



NOTA DE LA COORDINADORA / COORDINATOR'S NOTE

María-Ángeles Alaminos¹

UCM / UNISCI

The current crises in Sudan and South Sudan highlight the need for discussion and reflection on the key issues surrounding South Sudan's secession from the North. This collection of articles considers those crises emerging between and within the Sudans and seeks to understand both Sudanese and South Sudanese internal dynamics and the way they relate to the external influence of major powers.

The history of Sudan, formerly the biggest African country and often considered "a microcosm of Africa", has been characterized by inequality between the center and the peripheries and by protracted internal conflicts that have shaped the country since its independence from British and Egyptian rule in 1956.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which was signed in 2005 between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), brought an end to the second civil war in Sudan and granted the people of Southern Sudan the right to self-determination through a referendum. However, the independence of South Sudan on 9 July 2011 - as the consequence of an overwhelming Southern vote for secession in the referendum held in January 2011 - has not provided a solution to the North-South conflict.

In his article, **Aleksi Ylönen** analyzes the external intervention during the CPA's implementation in Southern Sudan between 2005 and 2011. The author argues that the external intervention was mainly based on a 'peace-through-statebuilding' approach and suffered from limitations that were evident in terms of governance and development during the CPA implementation and afterwards. The focus on statebuilding through an exclusive partnership between the main external actors and the SPLM/A leadership failed to promote inclusive nation building and excluded the political participation from various sections of Southern Sudanese society. As a consequence, this short-term strategy has been unable to generate neither a sustainable peace nor state legitimacy in Southern Sudan.

There has also been serious inter-communal violence and renewed conflict in several states of South Sudan, which reflect the complex context and challenges to state-building in the new state.

¹ María Ángeles Alaminos Hervás – the editor of the Special Issue on Sudan and South Sudan - is a PhD candidate and research fellow in International Relations at Complutense University of Madrid and researcher of UNISCI. Her main research areas are: European foreign policy, Sudanese politics, external intervention, theory of conflict, security-development nexus.

Address: Departamento de Estudios

Internacionales, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociología, UCM, Campus de Somosaguas, 28223 Madrid, España.

E-mail: ma.alaminos@cps.ucm.es.



Building on decentralized state-building theory, **Sara de Simone** analyzes the origins of the current system of local government in South Sudan. The author argues that an approach of decentralized statebuilding in a context where formal state structures at a local level did not previously exist needs to start from the delimitation of territorial units. The author focuses on the County level of government and takes Unity State as a case study in order to assess the local effects of the delimitation of territorial units and explains why internal border conflicts between Unity State counties arise. The data from the specific case study shows that internal border disputes revolve around access to land and basic services, and are grounded on tribal and clan affiliation – and identity manipulation – as the perception of access to resources is perceived to be granted on those tribal lines.

Through the analysis of a large repertoire of Dinka songs from South Sudan, **Angela Impey** shows how the words and themes contained in those songs appear to be concurrent with, and separate from, the official narrative about national reconciliation that is generated by government ministries and their international partners. Drawing on the agentive role of Dinka songs in South Sudan, the author interprets the making of songs in Dinka society as ‘acts of citizenship’ aimed at addressing core concerns of the national reconciliation process. The analysis of the songs allows the author to examine how peace, justice and national reconciliation are imagined at the local level and might be implemented in order to answer to the local concerns of the population. As a consequence they offer the potential to act as a significant counterweight to institutional and often culturally inappropriate discourses on peace and reconciliation.

Although South Sudan has attained independence, the root causes of the North-South conflict continue to be present. As for Sudan’s other peripheries, tensions are increasing, particularly within the states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile. The Darfur conflict continues unabated, reflecting a constant pattern of exclusion that has historically manifested in social inequality and political asymmetries.

The article of **Benedetta de Alessi** examines the conflict that erupted in the border areas at the end of the interim period, both in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states, between the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/A-North. The underlying causes of the new conflict are rooted in several key factors related to the outstanding CPA commitments and post-secession arrangements. The author argues that the conflict in the ‘Two Areas’ is the direct result of the failure of the CPA to address Sudan’s issue of sovereignty beyond the North/South divide, both in its design and implementation. The case of Sudan can be considered through the prism of recent scholarship that reveals the failure of liberal peacebuilding in the Third World. In fact, as a result of the CPA, the author states, neither peace nor democracy were reached in Sudan.

Although the issue of oil revenue sharing is one of the key outstanding post-secession arrangements – along with the border demarcation, the question of citizenship and the status of Abyei – there are other renewable natural resources that shape the relations between Sudan and South Sudan, mainly in the border areas. **Samson S. Wassara** examines the relevance of water and pastures on inter-communal relations around the White Nile in northern Upper Nile and the Kiir/Bahr el-Arab river basins. The author examines the historical relations of the border communities and the changing system of sharing water resources and grazing land because of the recurrent conflicts and crises in the border areas. The exploitation of water and land has been affected by the volatile political situation in the border areas and has generated poverty and underdevelopment among the community users.



As we have seen, Sudan is the theater of several conflicts, leading to a new war in Sudan's new South and an ongoing civil war fought from the West in Darfur. Building on the concept of 'system of conflicts', **Amandine Gnanguênon** examines the specific case of Darfur between 2003 and 2011, explaining how violence and disorder arose and developed at local, national and regional levels. The author argues that there is a link between the system of conflicts in Darfur and the nature of the state, i.e. how the erosion of legitimacy of the regime in place confers de facto legitimacy on those rebel groups who demand their rights to access national resources. Moreover, the author interprets the intensification and regionalization of political conflicts in Darfur as a state-forming process rather than an expression of its decline.

The situation in Sudan cannot be understood without taking into consideration the bordering countries and the relationship between the various actors given that the secession of South Sudan from Sudan and its consequences directly affect political and economic relations at regional level. In his article, **Volkert M. Doop** analyzes Ethiopia's relations with Sudan and South Sudan in recent history. The author examines the profound and far-reaching changes these countries have undergone over the last two decades, and the new challenges produced by such a transformation. The author argues that, despite the significant transformation processes in the Horn of Africa, the driving forces behind Ethiopian foreign policy in relation to Khartoum and Juba have not changed.

Finally, two Sudanese scholars examine the financial system in Sudan and the advantages a confederation system could provide to both Sudans. In his article, **Ibrahim A. Onour** analyzes the financial system in Sudan after the secession of South Sudan, with consequent changes in production and income, and the necessity to adjust to such profound changes. The author sets up a macroeconomic model designed to describe how a small and open economy endures political uncertainty arising from a country splitting into two independent parts. The author argues that the post-secession period is likely to be characterized by economic instability and political unrest for both sides unless economic cooperation between the two countries is maintained. Lastly, **John A. Akec** examines the historical evolution of the concept of confederation in Sudan's political vocabulary and advocates for this system as the most appropriate for building stable and prosperous relations between Sudan and South Sudan. The author argues that the confederation system would have been a potential option to resolve some of the key outstanding post-Referendum arrangements, and is an interesting strategy to be adopted by both Sudan and South Sudan in order to bring the two Sudans back into a path of unity or economic integration.

I would like to thank Zoe Marriage and Daniel Large for their feedback in the beginning of this project. I am grateful to Antonio Marquina for his feedback and comments throughout the process, and also to Eric Pardo and Beatriz Tomé for their assistance, particularly for translating and laying out a number of items.