

## *Compromising With Evil: An Archival History of Greater Sudan, 2007–2012*

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There are two dangers in constructing a history of greater Sudan since the conclusion of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in January 2005. First, there is the pronounced tendency by interested parties to rewrite key parts of this history in ways that efface error, ignorance, and moral misprision. Second, archival resources generated during this period have been surprisingly sparse in many areas and poorly organized.

This is particularly true of Darfur, where human rights organizations have had no sustained reporting presence for several years. The United Nations/African Union force charged with protecting civilians and humanitarians in the region has been a catastrophic failure. There is considerable institutional desire to obscure the dimensions of this failure, and historical and archival records have suffered accordingly. Incidents of violence (including civilian massacres), bombing attacks on villages without combatants, assaults on displaced persons camps, brutal extortion operations, and an epidemic of rape are nowhere reported, and the UN Secretary-General's reports on Darfur have reflected as much. Moreover, timid UN aid agencies on the ground have been largely silent about what they know of deteriorating humanitarian conditions, in deference to Khartoum's sensitivities about reporting on morbidity, morality, and rape. In turn, international nongovernmental relief organizations have felt obliged to remain quiet about what they know for fear of being expelled by Khartoum. To date well over twenty INGOs have been expelled or forced to depart by the regime.

At the same time, there is no human rights reporting presence in several other regions in (northern) Sudan with extremely restive populations. This includes the eastern states—Red Sea, Kassala, and Gedarif—which are among the most impoverished in all of Sudan and whose people have long had perhaps the country's worst health indicators. Two more southerly states are at present actively rebelling against Khartoum's tyranny: South Kordofan and Blue Nile. Khartoum's counter-insurgency strategy is one of extermination, very much like the genocidal campaign in the Nuba Mountains (South Kordofan) during the 1990s. Two agricultural cycles have been deliberately and comprehensively disrupted by aerial bombardment and ground attacks on villages, arable fields, livestock, and water sources.

Estimates vary wildly for these two regions, but the most conservative estimate is that well over half a million people have been displaced or turned into refugees in

neighboring South Sudan and Ethiopia. The many hundreds of thousands unable to escape to the South are slowly starving to death, as Khartoum has imposed a total embargo on international relief aid. Yet even given our clear understanding of the broad ambitions animating Khartoum's assault, remarkably little of these events is being recorded, given our clear understanding of the broad ambitions animating Khartoum's assault.

The South has never had strong archival instincts or resources. This is chiefly a function of half a century of extraordinarily destructive civil war, but has much to do with the way in which southern Sudan was administered by the British during condominium rule (1898–1956). Moreover, the South was a “primary oral culture” for most of the twentieth century, with very limited literacy and ability to produce archival materials. Historians and anthropologists have been our main source for details of the war years; human rights reporting, especially around oil development, has also provided much informed, though highly focused, research. But while there have been a number of more global overviews of the past five years in the history of South Sudan, little has accumulated in the way of archival materials.

The [extensive electronic text](#) I am releasing this month attempts to contribute to the archival account of conflict, and its consequences, throughout greater Sudan over the past five years. The text comprises numerous analyses and publications focusing on South Sudan, the border regions, Abyei, and the continuing human catastrophe in Darfur. Much of the latter has [appeared in print and online at \*Dissent\*](#). These pieces appeared in a form adapted to realistic publication length; the individual analyses I've published very regularly over the past five years, however, often run to as many as 10,000 words (although many of these have appeared in the [Sudan Tribune](#), the most extensive source of Sudan news and analysis online). Such length is due primarily to the inclusion of copious citations from a wide range of human rights reports, UN documents, humanitarian assessments, reports from Darfuri contacts in the diaspora, dispatches from the extraordinary news outlet for Darfur known as [Radio Dabanga](#), and information from a wide range of confidential sources. My primary ambition in section one of the text was to preserve and contextualize these large sections of quotation and reporting, which are likely to become increasingly inaccessible.

Section two of my archive chronicles the slow demise of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. I attempt to provide the evidence and analysis that explains just how and why the international community has allowed such a critical agreement to fail in so many ways, threatening new and even more destructive war. The third section provides a detailed account of the antecedents and consequences of hostilities that began in the Abyei border region (May 2011) and subsequently spread to South

Kordofan (particularly the Nuba Mountains) and Blue Nile, where conflict continues to rage.

The second half of my text comprises fourteen annexes, each of which has been edited to stand alone and begins with a preface written from the perspective of the present. The annexes address particular topics and offer analyses that would be difficult to incorporate within the main body of the text. Some of these analyses appear individually by virtue of their extensive treatment of a particular issue, such as rape in Darfur, mortality in the region, and a monograph and data spreadsheet detailing Khartoum's aerial attacks on civilians throughout Sudan and neighboring countries from 1999 to the present. Others are compendia that draw together a series of shorter and more focused analyses on specific topics. Still others attempt to bring together useful information that might otherwise be too dispersed throughout this lengthy text: a highly detailed timeline concentrating on events of the past two years, for example, and synopses of all important UN Security Council resolutions addressing issues in Sudan. This electronic text has been designed to be both readily searchable and easily navigated; it also has a substantial bibliography and a large collection of photographs.

Of the various commentaries I've received in preparing to release this book-without-an-imprimatur, that offered by Lt.-General (ret.) Roméo Dallaire best captures my ambition: "The contents of this work provide the empirical basis for renewed and increasing efforts to stop the atrocities in Sudan, or at the very least a historical record to guard against claims that we simply did not know what was happening." Dallaire, of course, was the courageous UN force commander during the Rwandan genocide. Few understand so well the insidious nature of so many claims that "we didn't know what was happening."