

the tinder for conflict in the East.

- 16. Issues of tribalism, underdevelopment and inequality are cited as the root causes of the western conflict as in other parts of Sudan, but participants highlight the government's negative role in Darfur to a greater degree.** The same conflict origin themes emerge in discussions about Darfur as elsewhere: tribalism, discrimination and underdevelopment. In Darfur, though, people are also more likely to implicate the government, and the direct actions the government has taken, for having exacerbated the conflict.
- 17. The origins of the conflict in the South are similar to other regions – oppression, underdevelopment and inequality – but historical factors play a greater role according to participants. With the CPA now signed, participants in northern Sudan generally embrace the SPLM, but not necessarily as a party that could represent them.** As with other conflicts in Sudan, participants highlight underdevelopment, inequality and oppression as the major instigators of conflict with the South, but colonization is also cited as having played a key role. Participants in government-controlled areas have grown much more comfortable with the SPLM during the peace process. In particular, they voiced respect and admiration for the now late Dr. John Garang, because of his transformation from a military to a political leader. Despite generally positive attitudes about the SPLM and Dr. Garang, some participants still question whether the SPLM truly represents the South and whether going forward, the SPLM could ever represent them as a national party.

In discussing the relocation of non-native peoples to their homelands after peace between the North and South, participants are clear they would see any forced movements as illegitimate. Opinion on the presence of peacekeepers in the South divides along geographic lines: participants in non-conflict areas are more likely to view the introduction of peacekeepers to Sudan quite negatively, while participants in conflict areas are more likely to be supportive of peacekeepers or have no objections to their deployment.

- 18. Women participants are eager to enjoy greater equality in Sudanese society and see no limit on their right or ability to participate in the political culture of the country. Many male participants, though they embrace economic and educational rights for women, cannot conceive of women playing a larger role politically.** Although women do not eschew traditional roles, they see a broad role for themselves politically in Sudan as voters, local government leaders, party leaders, National Assembly members, ministers and even, possibly one day, president. Men believe that women certainly should be voters and there is some acceptance of women as ministers or National Assembly members, but there is much less support among men for women serving as party leaders, local government leaders and definitely not as a future president. Both sexes support the concept of equal pay for equal work and the right for girls and women to pursue any level or type of education.
- 19. Many participants hold somewhat negative views of western political forces, such as the United States and the United Nations, and speak more positively of Muslim countries and leaders.** Although not all comments are negative, participants' tend to view the United States of America as heavy-handed and wrong-headed. President George Bush is a lightning rod for much of the criticism of the U.S., although people in the South and Darfur are more

likely to appreciate his and the U.S.'s involvement in Sudan. The United Nations enjoys more positive reviews, though some believe that the world body is unduly influenced by the United States. Secretary General Kofi Annan's reputation fares slightly better as a man who is striving for peace. Participants portray Muslim countries, especially Egypt and Libya, as great friends and 'brothers' of Sudan. Some participants are also complimentary of Osama Bin Laden, who once lived in Sudan.

## **PRINCIPAL FINDINGS**

The long-awaited signing of the peace agreement between the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the Government of Sudan (GOS) on January 9, 2005, was a historic moment for Sudan. The agreement signaled vast changes for SPLM-controlled areas of Southern Sudan, which will now have their own semi-autonomous government, but the impact of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) will reach far beyond the South, to all regions of the country. The Interim National Constitution (INC) expands rights for all citizens; the Government of National Unity (GNU) moves all of Sudan toward political pluralism; and national elections in 2009 could change the political landscape significantly. These are just a few of the components of the CPA that will forever alter life for citizens in Sudan, regardless of whether they live in what were SPLM-controlled or government-controlled areas. The National Democratic Institute (NDI) has previously conducted research on the CPA in Southern Sudan.<sup>1</sup> As a complement to this research, a series of 21 focus groups was conducted between June 16 and June 28, 2005 to assess citizen reaction – in what were then government-controlled areas – to the many changes Sudan will undergo as a result of the CPA.

### **1. Progress toward ending conflict in Sudan – in particular the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement – is helping foster a sense of cautious optimism among various peoples in northern Sudan, many of whom see a peace dividend not only for those areas directly affected by violence but also for themselves.**

Most Sudanese participants express a measure of hope that their country is finally on the right track after decades of divisive and destructive civil war. The primary reason cited for this belief is recent efforts to resolve the various conflicts in Sudan. As the most concrete example of progress toward peace, the CPA – concluded in January by the GOS and the SPLM – is viewed as a very favorable development and many want the agreement to succeed. Although detailed knowledge of the CPA is limited, participants fully support the agreement's proper and fair implementation as a way to achieve a long-lasting peace.

*Peace and national unity are putting us on the right way.* (Man, Dongola)

*[Sudan is going] 90% in the right direction because they have solved the problem and opened the road [to peace].* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*Really, Sudan's good and going well, and it's all great, praise be to God. Peace is good and Sudan is good with its millions of people, and praise be to God.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

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<sup>1</sup> NDI has conducted two separate previous rounds of focus group research in Southern Sudan. The first, which took place between August and October of 2004, sought to gauge citizens' attitudes towards the then-ongoing peace process. The second, conducted in March and April of 2005, was a unique attempt to give ordinary Southern Sudanese a voice in South Sudan's constitutional drafting process. Additional information about this research, including copies of each report, can be found on NDI's website at [www.ndi.org](http://www.ndi.org).

*I think it's going to get better because of the peace agreement. Only God knows. (Woman, El Obeid)*

*It's going in the right direction because we have peace now and people will go back to their normal lives. (Muslim Woman, Juba)*

*We don't just need peace; we need implementation of the peace. (Arab Man, Juba)*

*Maybe [things are] going in the right direction because of peace and maybe they will go in the wrong direction if peace is not implemented fairly. (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)*

Many participants in northern Sudan see themselves benefiting directly from peace in the South. For these people, the peace dividend expected not only includes personal matters such as the reuniting of families, but also hope for greater progress, more development, better government, enhanced personal freedoms and increasingly democratic structures in the country as a whole. In some of the areas where conflict remains, some participants even see certain aspects of the peace, such as the South-South dialogue, as providing a model for moving things forward in their own regions.

*[Peace with the South] is important for the North. (Man, Dongola)*

*[Things will be] better because people will return and families will be reunited. (Southern Man, Juba)*

*We will be relieved to know that our sons will not have to fight; that there will be no problems, no disruption in education, and no shortage in anything. We will be at ease. All praise be to Allah. (Woman, Dongola)*

*Development-wise, the South is a very rich area and the North is oil rich so if a peace would take place, then, we would all win developmentally with peace as its main impetus. (Man, Port Sudan)*

*[In the future] there will be participation of all regions and the new democratic government will maintain the peace. (Woman, Port Sudan)*

*[More] participation will lead to more progress. (Man, El Obeid)*

*[The future] will be better. There will be some kind of democracy and all parties will be as in one hand. (Man, Dongola)*

*I think we should have a North-North dialogue that is based on the success of the South-South dialogue. (Man, Port Sudan)*

The optimism expressed by Sudanese participants is not unqualified, however. As illustrated in the first quoted exchange between two participants below, there is a continuing uncertainty among some people in northern Sudan about the quality and/or legitimacy of peace efforts. Some participants question whether the peace is truly representative; others remain concerned about

continuing conflicts in other regions and whether conflict in the South could be reignited; and finally, there is a recognition on the part of many that peace is a delicate balancing act, and that there are many uncertainties that could tip the scales either toward peace or continued conflict.

*[Participant 1] [Sudan is going in] right direction because of peace and the stopping of the war.*

*[Participant 2] Are you sure the peace is really made? (Women, Khartoum Center)*

*Where is peace? There is no peace. Peace means all the tribes share in the CPA, not just the GOS and SPLM. (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)*

*Conflicts are not [being] resolved carefully or rightly. The southerners and the Sudanese public are not sharing any benefits as stakeholders. The only beneficiary of this process is John Garang and his cabinet. (Man, Khartoum Center)*

*The conflict in the West and East are not minor; they block this [peace] process. With these two conflicts, I do not think that the peace signing is greatly effective...there is great need for actual participation by the West and East regions equal to the South. (Woman, Port Sudan)*

*If peace is meant to happen it has to be for all Sudanese, from all parts of Sudan, and not from a few selected places, then I see peace. It has to be comprehensive or not at all. (Man, Port Sudan)*

*When peace comes, problems from the southerners is [sic] expected. (Man, El Obeid)*

*It [peace] won't solve all the problems. Even within some homes there are tribal problems. (Southern IDP Woman, Khartoum)*

*Peace may not go as expected. Many things happened during this war. Many pledges have been made to help the war-torn areas, but nothing has come. This may push former fighters to take up arms again. (Southern Man, Juba)*

*The government must present suitable things for people. Offer retirement for people in militias. (Woman, Khartoum Center)*

Two categories of participants were less likely to believe that Sudan's future was bright: women and people either in or from the Darfur region. Women's reasons for being decidedly less optimistic than men are mostly economic or development-related, such as misplaced government budget priorities, increasing commodity prices and myopic development efforts.

*The prices of commodities like sugar and bread are increasing. The budget of 2005 specified 2% for agriculture, 2% for health and 86% for security and traveling. Because of this, I think the country is going in the wrong direction. (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)*

*The basics are too expensive...Education is not free...People are hungry. (Three Women, Dongola)*

*Development is only in Khartoum.* (Woman, Port Sudan)

*We women are exhausted, you know what I mean? We can't pay the 250 dinar to send them [children] to school.* (Woman, Dongola)

People in and from Darfur are focused on the conflict in that region and so their views on the direction and future of Sudan are more mixed than those of participants overall. Darfurian participants also spoke about the future in much more conditional terms, linking prospects for their future to specific developments such as a cessation to the violence or an end to discrimination. Many Darfurians, for example, say that they “hope” the future will be better but know it will only be possible “if” progress is made toward peace and reconciliation.

*[Things are going in the] right direction because of an increase in the number of security forces.*<sup>2</sup> (Man, Nyala)

*In general, the situation is good, in the right direction to heal the wound. But we must stop and solve the problems of migration, education, discrimination and centralization.* (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum<sup>3</sup>)

*We are in the middle of the road. They have neglected the West.* (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)

*It [the future] will be better if we get our rights.* (Man, Nyala)

*If we do not put our guns down, the future will be no good.* (Man, Nyala)

*It [the future] will be worse...To be better, they must stop the killing.* (Woman, Nyala)

*I hope it [the future] will be better but from the mistreatment I have seen it will not be better.* (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)

*We left our home and came here [Khartoum] on horse and on foot. Before we had land and a house and we lived in a good situation. Now, we have no work. It is a bad situation. We have nothing. All we need is to go back to our normal life.* (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)

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<sup>2</sup> Because the political situation in Darfur is extremely fluid, opinions about the current environment and the future of the region may also be fluid.

<sup>3</sup> Participants in the Darfur IDP men's and women's focus groups were from the West Khartoum IDP camp, but they were brought into Omdurman by bus for the discussion. All participants immediately began the groups after disembarking from the bus and were returned to the camp shortly after the discussion ended.

**2. Sudanese nationality is a defining part of personal identity for almost all participants throughout northern Sudan, although the importance placed on it varies by ethnic group and region. Likewise, there is fairly broad recognition of, and support for, the right of almost all ethnicities within the Sudan to call themselves Sudanese.**

Regardless of ethnic group or region, participants in northern Sudan say that being a Sudanese citizen is one of the fundamental ways they define and describe who they are. No participant rejected the label of Sudanese. In fact, most would proudly say, “I am Sudanese” and list their nationality as one of three most important factors in determining their identity, usually ranking it first or second.

The difference for participants in areas where there has been or is ongoing conflict is one of emphasis. They do not reject the title of Sudanese, but tribe and region tend to take on a greater importance. As a result, participants in conflict areas are more likely to rank tribe or region as the single most important factor in shaping their identity, with nationality coming in second or third behind religion. Participants in Port Sudan, in or from Darfur, and in or from the South were more likely to rank nationality as a less important identifier than other participants.

Whether Christian or Muslim,<sup>4</sup> religion is clearly a key aspect of how virtually all participants identify themselves. In the Khartoum area groups, as well as the Dongola and El Obeid groups, participants say being a Muslim plays a big part in determining how they see themselves and often rank it either just before or just after nationality in terms of importance. In Darfur and Port Sudan, Islam plays a similarly important role and is often ranked either before or after tribe or region. Likewise, southerners in Khartoum and in Juba agree that religion is a defining characteristic – often ranking it first or second after tribe or region – but the religion referred to in this case is Christianity.

Participants also have a fairly broad definition of who is a legitimate citizen of Sudan. When quizzed about the major ethnic groups that reside in the Sudan, the most common participant response was that most, if not all, ethnic groups and tribes have the right to call themselves Sudanese. The only ethnic group that participants across a number of groups reject as Sudanese is the Hausa. This is primarily based on their West African origins. To a much lesser degree, the Zaghawa, Baqqara<sup>5</sup> and Nubians are cited by a few participants as groups that are not of Sudanese origin. In contrast, a common comment among participants is that southerners' nationality cannot be questioned because they are the “original Sudanese.”

*Every person who lives in this country is Sudanese.* (Southern IDP Man, Khartoum)

*Whoever is in Sudan is Sudanese.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*All people of the Sudan are Sudanese.* (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)

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<sup>4</sup> No adherents of traditional beliefs were interviewed for this research.

<sup>5</sup> The nationality of the Zaghawa and the Baqqara is most commonly questioned by Fur participants either in or from the Darfur region.

*Of course they [southerners] are Sudanese. Not only the southerners, but every person in the territorial boundaries of Sudan [is Sudanese].* (Man, Dongola)

*We consider any one who migrated to or married from this country is Sudanese. The country is obligated to give them their rights.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*Look, we are all Sudanese; we are all family to each other.* (Muslim Woman, Juba)

*Hausa are not Sudanese. The [Sudanese] government gave them nationality, but they kept their other nationality.* (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)

*Hausa are not Sudanese because they are from Nigeria.* (Woman, Dongola)

*That [West Africa] might be where their [the Hausa] roots are, but since they have established themselves in Sudan they are Sudanese.* (Arab Man, Juba)

*Yes all [are Sudanese] except the Zaghawa. They migrated from Libya and Chad, and they do hold two nationalities.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*No, they [Baqqara] are not Sudanese. They are wanderers.* (Woman, Nyala)

*Some Baqqara are not Sudanese.* (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)

*Nubians are not Sudanese because they are mixed with Egyptians.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*No, they [Nubians] are Egyptians, not Sudanese.* (Woman, Dongola)

*Southerners are the original Sudanese.* (Ansar Man, Omdurman)

*Southerners are the origin of the Sudan.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*I think southerners are the real Sudanese. The Sudan as a country should take care of the South and work towards developing their economy and education. They deserve to live in stable living conditions.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

Whether the government treats all of these peoples of the Sudan equally generates opinions that clearly divide along conflict/non-conflict area lines. Participants who currently live, or had in the past lived, in conflict areas were quick to assert that equal treatment of all Sudanese by the government simply does not exist. In contrast, participants who live in non-conflict areas, particularly if they live outside of the Khartoum area, were more likely to believe the government treats all citizens equally. This is contradictory to later statements about the cause of the various conflicts in Sudan when many of the same participants would cite discrimination as a key contributing factor. However, the participants may have been making some distinction between what had happened in the past and what they believe to be the situation today.

*The government doesn't treat Easterners and Westerners equally.* (Man, Nyala)

*There is discrimination against the blacks in Darfur. (Woman, Nyala)*

*The Sudanese are not equally treated. Treatments differ. In the Red Sea we witnessed some military attacks in some villages similar to what happened in Darfur, I don't agree with such acts. (Woman, Port Sudan)*

*The government does not treat the citizens equally. (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)*

*There is inequality always. (Southern IDP Woman, Khartoum)*

*There is no bias in treatment. (Man, Dongola)*

*Of course. The government treats all Sudanese, regardless of background, the same. The government doesn't have different classes of treatment. (Woman, Dongola)*

*It treats them [people] the same. (Ansar Man, Omdurman)*

**3. The everyday hardship of securing clean, safe drinking water drives participants' desire to have the government address the issue as the country's number one development priority. Food security and health care are also seen as critically important.**

In an unstructured discussion about development issues, participants most often cite health care, education, employment (in urban areas) and agriculture (in rural areas) as their top priorities. Typical beliefs are: the number of clinics and hospitals does not meet the current need; school fees are too high and education should be free; good job opportunities are available only to those with party, tribe or family connections; and government does not invest in developing agriculture. More broadly speaking, participants see a lack of development in all areas and government's lack of attention to it (except perhaps in Khartoum) as holding Sudan back.

Interestingly, even more basic needs rise to the top when participants are asked to compare development priorities.<sup>6</sup> By an almost two to one margin over any other issue, participants cite increasing access to clean water as the most important development initiative the government could undertake. Clearly, the scarcity of this most basic of life's necessities is of great concern to people, and government's focus on developing additional and easily accessible resources of water would have the greatest impact on the daily lives of its citizens. Food security ranks second to water in participants' priorities and health care ranks third. Although they do not outrank more basic needs, settling ethnic conflicts and security issues are important secondary issues in places like Port Sudan, Juba and Darfur.

*Water's the most important thing. (Woman, El Obeid)*

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<sup>6</sup> A bi-ranking chart, where participants are asked to choose one priority over another one at a time, was used to determine priority development needs.

*Sudan should be the most developed country because of its rich land. The government doesn't care about the land. China cultivated their mountains and we do not.* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*There are no job chances. Some post-graduate girls sell tea and work in many lowly jobs.* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*Education and awareness. There are no proper institutions. There is scarcity of schools! Without schools, how do you want children to learn? If they don't learn, then we lose the most important resource we have: the mind.* (Man, Port Sudan)

*The government should focus all its efforts to economic development, health and education.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

Willingness to discuss the absence or existence of corruption varied significantly by group. Women, in particular, were reluctant to speak of corruption or would only speak of social corruption, such as drugs and alcohol. Of the participants who chose to speak about corruption, the vast majority say it is prevalent across all areas of Sudanese life. Nepotism and corruption in employment were most often spoken of but larger issues of corruption in different levels of government activities, especially as it related to development, was a concern as well. Nevertheless, corruption was often at the bottom or near the bottom of participants' priorities, in part because other needs are so pressing but also because some participants view corruption as less of an issue in Sudan than in other countries or organizations.

*There are many corruption cases, such as the case of the Rebat University building.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*The three most important problems that are plaguing us are infrastructure, health and education. Corruption however is the main reason why all of our problems exist. Human development, education, poverty...All caused by administrative corruption? Yes.* (Man, Port Sudan)

*Any problem you have, especially in Darfur, won't be solved [by the local authorities] without bribes.* (Man, Nyala)

*It [corruption] is the biggest problem.* (Arab Man, Juba)

*I swear it [nepotism in employment] is a problem; a big problem.* (Muslim Woman, Juba)

*There is corruption in the Sudan, but compared to the world corruption, it is not that big. For example, there is corruption in the UN and there are other cases in many developed countries.* (Woman, Port Sudan)

*The majority of people are corrupt...But it's only a medium-sized problem [compared to other places].* (Two Men, Dongola)

**4. Despite Sudan's status as a significant producer of oil, any benefits from the petroleum industry are all but invisible to Sudanese participants.**

All participants understand that the discovery of oil in Sudan opened up a new and important source of revenue for the government, and the example of their neighbors in the Gulf States gives them hope that the petrol industry can be a significant force for improving their lives. Clearly, however, these expectations have not been met, and most participants express a high level of frustration that revenues from the extraction of oil have produced little or no benefit for the regular citizen. These participants see no visible signs of a major increase in development projects, such as schools and hospitals. To add insult to injury, many believe that their own oil is not available for their use and is instead for the sole benefit of foreigners, either through the exporting of oil or through revenues made by foreign companies involved in extracting or refining Sudanese oil.

*The production of petrol is not clear to people's eyes. We see nothing.* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*We have not benefited because we send the petroleum out of the country.* (Woman, Dongola)

*We hear about the petrol but don't see the reality of it.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*Sudanese are not benefiting from it because foreign companies come in and take the petrol out and give the government a small portion of the profit. Then there is corruption and nepotism on our end after, so the people do not benefit.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*We have all the oil in the world. Why can't our government distribute that wealth to us? Look at Saudi Arabia!* (Man, Port Sudan)

*I fear that the revenues from oil will go to the pockets of those in charge and not bring any hope of development projects to our region. Oil seems like an evil in the guise of a blessing. The petroleum is our resource and I would love to see the revenues going to development projects like building education and health facilities as opposed to money for the weapons they have used against us.* (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)

For the small minority of participants who admit to seeing some benefits to the petrol industry, those benefits were rarely without qualification as can be seen in the exchange below between women in the Port Sudan group.

*[Participant 1] This is the richest source of income; it will change this country by providing more and more economic development to the people of Sudan.*

*[Participant 2] I do agree. However, I still have not seen any changes in our day to day living standards. We just hear about it; we hope we all can benefit equally from the oil.*

*[Participant 3] I felt the impact on my salary, and the reason is oil. My salary has doubled.*

*[Participant 4] I felt the positive impact of oil when I visited our capital Khartoum, but at the local level here I do not see any change. Last week we had notice of shortages of stove- gas supply and we were advised to reduce consumption.*

*[Participant 5] I do not sense any change in our economic institutions; industry is declining every day. I went to visit Basher [oil discovery area]. This area is economically dead and the locals are living in hard conditions without adequate services. There is no indication that the oil may or will change the social, economic conditions.*

*[Participant 6] We are better off now because of the oil. We have electricity; we used to be short of gas, electricity and other oil products. But yet we do suffer from the collapse of industry in this region. (Women, Port Sudan)*

For most, the only solution to deriving benefits from the petrol industry for regular citizens is to set up some method for distributing portions of the oil revenues directly and equitably to the different regions. In short, participants want to see the oil revenues at work and, more specifically, at work in their areas. The potential for refineries and the employment associated with them is something also highly prized by people in many areas. Now that the CPA has been signed and there is a new national unity government, expectations will rise even higher in anticipation that peace will allow increased oil production and in turn allow the government to begin directing more revenues toward projects that will better the life of the common citizen in Sudan.

*At a minimum the region that produces the oil should get a portion of the proceeds...There should be guaranteed employment for the people in those regions. (Two Ansar Women, Omdurman)*

*For Juba to benefit, the government should put a refinery in Juba. (Southern Man, Juba)*

*Previous petrol revenue was devoted towards the war. After peace, this will be distributed. Right away the area will get benefits. (Man, Dongola)*

**5. Participants are generally supportive of key human rights principles but do not feel many of these rights are a reality for Sudanese citizens in the current environment. Freedom of religion, press, association, speech, property ownership and movement were all broadly endorsed – with a few cultural or religious reservations – as rights that should be the entitlement of every Sudanese citizen.**

The questions about basic human rights during the focus groups were all asked in the abstract. For example, questions might be framed as such: equal rights for everyone in Sudan regardless of ethnicity or religion...good or bad? Yet, time and again, the answers given were about the current state of these rights in modern day Sudan. Participants support for equality under the law and basic human rights is unequivocal, but they do not feel the same commitment from their government.

*It [equal rights] is good, but the government does not apply it. (Woman, Khartoum Center)*

*Equal rights for everyone is good, but there is no equal rights in Sudan. (Southern Man, Juba)*

*The government increases the problem [of equality in Sudan], according to its needs. If the government needs or wants anything from a certain tribe, they give them money and guns to go and be in conflict with other tribes, like the Janjawiid. (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)*

### **A. Freedom of Religion**

No participant of any religion questioned a person's basic right to freely practice the religion of their choice or to openly espouse a religious affiliation. In fact, the practice of *any* religion – except in rare circumstances where less mainstream religions may engage in harmful practices – was seen as a positive act. In fact, there was a respect and certain commonality felt among the Christians and Muslims interviewed because they were, as one participant put it, all 'holy book believers.'

*To each his own religion...It's a good thing that the Muslim be Muslim, the Christian be Christian, etc. (Two Women, Dongola)*

*The government doesn't have the right to tell people how to worship. (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)*

*Everyone is free in his or her religious practice. (Woman, Khartoum Center)*

*There should be freedom of religion. (Man, Nyala)*

The only rigidity participants express on religion is regarding the freedom to change religions based on personal convictions. Christians have no problem accepting that an individual may want to change their religion over time. However, Muslim participants say that while they fully support a person's right to practice their religion, once a person is a Muslim, the dictates of *Shari'a* prevent that person from disavowing the faith. The penalty for leaving Islam would be death, although Muslims will happily welcome Christians into the fold.

*That [changing religion] is a personal choice, and an individual has the personal freedom to choose what he wants. (Southern IDP Man, Khartoum)*

*It's [changing religions] not bad because freedom means that people choose. We should not interfere. (Southern Man, Juba)*

*If a Christian becomes a Muslim, he will be immediately rewarded with heaven. (Woman, Dongola)*

*A Christian can become a Muslim, but a Muslim can't become a Christian. (Man, Nyala)*

*[Changing] from Muslim to Christianity is bad. In Islam, it is called 'rada.' According to Shari'a law, the person must be killed. (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)*

*In Islam, if a Muslim changes his religion to another there is a three-day period given as a break period or a chance for him/her to return back to Islam. If the individual does not return after three days, he/she will be sentenced to death. It is very serious matter.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

## **B. Freedom of Speech**

The ability to express personal thoughts and opinions is seen as something good and important but also something that is limited in the reality of day-to-day life. Unlike some of the other freedoms discussed, some participants would not be comfortable with free speech without limits. There are multiple reasons for this hesitation, including certain religious concerns and the fear that unlimited speech might ignite conflict.

*It is good. Freedom of speech and thinking without fear is extremely important.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*[A person] should express himself with no problem.* (Woman, Nyala)

*It [freedom of speech] is good, but we are controlled and limited to do so.* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*They [who speak freely] face a threat of penalty if they express themselves. One could say something in the street and then be penalized the next day.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*It's necessary to speak out, even if one gets into trouble. He should still speak his opinion.* (Woman, Dongola)

*[Whether freedom of speech is good or bad] depends on what they're saying. If somebody's speaking within the limits of Islam, they can say whatever, but if they're speaking falsehoods, then no.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

*Freedom [of speech] has its limits.* (Arab Man, Juba)

*It [freedom of speech] is good, but if it exceeded the limits and started to raise conflict with others then this is a destructive process.* (Woman, Port Sudan)

## **C. Freedom of Press**

The ideal of a free press is supported and desired. Although one group reported recent progress in this regard, there remains a general skepticism about whether the press could ever be truly free in Sudan.

*It is good if it [media] is open to know what really happened.* (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)

*You're joking right? (laughs) The government controls everything.* (Man, Port Sudan)

Sudan)

*There's no freedom of the press...It's a good idea.* (Multiple Men, Nyala)

*There's no freedom of the press.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

*Yes, it [press freedom] is good. Recently we witnessed certain exhibits of different opinions in the news.* (Woman, Port Sudan)

#### **D. Freedom of Association**

Freedom of association is a concept supported by most participants, but those in conflict areas are more likely to feel they do not have this right. In addition, for a few participants, who are primarily women, freedom of association brings up issues of conflict between multiple political parties that may form and thus is concerning.

*It's [freedom of association] good, you should be able to do what you want.* (Man, Nyala)

*The same political party that has been ruling Sudan forbids others from forming. The tribes want to form politically but they're not allowed to.* (Man Port Sudan)

#### **E. Freedom of Property Ownership & Movement**

Widespread support for individual property ownership rights is based, according to many, on the rules of Islam. As a result, most participants have no concern about a person from another region owning property in their area, although a few did express doubts about the wisdom of allowing foreigners to own property in Sudan. Likewise, women participants were almost unanimous in their belief that women had the right to own property and many male participants echoed that sentiment, though a few did object.

*We are a Muslim country and therefore we follow the Islamic rules which do not prohibit anyone from another region or religion to own property.* (Woman, Port Sudan)

*A foreigner shouldn't be able to [own property], but anyone from Sudan can.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

*I do agree that [property ownership] should limited to Sudanese only, not everyone from another country should be allowed to buy land. These people could be a terrorist.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*Yes, [a woman can own property]. Islam established equality between men and women regarding many issues.* (Arab Man, Juba)

*Women in Islam have the right to own property and there are certain rules for that to determine her share. However, traditionally, it is not preferred to let women inherit land especially if she is married outside the family in which strangers may have legal claims.*

(Woman, Port Sudan)

Freedom of movement is another basic right embraced by participants. In Muslim groups, however, there were mixed feelings about freedom of movement for women. In both men's and women's groups, freedom of movement for women was accepted as an important right by some participants but in other groups (again, both men's and women's) it was seen as necessary to limit this right based on religious customs.

*Yes, we strongly agree [women can freely move].* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*Yes, that's [freedom of movement for women] part of freedom. Freedom of expression.* (Man, Nyala)

*With her family it is okay; for holiday, it is okay; work is good if she has a certain job, but if she leaves for a year or more that is not expected at all.* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*If she is Muslim, she has to get the approval from a guardian.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*From a religious perspective, for a woman particularly, she has to be accompanied by a chaperone.* (Woman, El Obeid)

**6. Democracy is embraced as a system of government because there is a prevailing sense that it offers a unique ability to address the diversity of Sudanese cultures and the conflicts that have resulted from it. Though there are mixed views on the appropriate role of religion in government, most participants believe that Islam and democracy are compatible and share many fundamental values.**

Sudanese participants most often define democracy as freedom, and with this freedom they see an opportunity to link all of Sudan's diverse cultures under one system of government. The increased participation of all groups in governing, Sudanese participants believe, will help resolve decades-old conflicts that have appeared intractable.

*The notion that links the North to the South to the East to the West is that we all want a democracy.* (Man, Port Sudan)

*This [democracy] is good. We wish for the people to be together.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*Democracy would be good here because it means equality and justice for everybody.* (Southern IDP Man, Khartoum)

*[Democracy is] suitable for Sudan because of different religions and parties.* (Man, Dongola)

*We are a diverse nation and democracy is the best system for such a diverse country... democracy is suitable for the Sudan because it has multiple religious populations.* (Two Men, Khartoum Center)

*Democracy would solve these conflicts because the authority would be elected, and people would come every couple of years and vote people in and out of office. Therefore there would be no reason for groups to have coups and start militias.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*[Democracy] would bring stability...There would be no problems or conflicts...Things would return back to normal.* (Three Women, Nyala)

*Yes, [democracy can help end conflict] because everyone can benefit.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

Most participants believe that there is no conflict between democracy and Islam. In fact, quite the opposite. The Islamic practice of *Shura* (consultation) and Islam's respect for the individual are repeatedly cited as evidence that not only are Islam and democracy compatible but that democracy is a fundamental part of Islam. This belief was nearly universal and strongly felt, even to the point where some participants posit that democracy originated from Islam.

*Islam is a global and humane religion and Shura is the modern form of democracy because it's a form of consultation that democracy promotes.* (Man, Port Sudan)

*They [democracy & Islam] have the same values, they protect the individual.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

*Islam is compatible with democracy because Islam itself is freedom...freedom of religion, freedom of belief. Islam has much in common with democracy.* (Man, El Obeid)

*Islam brought democracy! For example when the prophet Muhammad came and said to his counterparts, 'To you your religion and to me mine.' Our religion is comprehensive and relevant for every time and place.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*Democracy is compatible with Islam because of Shura [consultation required in Islam].* (Man, Dongola)

There is much less consensus on how Islam, or religion in general, should function within a democratic government. Some participants see religion and government addressing different parts of life, and therefore the two can be separate. For these participants, the separation of religion and government is also a key to addressing conflict and maintaining peace in Sudan. But to others, the separation between religion and government is unthinkable. People in conflict areas were somewhat more inclined to support separating religion and government, but the more common situation was disagreement over the issue within a group itself, regardless of its composition. In addition, the issue was much more concerning to Muslim participants than Christian ones.

*Democracy without Islam doesn't work.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

*Religion is good, but religion deals with some issues and government deals with other issues. (Woman, Nyala)*

*Religion should have a role [in government]. (Woman, El Obeid)*

*[Participant 1] Of course, religion can be a system of government if the entire country belongs to one religion, such as is the case in Saudi Arabia...But in a country like here in Sudan with religious diversity, it would be a problem to mix religion and government.*

*[Participant 2] I disagree. I don't think you can separate religion from the state under any circumstance. Religion is about dealing with things. (Ansar Women, Omdurman)*

*[Participant 1] The role of religion and the government should be separate. Religion is a private individual matter and has nothing to do with the government policy or rights.*

*[Participant 2] The role of religion and the government is inseparable. (Men, Khartoum Center)*

*Religion should be different from the policies of the government. To add something, religion can be a source of advice for the government to solve some problems. (Southern Man, Juba)*

*I believe an Islamic state should remain. I think we can all agree on that. Sudan is an Islamic republic, and I do not see how a secular law can be beneficial. This is the way things have been running for so long, why change them? (Man, Dongola)*

*All of the problems that we have today are because the government tried to impose religion on the country. (Ansar Man, Omdurman)*

An issue more specific to the role of religion in government is whether the top positions in government must be held by Muslims, since they comprise the majority in Sudan. Again, there is no consensus on this issue among the participants in the groups. Christians, as a minority, support the right of anyone to attain the highest level of office in Sudan, but Muslim participants were divided on whether the country could be led by a non-Muslim.

*We, in Sudan, aren't all Muslims. And we all benefit from the government if there's democracy and competent rulers, whether they're Muslims or not...The important thing is that there be justice in the government. What does it matter if he's Muslim? Justice is what matters. The Prophet Muhammad, in the first hijra ordered Muslims to flee to Ethiopia, and the king there was Christian and just. (Man, Nyala)*

*They [top positions in government] should be open to anyone, whatever his religion. (Man, El Obeid)*

*Non-Muslims can have those positions [president & vice-president]. Governing has nothing to do with being Muslim, Christian, or whatever. Religion only relates to our customs and traditions. (Woman, El Obeid)*

*[Participant 1] I do think Sudan should be led by a Muslim who is fair to every religious group. In regard to the other religion groups they should have a government official to represent them.*

*[Participant 2] I do not agree; a leader shouldn't be only Muslim. (Men, Khartoum Center)*

*They president must be Muslim because we are in a Muslim country...the vice president can be Christian. (Two Women, Khartoum Center)*

*He [president] has to be Muslim. (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)*

*The President must be a Muslim. (Man, Dongola)*

*This is answered by democracy. Democracy means voting. If a Christian is chosen through voting, then he can become president; if a Muslim is elected, then a Muslim can be president. We don't link the two. (Arab Man, Juba)*

**7. While elections are valued as a participatory tool, past experience and the unsettled nature of the Sudanese political situation raises participants' concerns about whether any election could be free, including the scheduled 2009 national elections.**

In general, participants believe elections are positive events that can provide the many diverse peoples of Sudan a voice in government. However, there is a significant amount of caution expressed about holding elections without appropriate safeguards. Some participants, particularly those in conflict areas, see past elections as flawed and the results as illegitimate, and are worried that future elections would only repeat the same mistakes.

*It [election] is the best way to choose leaders. (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)*

*Elections will be a courageous decision for peace. (Man, Dongola)*

*Elections have to be done carefully to be effective. (Man, El Obeid)*

*Elections are important, but if there is a tribal preference over qualifications then the process will not be effective. (Woman, Port Sudan)*

*If there's no fraud, if the votes are really counted, elections are great. If there's voter registration and everything. (Man, Nyala)*

*Those people [running elections] can do anything they want to the ballot boxes. (Woman, Nyala)*

The same dynamic is seen when participants speak more specifically of the 2009 national elections outlined in the CPA. For many, the elections are a very good idea, but how the elections are executed will be the true measure of success or failure. People want to know: Will there be

sufficient peace in Sudan to allow a democratic process? Will everyone be given an equal opportunity to stand for office and vote? Will the elections be free from corruption?

*Yes it [national elections] is good idea; in four years people will learn more of our needs and will effectively participate.* (Woman, Port Sudan)

*Really, if there were elections across the country [in 2009], that would be good.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

*It will be good to choose new people.* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*Very good [to have national elections in 2009].* (Man, El Obeid)

*Social and national reconciliation concerning the peace process has not been implemented, and I think that the election results will be reflective of that. They will surely be unfair and undemocratic. Unless the war is over, until the situation in Darfur is resolved and until the North gives us more power, then the overall elections [in 2009] will be unfair and most certainly undemocratic only because we are lacking the necessary peace conducive to proper elections.* (Southern Woman, Juba)

*It [2009 national elections] will be good if there is peace.* (Woman, Nyala)

*If they are free elections, they will be very good.* (Ansar Man, Omdurman)

*It [national elections in 2009] will be good if it is equal and clear.* (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)

*The National Council gave people money to vote [in 2000]. They will do it again in 2009.* (Southern Man, Juba)

**8. Although many participants see *Shari'a* as appropriate law for Muslims, there is an unequivocal rejection of the application of *Shari'a* to non-Muslims in Sudan.**

Many Muslim participants see *Shari'a* as a positive, and even necessary, part of the law in Sudan, but only for Muslims. There is virtually no support for the application of *Shari'a* to non-Muslim populations in Sudan, and participants have no expectation that Christians or persons of any other religion should be willing to live under *Shari'a*. For some, the notion of applying *Shari'a* to non-Muslims even borders on the ridiculous. As a man in the Darfur IDP group said, "If they are not Muslims, how can it [*Shari'a*] apply to them? It is for Muslims only."

*It [Shari'a] shouldn't be enforced upon them [non-Muslims].* (Woman, Nyala)

*It's [Shari'a] good, but only for Muslims.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*[Shari'a] can't be applied for non-Muslims because it is not part of their religion. We in Islam must wear a [head] scarf. How can we ask the non-Muslim to wear it like us? (Ansar Woman, Khartoum Center)*

*Muslims in the North should apply Shari'a laws and for the southerners Christianity should be applied. (Woman, Port Sudan)*

*Shari'a is good [but it is] just for Muslims. (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)*

*Implementing Shari'a was a mistake in 1983 because the country has two religions. Per our current situation, Shari'a might be able to be enforced on Muslims. (Southern IDP Man, Khartoum)*

**9. Opinions on a possible split between northern and Southern Sudan as a result of the 2011 referendum are extremely varied; while the idea of a divided Sudan was unthinkable to some participants, others felt that having such a choice was appropriate**

No clear idea from participants emerges about what the 2011 referendum will mean for Sudan. Some have limited knowledge of the CPA and are surprised to learn that southerners will be given the choice to secede and form their own state. Others are hopeful peace will be implemented in a way that will ultimately make unity attractive. More urban participants have a better understanding of southern opinions on secession and so are more likely to see it as inevitable. Although there is general support for the referendum, the possibility of splitting Sudan into two is unthinkable to a few participants and so they would oppose the referendum.

*It [Sudan] will stay united...The South is part of Sudan. (Two Women, Nyala)*

*There can not be a division of the North from the South under any circumstances. There are things in the North that the South needs and vice versa. There are economic ties that bond us. (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)*

*We want all Sudanese to be together. We don't want our country to be divided into two. We have to work together. (Woman, Dongola)*

*If everyone has his rights in the South, maybe they will be for the union. (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)*

*It [the referendum] is a good idea to ask people, but there is no need to divide the country because it is one country. (Woman, Khartoum Center)*

*If everything is implemented as was agreed upon then the country will remain united, but if there are loopholes then there is a high probability of the country seceding. (Southern Man, Juba)*

*It [the CPA] will divide the North from the South, and it will then split the South into two. (Ansar Man, Omdurman)*

*I think it [the CPA] might divide the Sudan in two, North and South. (Man, Khartoum Center)*

*It all depends on whether our brethren in the South want it. If we go according to peace for all and not based on religion, etc, then I do not see why the South will not participate in a new government with the rest of us. There is no other choice but unity. A national, united Sudan with no hidden agenda except for peace. (Man, Port Sudan)*

The complexity of opinion on the referendum can be seen in the examples of two exchanges that took place within groups.

*[Participant 1] No, I don't think so. There are a lot of southerners in the capital and in Central Sudan, and they won't want to.*

*[Participant 2] They will split off.*

*[Participant 3] They'll split off.*

*[Participant 4] It depends on the agreement.*

*[Participant 5] God willing, they won't secede. (Men, El Obeid)*

*[Participant 1] The idea of secession is preposterous. We can all exist under one banner, we are all Sudanese.*

*[Participant 2] We need to be united but to give a choice for our brethren in the South on whether they want to join a united Sudan or not.*

*[Participant 3] We prefer national unity. (Men, Dongola)*

For a few participants, and especially those in conflict areas, the specter of a split in Sudan raises troubling questions about the status of other regions and the possibility of additional conflict.

*If there is a split off of the South in Sudan, the rest of the regions will ask for the same thing. (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)*

*There won't be peace if they do that [secede]... Fundamentally Sudan, North and South, is one nation, and there will be problems if it is divided. (Two Women, Nyala)*

*If they secede, there will be a lot of problems. (Men, El Obeid)*

#### **10. The formation of the Government of National Unity and the development of the Interim National Constitution are good but leave some participants with the feeling that they are on the outside looking in.**

There are no complaints about a Government of National Unity as a concept. On the contrary, it is seen as a positive step forward for Sudan. However, participants in conflict areas other than the South and those who are not members of the ruling National Congress Party feel excluded from the process and so there are varying degrees of acceptance of the GNU.

*National Unity [government] is good. (Man, El Obeid)*

*This [GNU] is good. (Arab Man, Juba)*

*[National unity is] a good thing. Over 60 people from different political parties will participate in drafting this constitution. That means nobody will be left out. (Southern Man, Juba)*

*[Government of National] Unity is good, but each region should be given their rights. (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)*

*This partnership [between the GOS and SPLM] is good, regardless of the fact that we really won't benefit from it. (Ansar Man, Omdurman)*

*What is good is that they are coming together. What is bad is that they are leaving out other groups in the process. (Southern Man, Juba)*

*Sir, a national unity government must include all of Sudan...Not just the North and South. All of Sudan. (Man, Nyala)*

*They [SPLM] don't represent us in order for there to be a government of national unity. (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)*

Feelings about the development of the Interim National Constitution (INC) mirror those on the GNU. A better constitution would be welcomed, but some participants in the East and West see the INC as having relevance only to the North and South.

*[Participant 1] That's really good that there will be a new constitution. It'll hold the country together.*

*[Participant 2] As long as it's better than the current constitution. (Men, El Obeid)*

*The new constitution is not representing all the Sudan regions; we fear a problem in the future since the representation addressed the southern part only. (Woman, Port Sudan)*

*The GNU constitution is good, but it is only between the two of them, only between the North and South. It will lead to new problems. (Man, Nyala)*

*I think that it is a constitution just between the NCP and the SPLM. (Ansar Man, Omdurman)*

*We think of this [peace] as between northerners and southerners. Okay? Tomorrow or the day after they'll finish up the constitution. What about the other problems in Sudan?... What good is this constitution going to do us? How is it going to build a 'Sudan of the future'? (Man, Nyala)*

**11. The performance of the Sudanese government draws mixed reviews from participants. The executive branch fares the best, getting credit for its efforts toward peace, while the work of National Assembly is either unknown or looked upon as unrepresentative.**

The reputation of top leaders in government has been bolstered significantly by recent peace efforts. Southerners in government-controlled areas are particularly grateful for what they see as a good faith effort to re-make Sudan through peace, although other participants see the government's commitment to peace in a positive light as well. The other major accomplishments attributed to Sudan's top government leaders are advancements in the petroleum industry and, to a much lesser degree, Sudanese leaders' efforts in health, education and infrastructure are mentioned as positive steps forward.

*After this peace, there are no problems. They [top leaders in government] are good... So long as there is peace, they are good. (Two Southern IDP Women, Khartoum)*

*They brought peace and built the country. The roads used to be bad and now they widened them. Khartoum is more developed. (Southern IDP Man, Khartoum)*

*What we have seen in them, those guys at the top level, is that sense of need to create the new Sudan. They have improved the image of Sudan internationally. The best thing that they have done is this peace. (Southern Man, Juba)*

*[The top accomplishments by government leaders are]: Oil...Peace...Peace and general development...The oil is quite an achievement; an industrial achievement...I think just peace...Peace and oil...Peace...Peace and oil... Oil and peace...Peace...Peace and oil. (Eleven Men, El Obeid)*

*They [top government leaders] stay up late solving the problems of the masses...They work to help the public. (Two Men, El Obeid)*

*They've done a lot when it comes to the field of education, and treatment and healthcare. (Woman, El Obeid)*

*The communications infrastructure, and the water in some areas [is a government accomplishment]. (Ansar Man, Omdurman)*

At the same time, however, for many participants the peace effort does not trump other negative aspects of government rule. Top government leaders come under criticism for having a 'do-nothing' approach, for being out of touch, for originating in an undemocratic fashion and for engaging in corruption.

*Some [top government leaders] do good things, some do bad things. (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)*

*The top leaders are doing nothing. [They are] selfish. (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)*

*Why can't Omar al-Bashir...go and see what people need everywhere?...Yassir Arafat set on the ground with this people and ate and drank with them. (Two Women, Khartoum Center)*

*They are an illegitimate government and they came to power by illegitimate means. (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)*

*But I think they [top government leaders] are corrupted and have little to offer to this country, if not a completely negative [force]. (Man, Khartoum Center)*

### **A. Government Ministries**

Some of the negative feelings about top government leaders are also naturally felt about individual government ministries, since ministers are considered high-ranking members of government. But opinion about ministerial work was by no means uniform. Depending on the group, various ministries were lauded as performing well and bringing real benefits to the citizens of Sudan. Among those mentioned most often as doing the best job were Defense, Infrastructure, Health and Education. The ministry mentioned most often, however, was Foreign Affairs because of its central role in negotiating the CPA and in working to restore Sudan's reputation internationally.

*No one [ministry] at all is doing a good job. (Woman, Khartoum Center)*

*These ministries are just names. (Woman, Nyala)*

*They [ministers] don't even know what it happening in their own ministries. (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)*

*Another ministry that has played a great role, although it is not seen very wide, is the Ministry of Defense because now all the military forces are aware of this peace and all of these officers can address their forces and tell them to live a life of peace. Now you can see the acceptance of the peace in them. (Southern Man, Juba)*

*The road is good; education, but fees are high. (Woman, Khartoum Center)*

*The Health Ministry; they established a new clinic. (Southern IDP Woman, Khartoum)*

*The Foreign Ministry is the best one because they improved Sudan's relations with the world. (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)*

*I see the Foreign Ministry as being particularly effective. (Southern IDP Man, Khartoum)*

*The active ministries are the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health. (Woman, El Obeid)*

*All the ministries are doing well. (Man, El Obeid)*

## **B. National Assembly**

Participants exhibit little knowledge of the Sudanese National Assembly or what the body's role is within the government. Few who do understand the work of the Assembly have positive comments because either they do not see any benefit from the body's work or they perceive the body as a rubber stamp.

*We don't know what they actually do.* (Woman, Nyala)

*I don't know what they do.* (Southern IDP Woman, Khartoum)

*I know there are Assemblymen, but I don't see any real action from them. Before there used to be one who did good, but now I don't see any action.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*The National Assembly is supposed to be the vanguard to ensure that the government does not stray off course. But they are just a tool of the government.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*They just sit around doing nothing.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

*The representation of the Assembly is not fair. Those who are in the Assembly were not elected by the people. They belong to specific political parties, and very few deliver services for their own people. They are a hand-picked group.* (Southern Man, Juba)

## **C. Military & Police**

For a country that has seen as much conflict as Sudan, participants have a fairly neutral, if not positive, view of the military. Though some views of the military are clearly negative, opinion of the military does not follow any pattern, even among people in conflict areas. In the groups with Darfurian IDPs, for example, men express positive feelings about the military, while the women's view of the military is the opposite.

*Honestly, there is no military...There are just a bunch of militias.* (Two Ansar Men, Omdurman)

*As somebody from Juba, I say the military has done more harm than good for our people. One simple reason is that the military is supposed to protect its people, but now the opposite is taking place. All of the people are on bad terms with the military because they have intimidated us.* (Southern Man, Juba)

*[The military does] killing, violence. It is supposed to protect the citizens.* (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)

*The country benefits [from the military].* (Man, Dongola)

*Military is good because of protection. (Southern Woman, Juba)*

*They respect people and citizens, and they are good guys. That's why the government uses militias because the military officers would not follow orders to harm the citizens. (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)*

*The participation of the military [in government] is important. They are effective and defend the people. (Woman, Port Sudan)*

Most participants see the National Service, Sudan's mandatory military draft, as playing a positive role in the development of the country's youth and as being no different than what occurs in many other countries. A few participants question the system's benefits and its true purpose, but these views are clearly a minority in the focus groups.

*I think the military draft lays down the foundation for the youth who will be leading this country sometime in the future. It trains and develops them well. Military drafting exists everywhere, and I don't see a difference. (Man, Port Sudan)*

*My opinion is that it [National Service] is very good. Our boys get educated and earn their degrees. I think it is really good for boys. (Woman, Dongola)*

*We send our boys there [to the military] and they come out as doctors. (Woman, Nyala)*

*In any country there's [military] service after someone finishes university. (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)*

*It [National Service] is good and bad. The same student when they learn how to use a gun, they abuse it. That makes a lot of problems. (Woman, Khartoum Center)*

*The National Service is mandatory and is used by high officials to fill vacant positions so that they don't have to pay salaries to conscripts. They should pay conscripts. (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)*

Perhaps because citizens interact with police much more frequently, participant opinions about the reputation and role of the police were much more varied than views of the military. Charges of bribery and ineffectiveness color some reactions about police, but at the same time police are also appreciated for their role in providing protection, security and stability in day-to-day life.

*They [police] are thieves. If you give them money, they can do things for you. (Woman, Khartoum Center)*

*They [police] are bad people, most of them. (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)*

*[Police] are not that strong or effective. (Woman, Port Sudan)*

*Of course the police protect the people. They protect the merchants, they protect those who work at night...They are good, their work is good.* (Southern Man, Juba)

*They [police] protect the citizens...They [police] keep traffic moving.* (Southern IDP Woman, Khartoum)<sup>7</sup>

*They ensure order and protect the people.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*The police keep the security and stability.* (Muslim Woman, Juba)

#### **D. Court System**

Only about half of the groups included a significant discussion of the court system in Sudan. Much like views of other parts of the government, reactions to the court system among this group are mixed. Overall, the weight of opinion from those expressing views on the courts is somewhat more negative than positive.

*The courts in Sudan are not trustworthy.* (Ansar Man, Omdurman)

*It [the court system] never gives people their rights.* (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)

*It [the court system] is corrupt.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*Courts are bad and are doing nothing unless you give them money.* (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)

*[The courts are] the best in the world.* (Man, Dongola)

*It [the court system] is good because they judge with the Koran.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*It [the court system] is the universal system and is equal to other systems in the world, [though] some people think that the court system more or less favors the needs of this government.* (Woman, Port Sudan)

#### **12. A decentralized, federal system is the government of choice for participants who believe it is the only way to competently govern a country with the geographic and cultural diversity of Sudan.**

Participants in at least two-thirds of the groups express a preference for a federal system that devolves power to the regions and/or the states. For many, decentralized government is the only right and just way to govern a country with the cultural complexity of Sudan and is the only practical solution for a country with the geographical reach and logistical challenges of Sudan. For people in conflict areas, a federal system is equated with freedom and offers an opportunity for self-governance, which perhaps can lead to a better life.

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<sup>7</sup> This report was written prior to the Khartoum riots that followed John Garang's death. Views about police, especially among southern IDPs in the capital, may or may not have shifted as a result of the riots.

*Government where power is spread out more to the individual regions and states [is best].* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*Sudan is a very vast country so you can't have a centralized government.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*Really, they [the states] should have more freedom, so that any decisions the central government makes they first consult the state governments.* (Man, El Obeid)

*I think if our region was given enough power, we would be able to solve our own problems and not have to rely on a corrupt government like the one in the North. The Khartoum government in our eyes is a failed government that cannot even deliver the resources required to have a sustainable and developed South. I have lost faith in them.* (Southern Woman, Juba)

*A federal system is the best choice.* (Arab Man, Juba)

*Federal [system] equals freedom.* (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)

Although the majority of women preferred a federal system of government, those few participants expressing a preference for centralized government were primarily women. This is driven in part by women's greater sensitivity to the conflict that they fear may arise out of greater autonomy in the regions.

*It is best to have a centralized government.* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*This [federal system] will create problems and the tribes will start fighting. If we give individual states autonomy, we will see tribal fighting.* (Muslim Woman, Juba)

### **13. Discussion of political parties and political party leaders makes Sudanese participants uncomfortable, but of those willing to express an opinion, a multi-party system is preferred to the rule of a single party.**

Perhaps more than any other subject, political parties and political party leaders are uncomfortable topics for many Sudanese participants. Women, especially, either refuse to answer questions about political parties or profess extremely limited knowledge. A few groups in urban areas are the only ones that include a detailed discussion of individual political parties and these are too few to draw any conclusions. On the issue of multi-partyism, though, just over half the groups express an opinion and the majority of these indicate their preference is for a system that allows the involvement of more than one political party. Some women fear conflict may be exacerbated by the participation of multiple parties and so, as a group, they may be more likely to support a one party system.

*One party is good. Multiple parties create problems.* (Muslim Woman, Juba)

*One party is good.* (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)

*One party [is best].* (Khatmiya Women, Khartoum North)

*Multi-party to rule.* (Southern Man, Juba)

*Multiple parties [are best].* (Arab Man, Juba)

*All governments should be multi-party.* (Man, El Obeid)

*Divide into two big parties; one for the left direction and another for right direction.*  
(Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)

**14. Participants see a connection between the various conflicts in Sudan, although they attribute these conflicts to a wide variety of causes from discrimination to government to tribalism to foreign interference. Participants from conflict areas tend to view underdevelopment and oppression as the primary underlying causes of violence more than other participants.**

For many participants, there is a thread that connects all of the conflicts in Sudan, but for any individual person the origin of the conflict varies. Government shoulders the blame for some; larger issues such as inequality and discrimination is the cause for others; some participants view conflict as an ethnic or tribal problem that is nothing new for Sudan; and others see the hands of foreigners playing a large role in conflicts.

*Ethnic problems...corruption...discrimination...water... no education [are the causes of conflict].* (Men, Khartoum Center)

*Some [conflicts] are because of underdevelopment. Racism is a reason too.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*The foreign people played a role in this [conflict].* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*We've had ethnic conflict for a long time; it's not new.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*It [conflict] happens because people are looking for trouble. The problems are between the tribes.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*I think that it's [the source of conflict] inequality in the political power-sharing system.*  
(Man, El Obeid)

*The government [is the cause of conflict].* (Ansar Man, Omdurman)

*[Participant 1] Tribalism.*

*[Participant 2] I think blame lies with the authorities and not with tribalism.* (Arab Men, Juba)

*[Reasons for the conflict are] government...lack of development...wealth distribution...inequality...internal conflict. (Men, Dongola)*

For many participants in conflict areas, there is no question about the source of conflict in Sudan: inequality, oppression and underdevelopment.

*Oppression, pressure, lack of freedom [are the causes of conflict]. (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)*

*Lack of development; equal opportunity for development, that is one. Another is leadership. Wealth sharing has been a source of conflict in Sudan. There has been racial discrimination on the ground. Religion is a source of conflict. There is mistrust between the South and the North. (Southern Man, Juba)*

*[Source of conflict in Sudan is lack of] fairness and equality. (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)*

Regardless of the origin of the conflict, Sudanese participants suggest similar solutions to achieve peace. Among these are justice, equality and above all development.

*For there to be peace there has to be a strategy by the people to ensure democracy in Sudan. (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)*

*Equality and development [will solve conflict in Sudan]. (Man, El Obeid)*

*Justice...Equality...Democracy...Development [will solve conflict]. (Four Men, Dongola)*

*Development [will bring peace]. (Arab Man, Juba)*

*[Solution to conflict is] justice and equality. (Woman, Nyala)*

**15. Reasons for the conflict in the East are much the same as elsewhere in Sudan, with about half of the groups attributing it to underdevelopment, inequality and tribalism.**

About half of the groups espouse specific opinions on conflict in the East of Sudan and when they do, these tend to closely mirror thoughts on conflict in other parts of the country including the South and Darfur. Underdevelopment, along with inequality and marginalization, are again seen as the tinder for conflict in the East.

*The East is treated unfairly like the South. (Man, Khartoum Center)*

*Marginalization and lack of development [are the cause of conflict in the East]. (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)*

*People [in the East] are enraged by the lack of equity in development funding. (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)*

*It's because there are multiple tribes there, not one tribe.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*The government hasn't been interacting with them [the East].* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

The solution to the eastern conflict, according to the participants, is to address situation directly before the conflict deepens.

*We think that the government did not deal effectively and wisely with the recent incidents. They neglected the local government and took over without any consultation or investigations.* (Woman, Port Sudan)

*There has to be a fair new partnership between them and the government, so people could take their rights back...I predict the East will try to separate itself from Sudan...It will be the same scenario as in Darfur...There will be more fighting.* (Four Men, El Obeid)

*We are hoping that Omar al-Bashir and John Garang will work together to solve the problems in the East, and anywhere else, for our future.* (Woman, Dongola)

**16. Issues of tribalism, underdevelopment and inequality are cited as the root causes of the western conflict as in other parts of Sudan, but participants highlight the government's negative role in Darfur to a greater degree.**

The same conflict origin themes emerge in discussions about Darfur as elsewhere: tribalism, discrimination and underdevelopment. In Darfur, though, people are also more likely to implicate the government and direct actions the government has taken that exacerbated the conflict.

*[Participant 1] Tribalism problem [caused the conflict in Darfur].*

*[Participant 2] Not tribalism. It is discrimination.* (Women, Khartoum Center)

*Some of their leaders [in Darfur] knew that their rights were not being given so they decided to fight for their rights.* (Southern Man, Juba)

*Well besides the government-backed militias terrorizing our daily lives, we lack the basic infrastructure like education, health, electrical, and economic facilities. It's like being part of a country that has forgotten that its people exist and being treated like pests more than anything else.* (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)

*The problems of marginalization and underdevelopment...Darfur is just underdeveloped, it's living in another age.* (Two Men, El Obeid)

*The government started the problem [in Darfur].* (Southern IDP Woman, Khartoum)

*It seems like the government wants to pit tribes against tribes. Peaceful tribes.* (Man, Port Sudan)

*The government is the direct source [of the conflict].* (Woman, Nyala)

*The government didn't handle it [Darfur] wisely and used or utilized the military to solve the problem, which is bad.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*There was already tension [in Darfur] and then the government ignited the conflict.* (Ansar Man, Omdurman)

Development and policy changes that include political pluralism are the keys to solving Darfur, according to participants.

*My opinion is that the government should build them [Darfur] schools, hospitals, and provide water. That's their right.* (Woman, Dongola)

*We think that the government's attempt to negotiate [in Darfur] is noteworthy but is futile because if they don't change their policies then there is no point for these negotiations. Unless the government accepts that there is a problem, an obvious problem, then real social reconciliation cannot occur. The heads of state don't seem to want to admit it.* (Man, Port Sudan)

*We in Darfur generally feel that there's been improvement. In the last three or four months, the events in Darfur and all the people here, officials visiting, I feel that it's a step forward. But it's not known if it will succeed or fail and return to how it was.* (Man, Nyala)

*[The solution to Darfur is] political pluralism, meaning that all the tribes would participate in government and have freedom. And development too.* (Man, El Obeid)

Most Sudanese participants know very little about the groups involved in the conflict in Darfur. For the few who have some knowledge base, all combatants carry at least some responsibility for the violence, although the *Janjawiid* are clearly seen as the most malevolent.

*It is not clear who they [Janjawiid] are, but they did very bad.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*[Janjawiid] are a government militia...The Janjawiid movement must finish.* (Two Men, Dongola)

*They [Janjawiid] are bad people.* (Southern IDP Woman, Khartoum)

*Their [Sudan Liberation Army] goal is reasonable but their means are illegitimate.* (Man, El Obeid)

*They're [Sudan Liberation Army and Justice and Equality Movement] causing a lot of problems too.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

*They're [Janjawiid] troublemakers...They attack a lot of people.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

**17. The origins of the conflict in the South are similar to other regions – oppression, underdevelopment and inequality – but historical factors play a greater role according to participants. With the CPA now signed, participants in northern Sudan generally embrace the SPLM, but not necessarily as a party that could represent them.**

As with other conflicts in Sudan, participants highlight underdevelopment, inequality and oppression as the major instigators of conflict in the South. In addition, though, historical factors, particularly colonization, are cited as having played a key role in the origin of the conflict.

*The South problem is from old times before we were born. When this government came, the problem already existed.* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*[Participant 1] The reason is neglect of the South part until Garang and his army started fighting for their rights, and now they succeeded to draw the government attention.*

*[Participant 2] It started from the English colonization.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*It is well known that the South has been oppressed, and its underdevelopment is unlike any other region.* (Southern IDP Man, Khartoum)

*In the past, it was colonization...[government] did not respect the Southern people...Discrimination...Social class...Economic problems [caused the conflict in the South].* (Five Darfur IDP Men, West Khartoum)

*Marginalization [caused the conflict in the South].* (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)

*[Participant 1] [Conflict in the South started] from discrimination, saying 'he's a southerner, and he's a northerner.'*

*[Participant 2] It [southern conflict] was [born] out of an imperialist [foreign] movement.* (Men, El Obeid)

### **A. The SPLM & John Garang**

Participants in government-controlled areas have become much more comfortable with the SPLM during the peace process. In particular, they voiced respect and admiration for Dr. John Garang, because of his skill at making the transformation from a military to a political leader. It is worth noting, however, that these focus groups were conducted before Dr. Garang's tragic death on July 31<sup>st</sup>, and the subsequent spasm of violence that gripped much of the country; it is unknown what impact these events may have had on popular opinion. Therefore these views may only be said to be representative of the time at which they were expressed.

*At first we were really worried [about the SPLM] but all praise be to Allah, we now have peace. We are really happy now and we don't have any animosity towards anyone.* (Woman, Dongola)

*[The SPLM] started tribal and ended national.* (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)

*They [SPLM] have a major hand in bringing around peace.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*He [Garang] asked the government as a Sudanese national and leader to have equal rights for the southern population. He did succeed and that will benefit the southern region. We hope the same success will happen for the Beja in the East.* (Woman, Port Sudan)

*It used to be a name that inspired fear in people, but now people talk about Doctor John Garang or Sheikh John Garang.* (Man, El Obeid)

*Despite the war and all, we think he's [John Garang] good.* (Woman, Nyala)

Despite generally positive attitudes about the SPLM and Dr. Garang, some participants still question whether the SPLM truly represents the South and whether going forward, the SPLM could ever represent them as a national party.

*Some southerners disagree with Dr. John Garang....There are a lot of southerners in other movements too.* (Man, El Obeid)

*[SPLM represents] only southerners.* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*If the SPLM changes its face from a militia into a political party serving a united Sudan instead of a separation, then I don't see why it's wrong to vote for them.* (Man, Port Sudan)

*It [SPLM] is a political organization for all the people...They can be for anybody.* (Ansar Man, Omdurman)

*The SPLM doesn't represent us...[we] can help the SPLM if we are equal.* (Man, Nyala)

## **B. Relocation of Non-Native Peoples in North & South**

Whether speaking of northerners living in the South or southerners living in the North, participants are clear they would not support any type of forced re-location. Any move to force non-native peoples to return to their homelands would be considered illegitimate because participants believe they have lived peaceably in their own areas with people from other regions and because the right of any Sudanese citizen is to live where they wish.

*Let everyone live where he wants. Sudan is one.* (Southern IDP Man, Khartoum)

*All our brothers [North & South] have the right to stay or leave as they wish.* (Man, Dongola)

*They [southerners] should be free in the North and we [northerners] should be free in the South.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

*Where are they [northerners living in the South] going to go?<sup>8</sup> There are families with mixed blood. There are northern men who've married southern women and vice versa, all mixed together. Where should they go? We shouldn't be classifying ourselves this way. We are all Sudanese, that's it.* (Muslim Woman, Juba)

*They [northerners in the South] should stay where they are because they are not causing any trouble.* (Southern IDP Woman, Khartoum)

*They [southerners in the North] shouldn't go anywhere.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*It's their [southerners living in the North] country. Sudan as a whole is a country for all its peoples...They [government] shouldn't make them return, because that would hurt them.* (Two Men, El Obeid)

*Our opinion is that they [southerners living in the North] have lived with us, eaten and drank with us, and they have been good neighbors. We should live all together.* (Woman, Dongola)

Two groups, one male and one female, were conducted with southern IDPs in Khartoum. Within these groups there is differing opinion about whether the IDPs themselves will choose to return to the South or stay in Khartoum.<sup>9</sup>

*We are ready to leave.* (Southern IDP Woman, Khartoum)

*After 20 years of living here, the scene in the South would be much difficult [sic].* (Southern IDP Man, Khartoum)

### **C. Peacekeepers**

Opinion on the presence of peacekeepers in the South divides along geographic lines. Participants in non-conflict areas are more likely to view the introduction of peacekeepers to Sudan quite negatively, while participants in conflict areas are more likely to be supportive of peacekeepers or have no objections to their deployment.

*[Peacekeepers are] not good.* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*We strongly reject this idea [peacekeepers], and we think it is insult to the Sudanese.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

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<sup>8</sup> Violence also erupted in Juba following John Garang's death, and many people of northern origin subsequently left that city. It is unknown how and whether opinion about southerners and northerners living together in that city has changed since that time.

<sup>9</sup> This research was conducted prior to the riots in Khartoum following the death of Dr. John Garang, and so feelings about the wisdom of returning to the South among southern IDPs in the capital may have shifted.

*[Peacekeepers will be] a strong disaster.* (Man, Dongola)

*I don't have any objection [to peacekeepers].* (Arab Man, Juba)

*Peacekeepers are good.* (Southern Woman, Juba)

*I believe that those people [peacekeepers] who come from outside Sudan are troublemakers.* (Woman, Dongola)

*It [peacekeepers] might interfere with rules of the country...I think they are not effective. People should solve their problems by themselves.* (Two Women, Port Sudan)

*If there is peace, then there will be no need for peacekeepers.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*It is good to have them if they will bring peace.* (Woman, Nyala)

Exactly which countries peacekeepers will represent is also of concern to some participants. Troops from African and/or Arab/Islamic countries are preferred, although participants in conflict areas are not as concerned with the origin of peacekeepers.

*[Participant 1] Let them come from anywhere because they are coming for peace.*

*[Participant 2] It is best if they are an African force.*

*[Participant 3] I don't want them to come from America.* (Southern IDP Men, Khartoum)

*They [peacekeepers] should be from African countries...From any country...From Islamic countries.* (Three Men, El Obeid)

*African groups [as peacekeepers] only.* (Man, Dongola)

*They [peacekeepers] can't be from Israel...Nor Eritrea.* (Two Arab Men, Juba)

*[Peacekeepers can be from] any country.* (Southern Woman, Juba)

*They [peacekeepers] can come from any country.* (Woman, Nyala)

*My opinion is that they should come from Muslim countries only. Let them bring Muslims like us.* (Woman, Dongola)

#### **D. Oil Revenues**

Participants have little knowledge of the specifics of the peace agreement in general and of the oil revenue split between the North and South in particular. When presented with the details of the wealth-sharing agreement, participants are unsure of what it will mean in practice and so there is a mix of views about whether it is a fair or unfair deal.

*[Participant 1] No, it is not fair.*

*[Participant 2] Yes, it is fair. (Men, Khartoum Center)*

*It is not fair because the map of the South is not like the North. I can't divide my budget for development between the North and the South because the entire country needs projects. (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)*

*[Oil revenues] should be divided by region...It is a national resource. (Man, Nyala)*

*It's [the oil revenue split] fair. (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)*

*Oil revenues split is fair. (Woman, El Obeid)*

*We think that the local state should share and benefit from its wealth. This is the fair process and in the East we are hoping they will apply the same rules as well. (Woman, Port Sudan)*

**18. Women participants are eager to enjoy greater equality in Sudanese society and see no limit on their right and ability to participate in the political culture of the country. Many male participants, though they embrace economic and educational rights for women, can not conceive of women playing a larger role politically.**

Although women do not eschew traditional roles, they are hopeful that the new constitution and new developments in government will bring about greater equality in all areas. Men are less enthusiastic about women's rights overall and do not want traditions disturbed, but most embrace equality for women at least in theory.

*It [to be treated equally by the government] is good and we want that. (Woman, Khartoum Center)*

*She [a woman] should get the same rights and role as men. (Man, Khartoum Center)*

*The West people have a known idea about women. We don't even like to speak about her rights. It is not allowed for us as men. (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)*

*It [women's role] could change from that of housewife to something else, with the entry of technology and all that, I mean we're in 2005 now. (Man, El Obeid)*

*[Absolute equality between men and women] will be bad. (Men, Dongola)*

*We do very much seek equality as the constitution recommended. (Woman, Port Sudan)*

Women participants see a broad role for themselves politically in Sudan as voters, local government leaders, party leaders, National Assembly members, ministers and even, possibly one day, president. Male groups are much less expansive in their views of the appropriate level of political participation by women. For men, women certainly should be voters, but higher levels of attainment generally are not embraced. There is some acceptance of women as ministers or

National Assembly members, but much less for women as party leaders, local government leaders and definitely not as a future president.

*[There is] no problem [with women being political leaders] if she is good...a high leader is not good.* (Two Men, Nyala)

*If I can say my opinion, all other nations have them [female ministers] except our country. A woman who's educated...and who works hard, it happens in all other countries except ours here.* (Woman, Dongola)

*It's possible [for a woman to be president].* (Woman, Nyala)

*Women running our government? The men in power right now can't even run the country, how do you expect women to run it? Women should assume cultural and domestic responsibility not economic, social, and political responsibility. It's not right.* (Man, Dongola)

Equal pay for equal work is not particularly controversial. Although a few male participants express some misgivings, most participants of both sexes endorse the concept as a way to ensure fairness.

*Yes, women should be paid [equally].* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*This woman that works among her brothers should be paid the same as the man. She shouldn't get less than him. She should get the same as him.* (Woman, Dongola)

*Equal pay for men and women? No, no.* (Man, El Obeid)

There is no real debate on the education rights of girls and women. All participants support a woman's right to attain the highest education level possible in the field of her choice. However, as one participant points out, in practice many girls may be discouraged from pursuing higher education.

*The highest [in education] she reach, even if she if a professor.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*As far as she [women] can go [in education]...She should study what ever she wants to.* (Two Women, Dongola)

*Girls are discriminated [against] in schools with regards to whether they are allowed to get an education farther than elementary. Young women are not encouraged to join secondary schools or pursue a higher level of education.* (Darfur IDP Woman, West Khartoum)

About half the groups contain significant discussion of the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM). Female and male participants in these groups generally support abolishing FGM, but

there are also some men and women participants who either support the practice or do not see it as altogether negative.

*There is not any advantage in FGM. It's a harmful practice and it should be stopped.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*[FGM should be] halted.* (Ansar Man, Omdurman)

*They should halt female circumcision because it leads to problems and illnesses.* (Woman, Dongola)

*It [FGM] should be stopped.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*[FGM] must be stopped.* (Man, Dongola)

*[Participant 1] We should continue [with FGM].*

*[Participant 2] Circumcision is harmful. It causes problems.*

*Participant 3] It was a good practice in the beginning.* (Three Women, Nyala)

*[Participant 1] It should go on.*

*[Participant 2] No, it shouldn't.* (Two Khatmiya Women, Khartoum North)

*[Participant 1] [FGM] is bad.*

*[Participant 2] Both [good and bad].* (Two Arab Man, Juba)

**19. Many participants hold somewhat negative views of western political forces, such as the United States and the United Nations, and speak more positively of Muslim countries and leaders.**

Just over half the groups contain participant discussion of external political actors that have some involvement in or with Sudan. Although not all comments are negative, in these groups participants' primary view of the United States of America is as heavy-handed and wrong-headed, and President George Bush is a lightning rod for much of the criticism of the U.S.. The pattern of opinion on America and Americans broke very strongly along conflict lines. In non-conflict areas, groups that held negative opinions of the USA outnumbered groups that felt more positively by over a 3 to 1 margin. People in non-conflict areas, such as the South and Darfur, are more likely to appreciate President Bush and the involvement of the United States in Sudan.

*They [the United States] impose their policies on other countries...they have a certain agenda in the Southern Sudan.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*Her foreign policy towards developing and poor countries is good.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*It [the United States] is the root of all of the world's disasters.* (Arab Man, Juba)

*It's [the United States] played an effective role in Sudan, though.* (Man, El Obeid)

*George Bush is not a Muslim, and he has done bad things in the world, and it is wrong.*  
(Woman, Dongola)

*He [George Bush] stands up for democracy.* (Ansar Man, Omdurman)

*He's [George Bush] bad, really bad.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

*George Bush is good.* (Southern Woman, Juba)

*He's [George Bush] stood with Darfur.* (Woman, Nyala)

*[George Bush is] an enemy to all Muslims...A catastrophe...A dictator... Our enemy.*  
(Four Men, El Obeid)

The United Nations enjoys more positive reviews, though some believe that the world body is unduly influenced by the United States. Secretary General Kofi Annan's reputation fares slightly better as a man who is striving for peace.

*They [United Nations] have produced positive things.* (Woman, Nyala)

*It [United Nations] just follows the US. It's US-controlled.* (Man, El Obeid)

*He [Annan] is a fair man and helps people in Darfur.* (Darfur IDP Man, West Khartoum)

*UN follows the UK and USA policies.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*He [Annan] doesn't have a really active role.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

Participants portray Egypt and Libya as great friends and Muslim 'brothers' of Sudan. Opinions on the Arab League are less stellar because of perception that it is inactive.

*It [Egypt] is a nation of peace, and it has good relations with us, thank Allah.* (Woman, El Obeid)

*It's [Egypt] our sister country.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*Egypt is a Muslim nation and a good country. They have never let us down. Mubarak has never let us down.* (Woman, Dongola)

*[Libya is a] good, Muslim country.* (Dongola Women)

*Great country, [Libya] played a big role in helping Sudan.* (Man, El Obeid)

*They [the Arab League] don't have any role.* (Ansar Woman, Omdurman)

*The Arab League problems are trivial.* (Woman, El Obeid)

Although not uniform, participants are generally complimentary of Osama Bin Laden, who once lived in Sudan. Some participants do not agree with his methods, but more see him as a 'real' Muslim who is helping to 'champion' their cause.

*Osama has a case but I do not agree with the way he decides to address it.* (Man, Khartoum Center)

*Osama is a Muslim man and hero.* (Woman, Khartoum Center)

*Oh wow, he is a Muslim. Anyone that has a son should name him Osama Bin Laden.* (Woman, Dongola)

*Bin Laden, he's the cause behind all this trouble, and there's no peace anywhere.* (Khatmiya Woman, Khartoum North)

*He's a sheikh, a holy warrior...The champion of the Arabs...A great Muslim...A holy warrior...the sword of Islam.* (Five Men, El Obeid)

## **CONCLUSION**

Although knowledge about the CPA is limited, many participants in northern Sudan are hopeful that the government's steps toward peace will mean real and positive changes for their lives. Of course, implementation of the peace is expected to have the most impact in the South where over 20 years of war have devastated the infrastructure and stalled development of that region. But participants in the northern Sudan are keen to have peace dividends realized for their areas as well. They want more development, more transparency of—and direct benefits from—the petrol industry, and a more participatory approach to decision-making and governance all over the country, not just in the South.

Sudanese participants desire these changes and are ready to embrace them. There is *hope* that recent steps toward peace and unity includes all people in northern Sudan, but skepticism is that it does not or will not. Participants indicate they are ready to embrace the CPA and the Government of National Unity (GNU). In concept, both are viewed as positive steps toward a better future for all, but as a practical matter, many people in government-controlled areas still feel excluded from the changes anticipated under the GNU.

As noted previously, the conclusions set forth in this report represent only a snapshot of public opinion in northern Sudan in June 2005. Since that time, Sudan has experienced several dramatic events, not the least of which was the death of SPLM leader and Sudanese Vice President Dr. John Garang and the riots that followed in some government-controlled areas. In addition, the GNU has now been formed and announced and so is a reality in a way that it was not when this research was conducted. These events are likely to have shifted public opinion in some areas. Nevertheless, the topics and the findings of this research should be helpful to those in Sudan – whether in government, the donor community or civil society – who wish to understand public opinion surrounding the CPA, the GNU and other critical issues facing Sudan. For those, the findings of this research suggest the following courses of action.

**Ensure All Sudanese Feel Invested in the CPA and the GNU.** Right now, most participants in northern Sudan have an appreciation for the progress made toward peace, but *they do not feel a part of that peace*. The CPA and the GNU are good, but many see both as simply between the government (or, more specifically, the ruling party) and the SPLM. Other parties, regions and ethnic groups need to be convinced that they too can play a major role in this new, more inclusive government and that they too will reap the benefits of a more peaceful country.

**Deliver Upon the Promise of Peace Dividends for All Areas of Sudan.** Participants interviewed for this research indicate they are not only hoping for peace dividends but are expecting them, primarily in the form of development progress. To sustain the support for the peace in parts of the country beyond the South, the GNU needs to make sure that development priorities (water, food security, health) are addressed and that signs of the this progress are visible to all parts of the country.

**Build Upon the Shared Sense of Sudanese Identity.** There is a fairly strong sense of a shared identity among most participants in the northern Sudan. In other words, being Sudanese is one of the primary ways in which people identify themselves. This suggests that the GNU could use

national identity to promote healing and a greater sense of unity (in the generic, not political sense). One of the easiest ways to do this is to communicate the GNU's stance on citizenship. The GNU needs to make clear exactly who is a citizen and who is not a citizen of Sudan and what rights and responsibilities Sudanese citizenship confers.

**Increase Transparency on Issues Related to Oil.** Participants do not understand how the petrol industry should or should not affect their lives. As much as anything, the GNU needs to set and manage expectations in this area. Otherwise, people will always wonder why they are not seeing more benefits from this natural resource. In addition, very few people had any understanding of how the oil revenues would be split under the CPA. Participants' initial reactions, therefore, varied greatly as they learned of how the agreement would allocate petroleum revenues; some participants thought it was fair, some unfair, and some very unfair. To prevent further confusion and discontent over oil issues, the GNU needs to communicate the anticipated distribution of oil revenues, as agreed upon in the CPA, and perhaps even more importantly, *the rationale behind that allocation*.

**Inform and Educate on All Aspects of the CPA.** There is very little knowledge of the CPA among participants. People simply embrace it as something good. The problem is that when people learn of the specific aspects of the CPA, some are surprised and disappointed, particularly when the reasons behind the individual aspects of the protocols have not been explained. In addition to the oil revenue distribution, the two areas the GNU should pay particular attention to are the 2011 referendum and the introduction of peacekeepers. It was clear from the focus groups that some people simply have no idea that there is to be a referendum in 2011, and that southerners will choose unity or secession. Although there was general support for the referendum, to some it was shocking, and if this idea is not introduced and discussed in detail prior to the event, it could cause unrest among certain populations. Likewise, the introduction of peacekeepers into Sudan, and more specifically those from non-African and or non-Arab countries, is troubling for some participants and so the reasons and benefits of peacekeepers should to be explained to the public.

**Begin Communication and Education on the 2009 Elections Early.** The concept of elections as a way to choose leaders is supported, but many participants do not have positive impressions of past elections. As a result, there will be a high threshold for the 2009 elections to be considered fair and credible. Education about specific steps being taken to ensure the election is free and fair needs to begin early and emphasized repeatedly. Only in this way can the GNU win over a population skeptical that a free and fair election can be conducted in Sudan.

**APPENDIX A – FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS**

**NORTHERN SUDAN FOCUS GROUPS  
Participant Demographics**

*Note: Tribe and sect names below are listed as recorded by Sudanese staff. Because the staff were not native English speakers, it is likely that these contain some misspellings. In addition, alternate spellings for some tribe and sect names may exist.*

DATE	NO. IN GROUP	GENDER	LOCATION	SECT	TRIBE/ ETHNIC GROUP	RELIGION	AGE GROUP <sup>1</sup>	INCOME LEVEL <sup>2</sup>	OCCUPATION TYPE <sup>3</sup>	EDUCATION
06/16/05	6	Male	Omdurman	Ansar	Mixed <sup>4</sup>	Muslim	Older	Lower- Middle	Bldg Employ. Farmer Merchant	None- Hi Sec <sup>5</sup>
06/16/05	9	Female	Omdurman	Ansar	Mixed <sup>6</sup>	Muslim	Younger <sup>7</sup>	Middle- Upper	Teacher Student Doctor	University
06/18/05	6	Male	Khartoum Center	Mixed	Mixed <sup>8</sup>	Muslim	Younger	Middle	Student Business Owner	University
06/19/05	7	Female	Khartoum Center	Mixed	Mixed <sup>9</sup>	Muslim	Middle	Lower	Informal Sector (e.g. tea woman)	Primary <sup>10</sup> or Less

<sup>1</sup> Groups were organized with various age groups that generally (exceptions are explained in footnotes) corresponded to the following categories: Younger=Age 20-30; Middle=Age 30-40 and Older=Age 40 and Older.

<sup>2</sup> Income level refers to a broad approximation of participants' wealth based on the area in which the group was conducted, clothing or other possessions, employment and a participant's input. The goal was to speak with a range of income levels, but there was no attempt to classify participants based strictly on income.

<sup>3</sup> Occupation types listed are examples of employment listed by the participants in the groups.

<sup>4</sup> Tribes represented included Danagla, Ashra, Kawahla, Rezagat, Bedaria and Masalat.

<sup>5</sup> None-Hi Sec refers to education levels of the participants that ranged from no education through some level of high secondary school.

<sup>6</sup> Tribes represented included Jaalia, Meseria, Habania, West, Robata, Hamriya and Hwaria.

<sup>7</sup> Three participants were out of the Younger age range. Their ages were 32, 35 and 39.

<sup>8</sup> Tribes represented included Bani Amir, Shaygi, Bedaria, Shigeeya and Tmraye.

<sup>9</sup> Tribes represented included Baqqara, Pataheen, Taguly, Nuba, Shygia and Al Rashich.

**NORTH SUDAN FOCUS GROUPS  
Participant Demographics (Continued)**

DATE	NO. IN GROUP	GENDER	LOCATION	SECT	TRIBE/ ETHNIC GROUP	RELIGION	AGE GROUP	INCOME LEVEL	OCCUPATION TYPE	EDUCATION
06/19/05	14	Male	Khartoum IDPs from So. Sudan	N/A	Mixed (Southern Only) <sup>11</sup>	Muslim + Christian	Older <sup>12</sup>	Lower-Middle	Laborer Policeman Chief	Primary or Less
06/19/05	7	Female	Khartoum IDPs from So. Sudan	N/A	Mixed (Southern Only) <sup>13</sup>	Christian + 1 Muslim	Younger	Lower	Housewife	Primary or Less
06/20/05	14	Male	W. Khartoum IDPS from Darfur Area	Mixed	Fur	Muslim	Middle	Lower	Laborer Unemployed	Primary- University
06/20/05	9	Female	W. Khartoum IDPS from Darfur Area	Mixed	Fur	Muslim	Middle	Lower	Small Trade Informal Sector Unemployed	Primary or Less
06/22/05	7	Male	Juba	Mixed <sup>14</sup>	Jaaliya <sup>15</sup>	Muslim	Older <sup>16</sup>	Middle	Merchant Business Owner	Primary- University
06/23/05	6	Female	Juba	Mixed	Mixed (No. & So.) <sup>17</sup>	Muslim	Younger <sup>18</sup>	Lower-Middle	Teacher Business Owner	None- University
06/24/05	7	Male	Juba	N/A	Mixed (So. Only) <sup>19</sup>	Christian	Middle	Middle	NGO Employee Student	Sec- University

<sup>10</sup> In Sudan, primary school is also referred to as “basic.”

<sup>11</sup> Tribes represented included Dinka, Jur Chol (Luo) and Zande.

<sup>12</sup> Three participants were under 40. Their ages were: 39, 37 and 33.

<sup>13</sup> Tribes represented included Zande, Bari, Latuka, Baka, Achla, Jur Chol (Luo) and Dinka.

<sup>14</sup> Sects included Gadria, Sani, Samaniya and Khatimya.

<sup>15</sup> Group included one person from the Marrajab tribe.

<sup>16</sup> Two participants were out of the “Older” range. They were 35 and 38.

<sup>17</sup> This group consisted primarily of wives of northern, ethnically Arab merchants. Four of the six participants, however, were of southern origins. Participants representing southern tribes included Dinka, Zande and Kuku. The two northern participants were from the Hawaza and Muro tribes.

<sup>18</sup> Two participants were out of the Younger range. They were 37 and 50.

<sup>19</sup> Tribes represented included Pojolo, Bari, Acholi and Kakuwa.

**NORTH SUDAN FOCUS GROUPS  
Participant Demographics (Continued)**

DATE	NO. IN GROUP	GENDER	LOCATION	SECT	TRIBE/ ETHNIC GROUP	RELIGION	AGE GROUP	INCOME LEVEL	OCCUPATION TYPE	EDUCATION
06/25/05	6	Female	Juba	N/A	Bari +1Chomb	Christian + 1 Muslim	Younger	Lower	Hotel Cleaner Laborer	Primary-Sec
06/21/05	9	Male	Sheikh Sharif (outside of Dongola)	Ansar?	Donglawi	Muslim	Older	Middle-Lower	Farmer Business Owner	None-Hi Sec
06/21/05	16	Female	Sheikh Sharif (outside of Dongola)	Mixed <sup>20</sup>	Mixed <sup>21</sup>	Muslim	Middle	Middle-Lower	Unemployed School Cleaner Laborer	None-Hi Sec
6/27/05	12	Female	El Obeid (rural area outside town)	Ansar	Fallata & Bedariya	Muslim	Younger	Lower	Housewife Laborer	Primary-Sec
06/27/05	11	Male	El Obeid (rural area outside town)	Ansar	Bedariya, Rekabia & Nuba	Muslim	Middle <sup>22</sup>	Lower	Farmer Laborer	Primary-Sec
06/25/05	9	Female	Khartoum North	Khatmiya	Mixed <sup>23</sup>	Muslim	Older <sup>24</sup>	Lower-Middle	Housewife	Primary-University
6/28/05	8	Female	Port Sudan	Khatmiya, DPC & Beja Congress	Beja & Shaigia	Muslim	Older <sup>25</sup>	Middle	Teacher Business Employee	Post-Secondary-University
6/28/05	13	Male	Port Sudan	Khatmiya	Beja	Muslim	Mixed <sup>26</sup>	Lower-Middle	Unemployed Sailor	Hi Sec-University

<sup>20</sup> Sects represented included National Co. and Ansar.

<sup>21</sup> Tribes represented included Nigirian, Danagla, Hamar, Arkeein and Kababish.

<sup>22</sup> Four participants were outside the age range for "Middle." Their ages were 27, 28 and 29 (2 participants).

<sup>23</sup> Tribes represented included Shaigia, Abdlab, Dnagla, Nalfuria, Srarab, Shygia, Galia, Hadndol and Bay Aman.

<sup>24</sup> Three participants were outside the age range for "Older." Their ages were 33 and 35 (2 participants).

<sup>25</sup> One participant was 38, two years younger than the "Older" age range.

<sup>26</sup> Age of participants ranged from 22-52.

**NORTH SUDAN FOCUS GROUPS  
Participant Demographics (Continued)**

DATE	NO. IN GROUP	GENDER	LOCATION	SECT	TRIBE/ ETHNIC GROUP	RELIGION	AGE GROUP	INCOME LEVEL	OCCUPATION TYPE	EDUCATION
6/21/05	9	Female	Nyala	Tijaniya	Fur	Muslim	Middle	Lower	Laborer	Primary or Less
6/21/05	8	Male	Nyala	Tijaniya	Fur	Muslim	Older	Lower-Middle	Business Owner Farmer	
Not <sup>27</sup> Completed		Male	Nyala IDP Camps							
Not Completed		Female	Nyala IDP Camps							
Not Completed <sup>28</sup>		Male	Khartoum North							
Not Completed		Female	Shendi							
Not Completed		Male	Shendi							
Not Completed		Male	Malakal							
Not Completed		Female	Malakal							

<sup>27</sup> The research team was denied permission to enter the Nyala IDP camps by the local authorities.

<sup>28</sup> Groups were not completed in three locations (Shendi, Malakal and Khartoum North [men's group]) because of a request from government security officials to terminate the research.

## **APPENDIX B – METHODOLOGY NOTES**

**Focus Group Research:** Focus groups are open-ended group interviews directed by a moderator and following a pre-set guideline. The purpose of focus group research is to understand the attitudes, opinions and experiences of participants who are recruited for the exercise. Focus groups are particularly useful in gaining a deeper appreciation for the motivations, feelings and values behind participants, reactions. In addition, the group format enables respondents to participants in an exchange of ideas – and thus revealing a more in-depth understanding of why opinions are held – that may not emerge in individual in-depth interviews or quantitative surveys.

Focus group discussions are comprised of a small number of participants, typically 8-10 per group. However, depending on the specific situation, groups may be slightly smaller or larger than the ideal. In the Sudan contexts, a group comprised of highly educated participants may work better with a smaller number because these participants are generally well-informed and have strongly-held opinions. A women's group in a more isolated area may benefit from being slightly larger because it is likely that one or more of the participants will be reluctant to speak at length, even if pressed.

Focus groups are recruited to be homogeneous – so, for example, men's and women's groups are conducted separately – to enhance the comfort level of the participants and to clarify the views of a particular sub-group. The number of groups conducted varies widely based on the goals of the research, but the total number of participants is always relatively small and cannot be considered statistically representative of the larger population. It is important to always be aware that focus groups are a qualitative, not a quantitative, research tool.

**Logistics:** The logistical challenges of conducting research in northern Sudan are mostly a result of the vastness of the country. Covering a large area of Sudan is only possible by air, and flights to many locations are sporadic or available only once or twice per week. Other than geography, the obstacles to conducting research in northern Sudan are bureaucratic. The necessity to obtain permission from local authorities slowed the research in some areas and in one area, Nyala IDP camps, prevented it altogether when local authorities refused permission for our team of researchers to enter the camps. In addition, government security officials in Khartoum requested that the research be terminated prior to its planned end, and so groups that had been planned in Shendi, Khartoum North (with men) and Malakal were not completed.

**Staffing:** NDI's local partner, Ahfad University, pre-screened a group of highly-skilled graduates (many of them with advanced degrees), to create a pool of moderator candidates. These candidates were then tested for English and Arabic skills and moderating abilities. Those that scored the highest underwent further training. Moderator teams of two men and two women conducted focus groups with four distinct populations in the greater Khartoum area and teams of one man and one woman or one man and two women were deployed to five additional locations in other parts of Sudan. In addition, NDI staff traveled to all locations with the research teams except for Dongola and El Obeid, because time would not permit. The research team leader deployed to these areas,

however, had conducted focus groups in Khartoum area locations under the supervision of NDI staff prior to traveling.

**Group Composition:** The focus groups in this report were stratified by gender, religion, sect (where appropriate), ethnicity/tribe (where appropriate), broadly-defined age categories, broadly-defined income levels and so some extent, education level. Single ethnicity groups or sect were organized where appropriate and possible. For example, if the dominant social divisions in the area where the group was conducted were based on sect, then groups with participants from a single sect were organized. If social divisions were based on tribal/ethnic group affiliation, the organizers of the groups endeavored to ensure that participants were from a single ethnic group. In urban areas, especially, groups interact and live within close proximity to each other and so some of the groups contain participants representing a mix of sects and tribes/ethnic groups.

**Education:** While participants with all levels of education were interviewed for this research, not all of the groups were successful in ensuring that only participants with a similar level of education were in the same group at any one time. Therefore, some of the groups contain people with widely varying education levels.

**Religion:** The majority of groups were among those who identify themselves Muslims. The only groups with Christians were with people of southern origin. In addition, no groups were conducted for this research among people adhering to traditional belief systems.

**Group Locations:** The focus groups outlined in this report were conducted in locations throughout government-controlled areas of Sudan. Twenty-one group discussions were spread across nine locations. Four of these were in the greater Khartoum area: Omdurman, Khartoum North, Khartoum Center and West Khartoum. Due to a lack of facilities in the area, the West Khartoum groups were conducted at Ahfad University but consisted of Darfurian IDPs were transported from the camps to the University for the groups. The remaining locations were spread throughout northern Sudan. There were Dongola in the far north, Nyala in the Darfur area, Port Sudan in the east, Juba in the far south and El Obeid in central Sudan.

## **Appendix C – Moderator's Guideline**

### **MODERATOR GUIDELINE Northern Sudan Focus Groups June 2005**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

[MODERATOR: WELCOME PEOPLE AS THEY ENTER THE ROOM AND MAKE THEM FEEL COMFORTABLE AS YOU ARE WAITING FOR ALL TO ARRIVE.]

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I work for Ahfad University. We are doing an academic study of citizen attitudes in Sudan. I am the facilitator for today's discussion, but I consider this your group. We are here to listen to your thoughts and opinions.

[MODERATOR: INTRODUCE OTHERS IN THE ROOM AND THEIR ROLES IN THE GROUP (E.G., NOTE-TAKING)]

A few things before we get started:

- It does not matter to me what opinions people have; I only care that the discussion is free flowing and fruitful.
- I am not affiliated with any group or political party. I am just here to understand what you think.
- There are no right or wrong answers to the questions I will ask.
- Everyone's opinion is equally important. We want to hear the opinions of each and every one of you.
- If you disagree with what someone has said, that is okay. Speak up and let me know in a nice way that you disagree, and I allow you to say what you think.
- This discussion is only between those of us here.
- I have this recorder, like a journalist, to help me when I write the report. Your name will not be used in the report. The report will only say a [woman/man] from [location] said this or that. No names will ever be used in the report, and only those preparing the report will listen to the recorder.
- Please speak loudly, and only one at a time, so the recorder can pick up your voice.
- Do you have any questions or concerns about what I have said?

Thank you. Now let us begin.

## II. COUNTRY DIRECTION

1. How are things going in Sudan these days? Are they going in the right direction or the wrong direction?
  - a. Why do you say this? List the reasons why you think things are going in this direction.
2. Are things here better off OR worse off than in other parts of Sudan? Why?
3. When you think about the general situation of the country, do you think that things will be better off OR worse off in 3 or 4 years?
  - a. What will make the future like this? List the reasons you think this.

## III. IDENTITY & ETHNICITY

1. If you could use **three** words to identify yourself to someone from another country, what would those words be?
2. From the following list, pick three words, **in order of importance**, you would use to describe yourself:
  - a. Muslim [or Christian or Other]
  - b. Arab;
  - c. African;
  - d. Sudanese;
  - e. Sect [Ansar or Khatmiyyah or Other]
  - f. [Name of Local Tribe]
  - g. [Name of Region, e.g., Northerner]
  - h. Ethnic Group [Beja or Fur or Other]
  - i. Political Party Member [Name dominant parties in the area]

[MODERATOR: RELIGION, SECT, TRIBE, REGION AND ETHNIC GROUP, WILL CHANGE BASED ON LOCATION.]

3. Do you consider the people living in South Sudan (Dinka, Nuer, Shilluk, Zande, Bari, etc.) to be Sudanese? What do you think of southerners generally?
  - a. Do you consider Nubians to be Sudanese? What do you think of this group?
  - b. Do you consider the Beja to be Sudanese? What do you think of this group?
  - c. Do you consider the Fur to be Sudanese? What do you think of this group?
  - d. Do you consider the Baqqara to be Sudanese? What do you think of this group?
  - e. Do you consider the Massalit to be Sudanese? What do you think of this group?
  - f. Do you consider the Zaghawa to be Sudanese? What do you think of this group?
  - g. Do you consider the Hausa (West Africans) to be Sudanese? What do you think of this group?
  - h. Do you consider the Missiriya to be Sudanese? What do you think of this group?
  - i. Do you consider the people of Nuba Mountains to be Sudanese? What do you think of this group?

j. Do you consider the people of Southern Blue Nile – Ingessena, the Uduk – to be Sudanese? What do you think of this group?

[MODERATOR: COVER QUESTIONS A-J QUICKLY, BUT MAKE SURE TO EXPLORE ANY PREJUDICES AGAINST A PARTICULAR GROUP.]

#### IV. DEVELOPMENT CONCERNS

1. What are the top three problems you have in this area?
  - a. What should be done about these problems?
  - b. Who is responsible for solving these problems?

2. I am going to read a list of important issues facing Sudan. Please tell me which you think is the one that needs to be addressed most urgently; which is the second most important and which is the third most important AND why.

- Education
- Jobs/Employment
- Transportation/Roads
- Land Disputes
- Health Care
- Hunger/Food Security
- Water
- Militia Movements/Attacks
- Ethnic Conflicts
- Corruption

3. Is corruption a problem in Sudan?
  - a. [If yes:] What are some examples of corruption?
  - b. Is nepotism a problem in Sudan?
4. What do you think of the petrol industry in Sudan?
  - a. Has the petrol industry benefited your area in any way?
    1. [If none] What should be done to ensure your area benefits?

#### V. PERSONAL RIGHTS

Please tell me if each of the following is a good OR bad thing and why.

[MODERATOR: Be sure you understand how strongly the participants feel about each of these before moving on. NOTE-TAKER: Be sure and record the strength of reaction to each of these.]

1. Equal rights for everyone in Sudan regardless of ethnicity or religion...good OR bad?

[MODERATOR: IF PARTICIPANTS HAVE BEEN NEGATIVE ABOUT A CERTAIN

GROUP IN SECTION III, QUESTION 2, THEN ASK THE FOLLOWING:]

- a. Should [ethnic group spoken of negatively in S.III, Q.2] be treated equally by the government?
2. Freedom for all people to practice their religion or belief...good OR bad?
  - a. Is it okay OR not for people to practice Christianity freely in Sudan?
  - b. Is it okay OR not for people to practice traditional beliefs freely in Sudan?
  - c. Is it okay OR not for people to change their religion or sect?
  - d. Should someone be fined or imprisoned for practicing a religion of their choice freely in Sudan?
3. Freedom for people to say whatever they think without fear (freedom of speech)...good OR bad?
  - a. Should a person be fined or imprisoned for saying what they think?
4. Every person has the right to own property...good OR bad?
  - a. Is it okay OR not for a person from another region to own property in this area if he or she has bought it fairly?
  - b. Is it okay OR not for a woman to own property?
5. Every person has the right to move around the country and in and out of the country freely (freedom of movement)...good OR bad?
  - a. Is it okay OR not for women to move around the country and in or out of the country for work or any other reason?
6. Freedom of the press/media...good OR bad?
7. Freedom of association whereby every person can join with others to form any type of group or political party...good OR bad?

## **VI. ELECTIONS & DEMOCRACY**

1. What is the meaning of 'democracy'?
2. What do you think of democracy as a system of government?
  - a. Is it a good system for Sudan OR not? Why or why not?
  - b. Could democracy help end conflict in Sudan OR not?
3. Is Islam compatible with democracy? Why or Why not?
4. What should be the role of religion – if any – in the government?
  - a. Do you think that only a Moslem should hold a high-ranking government office – such as president, vice-president or minister – in Sudan OR can a person of any religion hold these offices?

5. Do you think elections are a good way to choose leaders?
6. What did you think of the last presidential election in 2000?
  - a. [If group is old enough] What did you think of the elections in 1986?
7. The peace agreement with the SPLM calls for national elections for members of the National, State and Local Assemblies all over Sudan in four years (2009). Do you think national elections in 2009 are a good idea OR a bad idea? Why?
8. Are you aware that the Government of Sudan (GOS) and the SPLM are together drafting a new constitution for all of Sudan?
  - a. [If yes] What do you think about that?
9. Are you aware that the peace agreement with the South call for a new Government of National Unity? Is that good or bad?
  - a. Are you aware that leaders from the SPLM will be high-ranking members of that government? Is that good or bad?

## **VII. ISLAM AND THE LAW**

1. What do you think of the Shari'a laws?
2. Should Shari'a be applied to non-Muslims as well?

## **VIII. GROUPS**

1. Please tell me briefly if you have positive or negative feelings about the following and why.
  - The Ansar [NOT ASKED OF ANSAR]
  - The Khatimya [NOT ASKED OF KHATIMYA]
  - The Tijaniya [ASK IN DARFUR ONLY; NOT ASKED OF TIJANIYA]

[SUGGESTED BREAK POINT FOR REFRESHMENTS]

## **IX. BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT**

1. What do you think of the job the top leaders of Sudan are doing and why?
  - a. Who do you consider the top advisors of the President?
  - b. What are some of the good things the leaders have done for Sudan?
2. Which ministries in the government are doing a good job and why?
  - a. Which ministries in the government could do better and why?
3. What do you think of the job the National Assembly is doing and why?
4. What do you think of the job the Military is doing and why?

- a. What should be the role of the military – if any – in government?
  - b. What do you think of National Service?
5. What do you think of the job the police are doing?
  6. What do you think of the court system in Sudan?
    - a. What do you think of the Constitutional Court? [ASK ONLY IN KHARTOUM]
  7. Which is better – a centralized form of government or a government where power is spread out more to the individual regions and states?

## **X. POLITICAL PARTIES & LEADERS**

1. What do you think of political parties?
2. I am going to read a list of political parties. Please tell me the first thing that comes to your mind. It can be anything at all.

- National Congress Party (NCP)
- Popular National Congress (PNC)
- Umma Party
- Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)
- Sudanese Communist Party (SCP)
- National Democratic Alliance (NDA)
- Beja Congress
- Muslim Brotherhood
- Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection) Party
- Ansar Elsunna
- Republican Brothers Islamic Group
- Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)

3. Which of these political parties represents you, if any?
4. What do you think the following political party leaders:

- Sadiq al Mahdi of the Umma Party
- Hassan al-Turabi of the Popular National Congress (PNC) and formerly of the National Islamic Front (NIF)
- Osman Muhammad Uthman al Mirghani of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)
- Mohammed Ibrahim Nugud of the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP)

5. Which do you think is better for Sudan, a one party or a multi-party system of government?

## **XI. THE REGIONS**

1. What is the source of all the conflict in Sudan?
  - a. What is your opinion of militias in Sudan?
2. What will bring peace to Sudan?
3. How much autonomy should the different regions in Sudan have from the central government?

*The East*

4. What do you think is the reason for the recent clashes in the East?
5. What is your prediction for what will happen in the East in the future?
  - a. What can be done to end the clashes in the East?
6. Is the government handling the situation in the East correctly?

*The West*

7. What is the cause of the conflict in Darfur?
8. What do you think is the best way to resolve the conflict in Darfur?
  - a. Is the government handling the situation in Darfur correctly?
9. What do you think of the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA)?
10. What do you think of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)?
11. What do you think of the Janjawiid?

*The South*

12. What was the reason for the war with the South?
  - a. What is the biggest threat to maintaining the peace with the South?
13. What do you know about the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed between the Government of Sudan (GOS) and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)?
  - a. What is good about it and what is not good about the CPA?
  - b. Do you think the CPA will resolve the problem of the South once and for all?
  - c. Do you think the CPA will divide Sudan into two countries? Is that a good thing or a bad thing?
14. Do you think the SPLM represents the people of the South?
  - a. Would you ever consider supporting the SPLM as a national party or do you see the SPLM as a party for southerners only? [NOT ASKED OF SOUTHERNERS]
15. What do you think of the role of the international community played in helping negotiate the peace with the South?
  - a. What do you think about peacekeepers coming to Sudan to help maintain peace with the South?

- b. Should these peacekeepers be from certain countries OR can they be from anywhere?
16. What is the first thing you think of when I say the following name and why?
- John Garang
17. The CPA says there will be a referendum in South Sudan in the year 2011 – six years from now – to allow southerners to choose whether they want to stay united with all of Sudan or to create a separate country. What do you think about this?
18. The CPA says that revenues coming from the exploration and selling of oil produced in the South will be split with the new Government of Southern Sudan. What do you think about that?
- a. If the central government (Government of Sudan) combined with the northern states and the new Government of Southern Sudan each get a 49% share of the oil revenue produced in the South and the remaining 2% of oil revenues go to each oil-producing state, do you think that is fair OR not?
19. Now that the CPA has been signed what – if anything – should be done about southerners living in the North?
- a. Should the government require internally displaced persons (IDPs) currently living in the North – in Khartoum, for example – to return home to the South immediately OR not?
20. Should northerners living in government-controlled southern towns since before the war leave when the SPLM takes over local administration of those towns?
- a. Is the Government of Sudan required to help northerners living in southern towns return to the north if they want to?

## **XII. EXTERNAL POLITICAL ACTORS [SKIP IF TIME IS RUNNING LOW]**

1. I am going to reach you a list of countries or international organizations. Please tell me briefly what you think of each and why.
- Organization of African Unity/African Union
  - United Nations
  - European Union
  - Egypt
  - Eritrea
  - Libya
  - Arab League
  - United Kingdom/Britian
  - United States of America
2. I am going to read you a list of names of people and groups. Please tell me briefly what you think of each and why.
- Osama bin Laden
  - Kofi Anan

- George Bush

### **XIII. MEDIA [SKIP SECTION IF TIME IS RUNNING LOW]**

1. Where do you get most of your news about what is happening in Sudan?

- a. What newspaper do you read most?
- b. What television channel do you listen to most?
- c. What radio station do you listen to most?
- d. Do you trust/believe the news you hear?

2. I am going to read you a list of media organizations. Please tell me briefly what you think of them and why.

- Radio Omdurman
- Sudan Television
- Khartoum Monitor
- Al Gazira
- CNN
- BBC
- El Ayam
- Sahafa
- El Raielaam

### **XIV. WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

1. What is the appropriate role of a woman in the family structure?

- a. Do you see the role of women within the family changing in the future OR not?

2. It is good OR bad for men and women to be treated equally by the government?

3. Tell me whether you think women and men are equally qualified in the following aspects of politics:

- a. As voters?
- b. As party leaders?
- c. As a local government leader [mayor/council]?
- d. As members of the National Assembly?
- e. As a Minister in the government
- f. As president?

4. If a man and woman are doing the same job, should they be paid the same amount OR not?

5. What is the appropriate level of education for a girl or woman to reach?

- a. Should a girl or woman be allowed to study any subject she chooses?

6. Do you think that Female Genital Mutilation should be continued as a cultural practice OR not?

**XV. SOUTHERN TOWNS [THESE QUESTIONS ARE ONLY FOR SOUTHERN TOWN RESIDENTS]**

1. What is your perception of life outside of this town in the SPLM-controlled areas?
2. Now that the peace agreement has been signed, how soon should there be free movement between the government-controlled southern towns and the SPLM-controlled areas?
3. What do you think will happen when the SPLM takes over local administration of this town?
4. Do you plan to stay in this town after the SPLM takes over?
  - a. [If no] Where will you go?
5. Do you think if the Sudanese Armed Forces (Government of Sudan forces) leaves the government-controlled southern towns that there will be conflict between northerners and southerners in the towns OR not?
  - a. Do you think there will be conflict between southerners themselves if the GOS forces leave?
6. What do you think of the part of the peace agreement that says there will be a joint military force consisting of SPLM forces and Government of Sudan forces that will be stationed in the government-controlled southern towns? Is this a good thing OR bad thing?
7. Do you think there is a need for international peace keepers in the government-controlled southern towns?

**APPENDIX D – ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

**Traci D. Cook** works as an independent consultant to several organizations, including the National Democratic Institute. An experienced opinion researcher who has done similar work elsewhere in Africa, she previously served as the senior director for strategic and corporate communications at the Women's National Basketball Association and as Vice President of Marketing Communications at Shepardson Stern + Kaminsky in New York, where she supervised and analyzed focus group research for Fortune 500 companies. As Country Program Director for NDI in Malawi between 1993 and 1996, she also designed and conducted a series of focus groups on democracy and governance. Complementing her work in the field of international development and in the private sector is her experience as the political director for the Mississippi Democratic Party, legislative work on Capitol Hill, and research work for various U.S. House and Senate races. Ms. Cook previously completed a 2004 focus group study of political attitudes in Southern Sudan and 2005 focus group research on citizen views on a new constitution for the South.