

Promoting Democratic Governance in Sudan

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- Political historiography of democratic governance in Sudan is minimal or never existed.
- First democratic governance in Sudan was from 1956 to 1958.
- Though the term democracy was often used in Sudan, it never existed. Most government in Sudan was sectarian, partially elected and dominated by power elites of the ruling parties.

The concept of democratic governance is linked to:

- Strengthening the rule of law
- Respect for human rights
- Democratization
- Freedom, liberty, equality and social justice
- Promoting elections and political process
- Participation of all citizens in their government
- Increase development [social, economic, education, and cultural]
- Fighting corruption, nepotism, patronmonial, democratic, authoritarian, and dictatorial rule

BACKGROUND OF THE NORTH-SOUTH PROBLEM

The nature of Sudanese State is a controversial one. The development of democracy in the country has been impeded by the following:

- Intensity of ethnic and inter-ethnic fighting (56 ethnic groups divided into 597 subgroups and 115 languages and dialects).
- Religious extremism (Traditional African religions, Islam & Judaic-Christian). Islam is predominantly in the North. The non-Arab-Muslim Africans are Judaic-Christians in the South. Traditional African religions still being practiced by large numbers in both North and South.
- Competition over available resources/raw materials.
- Ethnic and religious diversity are not atypical to Sudan. It is common throughout contemporary Africa and elsewhere in the world.
- Religion and ethnicity have been the contributing forces that have fueled one of Africa's longest and most chronic and forgotten colonial war.
- Arab-Muslim north colonial domination and exploitation with backing from Egypt, Libya, the League of Arab States, and the entire Islamic world. Egypt's strategic interest is the control of the Nile Waters as stipulated in the 1929 Nile Waters Agreement and subsequent agreements.
- Declaration of jihad (Holy War) against the South from 1989 to presently.
- Previous governments have done it beginning with Lt.-General Ibarahim Aboud to Field Marshall El-Nuiemeri's Socialism, to Islam, and from Al-Saddiq sectarian rule to pro-Islamic regime in Sudan from 1989-

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Historically, Egypt has not been “neutral” in the prevailing Arab-Muslim North and the Judaic-Christian African South conflict. It has been backing all the governments in Sudan against the South as long as such governments and regimes protect the vital Egyptian strategic national interest on the Nile Waters.

Features of LIBYAN-EGYPTIAN INITIATIVE (LEI):

- Unity of Sudan
- Citizenship based on rights and duties
- Recognizes racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity of Sudan
- Sham diplomacy excludes the right of self-determination for the South, it is a red "no-go"

The Government of Sudan (NATIONAL ISLAMIC FRONT REGIME):

- Intransigence
- Manipulative
- Fragmental (divide and rule dictum)
- Denounces IGAD peace process
- Denounces the ongoing British- Italian- Norwegian- United States initiative (BINUSI)
- Disregard of the right of self-determination as one of the principles of the United Nations
- Unanimously and unconditionally accepted LEI as the way forward

SOUTH SUDAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

- South Sudan Liberation movements armed and unarmed groups have categorically denounced LEI and termed it as nonsense and a waste of time, energy, and money.
- They called for an immediate international intervention. The Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLA), a member of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) of the traditional Northern political parties, endorsed the LEI as the way forward.
- LEI is a political liability rather than a political asset (or sham diplomacy).

The NIF Regime Declared Jihad or Fatwa Against the South:

- The NIF regime assumed power in 1989 via a military coup against a declared Jihad or Fatwa
- Genocide more than 2.7 million people in the name of Arabism and Islamism
- Systematic internal displacement of more than 5.7 million people from their traditional habitat

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- The NIF regime enslaved hundreds of thousands of people as crime against humanity
- Abduction and kidnapped children were sold into slavery and bondage in the North, including Arab countries

SEPARATE ADMINISTRATIONS

- The North and the South were administered by the British colonial power as two separate political cultures
- Separate Educational System: Arabic as the medium of instruction in the North; English and Vernaculars were the used medium of instruction in the South. Arabic language and Islamic, as a religion, were completely rejected in the south even up to this day.
- Sudan (*El-Billad el-Soda* - meaning the “land of the blacks” was not a unified country. The north was ruled in the British pattern in Egypt and the Middle East. Whereas, the south was ruled through the indirect rule or the “dual mandate” introduced by Lord Henry Luggard and became the standardized policy of colonial administration in all British colonies in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Modern Sudan was the legacy of artificial creation British Creation in 1947.
- The south did not participate in the Cairo Talks on self-determination.
- Unification of the Arab-Muslim North and the Judaic-Christian South was vigorously pushed by Egypt.
- The United Kingdom had three (3) options for the South:
 - (a) To create a Protectorate or colony
 - (b) To Annex the South to the then British East Africa
 - (c) To Annex the South to the Arab-Muslim north.
 - (d) The United Kingdom opted for the third option because it believes that the future of the South was with the north.

Post- independence causes:

- Monopolization of political power by the Arab-Muslim North.
- South has been relegated to the second class position
- Unequal distribution of available scarce resources between the North and the South
- Denial of equal access into the system
- Social, racial, religious, and cultural discrimination against the non-Arabized and non-Islamized South.
- Lack of democratization, good governance, the rule of law, participation of civil society, and human right protections

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- Extreme religious intolerance, superimposition of *Shari'a* laws (September laws, 1987), declaration of Jihad or *Fatwa* against the non-Arab-Muslim South
- Policy of forced Arabization and Islamization to achieve homogeneity and social cohesion. This policy resembled the Boer apartheid (White tribe of South Africa) policy of forcing the African majority in South Africa to adopt the Boer's language as the medium of instruction and mass internal displacement in the South.

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

The concept of democratic governance has three waves in Sudan:

- First democratic elections were held in 1953 in the aftermath of the declaration of the right of self-determination statute for the Arab-Muslim north.
- Election commission declared elections to have been peaceful, fair, and free, nevertheless, some complaints were reported.
- The Constituent Assembly (1953-55) achievements;
 - (a) The establishment of Parliament
 - (b) The approval of the transitional constitution, and
 - (c) Declaration of Sudan's independence
- First national government was a Westminster-style or multiparty democratic system
- All parties were freed to form coalition
- Professor M.A. Salih identified three observations on the peril of democracy with the Sudanese political elite:
 - 1) Political wrangling over office and prestige at the expense of pressing national issues.
 - 2) Failed to prove to the public that they were more trustworthy than their colonial administrators.
 - 3) Public impression was that they were disorganized and careless about public policy interest rather than for consolidating their own power position. (This situation still exists in the country).
 - 4) The second wave was Political proliferation and the newly created political parties of the conventional traditional political parties (sectarian) transcended the sectarianism of the political parties they rejected in the first place. As a result, there was always a political vacuum, repeating a vicious cycle.
 - 5) The third wave of democratic peril began with military coup d'etat of 1958 military extension had become a norm.
 - a) Brought political stability in the north through the barrel of a gun with the highest level of economic success ever experienced by Sudanese since independence.

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- b) Strongly suppressed political freedoms, freedom of speech, press, equality, social justice, civil society organizations, banned all political organizations, trade unions, strikes, and indefinitely suspended the constitution.
- c) In the South, the junta was fighting a tough and un-winnable colonial war in the southern part of the country.
- d) The junta committed war crimes, genocide, declared jihad or fatwa, against the non-Arab-Muslim south.
- e) Forced Arabization and Islamization, conversion to Islam, Arabization of educational curriculum...
- f) Military college graduates were valued more than university/college graduates.

MAY REVOLUTION

- The May Revolution (1969-85) marked the second military takeover of the country.
- Characteristics of the junta influence were by pan-Arab and Pan-Arab socialism developed by the President Nasser of Egypt. It was also a pro-communist movement led by the Free Officers within the army.
- President El-Nuiemeri's greatest triumph was the Addis-Ababa Accord of March 1972 that temporarily ended the 17-year armed struggle for independence.
- It granted the South local autonomy or self-rule within a united socialist Sudan (SSU).
- President El-Nuiemeri, the architect of the Addis-Ababa, dissolved the agreement, superimposed the September laws of 1983 (Islamic code of laws), re-divided the south into three autonomous regions under the old adage of divide and conquer.
- President el-Nuiemeri's unilateral actions in the South were as follows:
 - 1) Government tight policy on the newly discovered oil in the South and other critical strategic raw materials;
 - (2) Premature construction of the unfinished Jonglei canal;
 - (3) The construction of the new National Oil Refinery (NOR) in unity State.

THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION

- A basic legal and human right guaranteed to all people as stipulated in the UN Charter Articles 1 (2) and 55; the 1960 UN Resolution on de-colonization or Granting Independence to all colonized people and Territories; the 1966 UN Human Rights Convention Resolutions and the 1975 UN Principles of International Law.
- By virtue of this right, the people of South Sudan should determine their political destiny, social, economic, and cultural well-being, as well as, the right to development.
- Libyan Egyptian Initiative denies that right to the people of South Sudan. It wants to preserve the unity of Sudan at the expense of the South.
- Libyan-Egyptian Initiative rejects the IGAD peace process in its entirety.
- Egypt is not a party to IGAD but has an observer status.
- LEI seeks to transfer the North-South conflict to be transferred from the African scene to Arab and the middle East orbit.

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- Egypt fears on partition of Sudan into two independent and sovereign states are based on its national strategic interest on the Nile Waters.
 - Egyptians are not keen to welcoming a new state to merge from the sources of the Nile Waters.
 - Egypt equates any emergence of South Sudan as a non-Arab-Islamic state as threat to its strategic national interest on the Nile Water.
 - Egypt encourages the NIF regime to be intransigent, manipulative and deceptive in the ongoing IGAD peace process in Nairobi, Kenya.
 - Egypt and the NIF regime in Sudan do not equate the right of self-determination to means political independence.
 - Overwhelming majority of South Sudanese or the “Nileans” define the right of self-determination to mean complete partition between the north and the South and the establishment of an independent and sovereign nation states and would-be member of the community of nation-states of the United Nations organization.
 - LEI does not support peaceful and political methods of conflict resolution through an internationally supervised referendum in South Sudan.
 - LEI does not endorse federalism, confederalism, autonomy or any other political arrangement for the devolution of power in the country. Its emphasis is on preserving the unity of Sudan at the expense of the South.
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- In the case of Sudan, the only viable and vibrant option left is total partition of Sudan into two states, viz., Arab-Muslim North to be governed by Shari’ a law and develops on Islamic path on the one hand and the Judaic-Christian African, secular and democratic South on the other.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN SUDAN

- Intergovernmental Authority and Development (IGAD) peace Process and its Declaration of Principles (DOP) agreed upon by the parties to the conflict in 1994.
- Khartoum Peace Agreement 1997 in which all parties to the conflict agreed on the exercise of the right of self-determination through an internationally supervised referendum with options in the secret ballot box namely, unity or secession of the south as an independent and sovereign state.
- The recently signed Machakos protocol which is the continuity of the Khartoum Peace Agreement embodied in the national constitution as Basic Law in 1998. How will the NIF regime reconcile the Khartoum Peace Agreement, which is a law in the national constitution, and the Machakos Protocol as the framework to achieve peace?
- Khartoum Peace Agreement - the parties to the conflict have agreed for interim period of four (4) years the referendum to be held. Recently, at the Machakos Protocol Khartoum proposed six (6) year interim period. How serious is Khartoum?

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- The people of South Sudan can accept an interim of no more than two (2) years and a specific date on which the referendum should be held.
- I shall conclude this presentation with a statement regarding the Sudan should be peacefully partitioned into two independent and sovereign states, viz., one Arab-Muslim, governed by *Shari' a* laws, and develops on the Islamic path on the one hand, and the South should be secular and democratic state on the other. This is the final, viable option left to achieve democratic governance and to save more lives on both sides of the battling camps.