



October 2010



# Sudanese-Canadians and the Future of Sudan:

## A Report on a Conference held in Winnipeg, September 2, 2010

Report prepared by The Mosaic Institute with the support of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Aurea Foundation



Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada

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## Introduction

This report summarizes the proceedings of a one-day conference entitled “**Sudanese-Canadians and the Future of Sudan**” that was held at the University of Winnipeg on September 2, 2010. The conference brought together approximately 40 delegates and speakers representing a cross-section of the leadership of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada, as well as Canadian government officials focused on the management of Canada’s engagement with Sudan. The day considered both Canada’s current interests with respect to such topics as development and human rights, and how the outcome of the referendum on the possible secession of Southern Sudan from the rest of the country, scheduled to be held in January 2011, may affect Canada’s interests and involvements going forward.

This conference, convened by the Mosaic Institute, came about at the behest and with the financial support of the Sudan Task Force (“Task Force”) at Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (“DFAIT”). The conference was effectively an outgrowth of the Mosaic Institute’s 2009 Report for the Task Force, entitled “Profile of a Community: A ‘Smart Map’ of the Sudanese Diaspora in Canada”. The data and recommendations in that report, gathered during the course of interviews with key members of the Sudanese diaspora living in Winnipeg, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Kitchener, Hamilton, and Ottawa, had helped to inform the development by the Sudan Task Force of a two-way conversation with Canadians of Sudanese origin, both to communicate Canada’s efforts in Sudan, and to learn from Canadian citizens and residents with insight into the region.

As part of an ongoing national discussion entailing several meetings with local community leaders all across Canada, the Task Force invited the Mosaic Institute to bring all of the different factions of the broader Sudanese community together for the first time to consider Canada’s policies in one forum. The resulting conference, which employed the Chatham House Rule, was specifically designed to engage those citizens and residents of Canada who possess first-hand, expert knowledge of Sudan in an open, multi-directional discussion about the most pressing humanitarian, economic and political issues facing Sudan, as well as the challenges and opportunities facing Canada as a major donor of aid and other forms of assistance to the people of that country. Of the 40 people who took part in the conference, many travelled to Winnipeg from other cities and provinces across the country, including senior DFAIT and CIDA officials with responsibility for Canada’s relations with Sudan.

Topics covered at the conference included:

- Canada’s “Whole of Government” Approach to Sudan;
- Key Challenges to Development in Sudan;
- Canada and Sudan after the 2011 Referendum;

- Canadian Global Citizens;
- Human Rights and Conflict – Darfur and Beyond; and
- The Sudanese-Canadian Diaspora and Canada’s Role in Sudan.

Each panel included both government participants from CIDA and DFAIT and “citizen experts” from the Sudanese community. This approach is consistent with one of the Guiding Values of the Mosaic Institute, which states: “It is appropriate and important for Canadians to be actively involved in helping to shape and influence the content of Canada’s foreign policy.”

A post-conference survey of participants found that community-based conference delegates were positive about their experience. 92% of respondents strongly agreed that such meetings as the one organized by the Mosaic Institute are “valuable opportunities for the two-way sharing of information and the expansion of networks.” Many have since requested that the Mosaic Institute convene additional opportunities like this one, and that it assist community members in creating or identifying more “hands on” opportunities to help Canada respond to the ongoing challenges in Sudan.

This report summarizes panelists’ and participants’ presentations and discussions on the above mentioned core topics. It does not claim to represent all that emerged from a rich and wide-ranging conversation, but rather to identify some key themes and ideas.

While every effort has been made to be as accurate as possible in summarizing the presentations made and the views expressed at the conference, any errors in this Conference report are those of the Mosaic Institute alone.

In addition to DFAIT’s funding for the Winnipeg conference, the Mosaic Institute received support from the Aurea Foundation that enabled it to provide travel scholarships to select members of the Sudanese diaspora who could not otherwise have afforded to participate, and to help draft, publish and disseminate this conference report to interested parties and organizations across government, the Sudanese diaspora, and the rest of civil society. The Mosaic Institute is extremely grateful to both DFAIT and the Aurea Foundation, as well as to all those who participated in the conference as speakers, panelists or delegates.

*John Monahan*

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## Canada's Whole of Government Approach to Sudan

The conference began with an introduction to Canada's involvement in Sudan. DFAIT has developed a strategic, “whole of government engagement” with Sudan, coordinated by the department’s Sudan Task Force. It was noted that Sudan, Haiti and Afghanistan are the only three individual countries with dedicated task forces in the department.

The task force directs Canada's diplomatic engagement with Sudan, but also treats Sudan as an international issue to be taken up in a variety of forums with multilateral partners and international organizations. The task force also coordinates between the range of Canadian governmental departments – DFAIT, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Department of National Defence (DND), the Ministry of Public Safety, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) – with an interest in Sudan. Additionally, the task force endeavours to communicate with Canadians. This means both alerting Canadians to Canada's active role in Sudan, as well as consulting with Canadians about their preferences for and knowledge of the region. It is this latter facet of the task force's mandate that has given rise to the “Smart Map” project and conference.

Canada's commitment to Sudan is massive - \$760 million in contributions to humanitarian peace objectives over the past 4 ½ years alone. It is only since 2005 and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that Canada has become heavily involved in Sudan, but since that time Sudan has become a country of primary interest to Canadian foreign policy-makers. DFAIT's response to the complexity of the Sudan issue has been whole-of-government (coordination between multiple ministries and agencies with complementary objectives), whole-of-Sudan (a policy not focused on one region exclusively), and whole-of-world (a recognition of the fact that Canada cannot transform Sudan alone, and must work with partner nations).

DFAIT identifies three primary policy objectives in Sudan. These are:

**1) To reduce violence and enhance security** by providing material and manpower support to peacekeeping operations, co-chairing the Friends of UNAMID (i.e. United Nations/African Union Mission in Darfur) group at UN headquarters in New York, participation in the Darfur peace process, helping to build a working rule of law system for Southern Sudan, etc.

**2) To reduce vulnerability and save lives** by participating in mine clearances, the returning of displaced persons, the provision of humanitarian assistance (food, water, shelter, medicine), etc.

**3) To build longer term stability** through diplomatic and programming support, capacity building, mobilizing third countries, preparation for a peaceful referendum, etc.

The impending referendum now commands much of the Task Force's attention. Participants were told that Canada would send observers to Sudan – likely more than had been sent to observe the 2010 elections, although the scope was to be determined – but that it will not try to influence the voters' choice. Canada's only interest is in working with multilateral partners to ensure a “successful” (peaceful, fair) referendum process.

## **Panel 1: Key Challenges to Development in Sudan**

The first panel of the day featured a wide-ranging conversation about underdevelopment in Sudan and Canada's role in fostering sustainable development.

Representatives of CIDA provided participants with a summary of the development work that Canada is currently involved with. Canada provides both humanitarian assistance (food, water, medicine and other immediate needs) and early recovery programming in Sudan. Administering both types of assistance in the same country is rare, and it is done in Sudan because of substantial immediate basic needs in certain regions, as well as the need for stable, long-term development. Historically, Canada provided relatively small amounts of aid to Sudan prior to 1993, when Canada withdrew its assistance altogether for diplomatic reasons. Aid disbursements began again in 1999 and increased substantially after the CPA was signed in 2005. Currently, Sudan represents Canada's largest engagement in Africa, where CIDA works through partner organizations. These include large international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), UN agencies, and small local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). All partnering organizations are subject to rigorous supervision to ensure that Canadian tax dollars are well spent.

CIDA's thematic priorities in the country are food security, children and youth, and governance.

Panelists and participants were invited to identify critical development needs that should be addressed through humanitarian assistance and early recovery programming, as well as obstacles to development that must be overcome. Many participants called for greater visibility for Canadian projects.

Some key ideas are listed below.

### **First Priority Needs:**

- *Maternal health:* Parts of Southern Sudan have the worst maternal death rates in the world.
- *Literacy rates:* These are particularly low amongst women.
- *Food security:* Sudan was once known as the “bread basket of Africa”. It still possesses natural endowments but requires support in establishing sustainable agriculture. Food insecurity has been a major driver of conflict.
- *Children and Youth, including education and health:* There are 4 million more girls in school now than there were 5 years ago, but widespread

access to education remains an issue.

- *Governance capacity*: International experts must ensure that they train local populations as they administer programs, so that change can be sustained after international participation subsides. Currently, particularly in Southern Sudan, there is insufficient governmental capacity to institute basic policies, enforce security, and stimulate development.
- *Civil Society capacity*: Civil society should not be overlooked as it is a critical intervening factor in successful development. Empowering civil society is one way to empower women, who play significant community roles but suffer the ill effects of underdevelopment most acutely.
- *Oil and Gas exploration*: International assistance is required for exploiting natural resources in a way that benefits all peoples of Sudan.
- *Telecommunications Technologies*: These technologies need to be developed, particularly in rural areas.
- *Banking System*: Support is needed to establish a stable, institutionalized banking system that can make loans available and stimulate microfinance.
- *Improved access to energy*: There is a particular need in regions outside of Khartoum where electricity is sometimes scarce. This must necessarily precede the development of industry.

### **Obstacles to Development:**

- *Poor Governance*: This was highlighted repeatedly by participants as the most significant hindrance to development. Because of rampant corruption, CIDA should go through NGOs and not local governments. Good governance is required for security, as well as for any kind of meaningful public consultation. CIDA currently dedicates some funds to capacity building projects, and the Canadian Parliamentary Centre has worked with governments from both the North and South to foster norms of good government.
- *Insecurity*: The government of Khartoum has actively impeded NGOs' access to underdeveloped regions and created an atmosphere of insecurity. After the International Criminal Court (ICC) indictment of President Bashir, some aid agencies were expelled from the country.

Many have now returned under different names, but their work ceased for 6-12 months. In other regions of the country, ethnic conflict prohibits a physical presence for development agencies.

- *Accountability*: Some participants expressed concern that CIDA operates through NGOs, rather than directly with program staff on-the-ground. It was stated by one participant that in the past, development funds have wound up in the hands of government security forces. Also, it was suggested that NGOs are ineffective at capacity building.
- *Imposed Financial Reform*: It was suggested that World Bank and IMF reform packages have exacerbated some development problems in Sudan, and have come at the expense of the Sudanese people.
- *Measurement*: It is difficult to quantify poverty, underdevelopment and social problems. It was suggested that purely-economic measures fail to capture the entire picture.
- *Top-Down Development Schemes*: Often, development priorities are identified either by the governments of Sudan or by international organizations and governments, without sufficient consultation with local populations. The most effective development programs have a strong participatory element, to ensure that they are responding to the most immediate needs of the Sudanese people as well as building capacity for future projects to be implemented by the people themselves.
- *Diversity*: Participants remarked that the needs of the country vary greatly from one region to the next, and also that cultural differences are very great. It is therefore important that CIDA officials strive to understand the specific populations they are working with for a given project.

There was some discussion of what priority development should hold in Canadian policy towards Sudan. Some participants suggested that development is impossible before the security situation improves, and that a more muscular posture towards the parties fuelling the conflict must necessarily precede development assistance. Others argued that development could help to mitigate some of the causes of conflict, which include food insecurity, inequitable access to resources, and poverty. It was suggested that conflict resolution training be included in development projects.

## Panel 2: Canada and Sudan after the 2011 Referendum

Panelists and participants discussed the upcoming 2011 referendum in Southern Sudan from a variety of perspectives, including what has brought Sudan to the point of potential dissolution, to what degree the CPA process has been respected, Sudan's state of readiness for the referendum, what a 'successful' referendum would look like, what issues remain most likely to trigger renewed civil conflict, next steps after a vote for unity or secession, and what role Canada can play in stabilizing the process.

Some major themes taken from the conversation, and the competing view-points that were heard, are presented below.

- **Reasons for Secession:** Participants discussed what has brought Sudan to the brink of disintegration. One participant argued that the referendum should be understood as a collective failure belonging to all Sudanese, as the country has been unable to find its way towards stable unity in the 50+ years since independence despite an historic appreciation for the notion of “unity through diversity”. The Arabism and Islamism of the Khartoum government were identified as particular drivers of the identity conflict because they neglected the diverse reality of the Sudanese peoples. However, it was noted that these movements had less to do with identity than with preserving the interests of the ruling class.
- **Symbolic Politics:** It was noted that the referendum issue in Sudan has often been clouded by an emphasis on symbols over reality. The government of Southern Sudan currently possesses a jurisdictional range which is nearly equivalent to that of a sovereign state. In the event of a vote for secession, there is little additional governmental space that needs to be devolved from the central government. It is important that the government of Southern Sudan does not try to substitute symbolic and nationalistic politics for substantive good governance. Similarly, the government in Khartoum should not impede progress with its unwillingness to cede symbolic ground.
- **Abyei, Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile:** Numerous participants noted that the fates of Abyei, Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile, straddling the division between North and South, are not dealt with in any depth in the CPA, and are often overlooked in preparations for the referendum. The result is hazardous uncertainty. These border regions were referred to as “a ticking time bomb”, vulnerable to a renewed outbreak of conflict in the event of a vote in favour of secession if they are improperly ignored.
- **Fragmentation:** Participants discussed the threat of fragmentation of the

country that could be precipitated by the referendum. If Southern Sudan elects to leave, this may be read as encouragement by alienated groups in Darfur, the East, and the border regions. The result could be a new round of violence on an extremely large scale. The examples of Yugoslavia and Somalia were cited. Participants agreed that thought must be given to the regions not dealt with directly in the referendum at every stage of the referendum process.

- **Canada as Role Model:** It was suggested that Canada, by nature of its relatively successful diversity models as well as its experience debating secession peacefully vis-à-vis Quebec, was particularly well-positioned to help guide Sudan through this process. This notion was debated by the participants. Many agreed, with one participant suggesting that young Sudanese citizens should be brought to Canada on scholarships to learn from the Canadian model. Others pointed out that the relationship between North and South is substantially different from that between English and French Canada, and that the parallels should not be overdrawn. Currently, Canada is active in Sudan through the Forum of Federations, which has encouraged the development of federal power-sharing institutions. Also, representatives from the governments in Khartoum and Juba were invited to Canada to learn about the Quebec referendums of 1980 and '95.
  
- **Unity of the South:** The issue of tribal/ethnic violence in the South was raised, with some participants questioning whether a truly national conscience existed there, and whether sectarian violence threatened the viability of an independent South. In 2009, the death toll from ethnic violence in the South exceeded that of Darfur. Some participants argued that the National Congress Party (NCP) in Khartoum was directly responsible for this violence. The NCP has been accused of arming tribal militias and inciting violence between groups in order to discredit the project of independence in Southern Sudan. This was used to explain the high death toll which, it was argued, is unusual for tribal conflict in the South. Others responded that the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in Juba deserved a large share of the blame for its inability to maintain security. It was also argued that the NCP has only been successful in bringing Southern tribal leaders onto its payroll because of existing grievances between parties in the South. Currently, Canada is lobbying for a stronger mandate for the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) peacekeeping deployment. It is also trying to help build the capacity of the Southern Sudan police forces and Cattle Protection Service. It was suggested that Canadian-supported NGOs should be involved in village-level reconciliation programming.
  
- **International Recognition:** The issue of international recognition of both



the North and South in the aftermath of a vote for secession was discussed. One participant suggested that the North would likely be treated as a pariah state by the international community, similar to the way that Iran is currently treated. It was argued that this would have deleterious consequences for regional and international security policy. It was also suggested that an independent Southern Sudan may be used by the West as a tool in a policy of containment of the North. When asked about Canada's response to a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) made by Southern Sudan, representatives of DFAIT emphasized that Canada's position is to encourage all parties to remain within the framework of the CPA. Ultimately, though, recognition decisions would be made by ministers.

- **Time Frames:** Numerous participants expressed concern for the pace of referendum preparations, which were described as perilously behind schedule. The potential of postponement was raised, with one participant responding that it is fruitless to allow more time for outstanding issues to be resolved, given how little the parties have done to prepare for the referendum in the five years since the CPA. Some participants suggested that the post-referendum transitional period, of six months according to the CPA, is too short. The referendum, it was argued, marked the beginning rather than the end of a process, and it required a larger time commitment by the parties within Sudan and the international community.



## Canadian Global Citizens

The luncheon presentation moved focus away from Sudan specifically, to deal with DFAIT's efforts to harness the policy-making expertise of Canada's global citizens. Participants were invited to shift from thinking about Sudanese-Canadians and the future of Sudan, to thinking about Sudanese-Canadians and the future of Canada.

DFAIT is beginning to experiment with open policy development models, which will enable greater input from outside the department. In particular, policy makers are looking for ways to connect with Canada's global citizenry – both Canadians living overseas (Canada's “hidden province”, representing 8% of the population), and diaspora communities within Canada. Transnational citizenship is a global phenomenon, but Canada can claim a particularly large (and growing) population of global citizens. It is important for government to adapt to the challenges and opportunities that this population represents.

Globalization is altering present conceptions of citizenship, as well as expectations of government. In order to meet these new expectations, DFAIT is in the process of hosting a national, multidirectional conversation with Canadians about how government should involve its global citizens in decision-making. The conference represents one step in this effort, which is still in very early stages.



## **Panel 3: Human Rights & Conflict – Darfur and Beyond**

Participants and panelists were invited to discuss human rights issues in Sudan, with a particular focus on the ongoing crisis in Darfur. The observation was made that the situation in Darfur has become somewhat less violent over the last few years, with some noting that as of 2009 it was no longer the most violent region in Sudan. Nevertheless, human rights abuses remain endemic in the region, as well as the rest of country. It was also largely agreed upon that Darfur's problems are symptoms of the broader Sudanese condition, and that it is unwise to treat the various regional conflicts in isolation from each other. Participants focused particularly on how Canada and the international community can improve the human rights situation, and how they can complicate it.

Some major themes taken from the conversation, and the competing view points that were heard, are presented below.

- **Internally-Displaced Persons (IDP) and Refugee Camps:** IDP camps in Sudan and refugee camps in bordering states are the sites of some of the most egregious human rights abuses. Some participants suggested that as the situation improves in Darfur generally, the situation in the ever-growing camps has worsened. Displaced people are subject to harassment by government-commissioned elements, and even African Union - United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) forces. The transmission of AIDS in the camps is of particular concern. The proxy war in Chad that has largely been fought in and around refugee camps has played a large role in stoking and sustaining the conflict. It was suggested that CIDA should focus funding towards projects that would enable income-generation in the camps.
  
- **UNAMID:** Participants and panelists assigned UNAMID a mixed report card. As noted above, the security situation in Darfur has improved. Nevertheless, considerable frustration exists with the weak mandate, the ongoing failure to guarantee the safety of civilians, and the seeming willingness of UNAMID to tolerate abuses meted out to it by the NCP government in Khartoum. In addition, it was suggested that UNAMID personnel have been responsible for some human rights abuses – specifically, that they have abused their positions of power by sexually harassing Darfurian women. This sparked a debate about whether it is appropriate or ideal to draw peacekeepers from other African nations that have their own experiences of human rights abuse. Some argued that this was a problem and that as a result UNAMID itself requires international supervision. Others responded that UNAMID's failures have more to do



with its limited mandate and insufficient international support. It was noted that UNAMID waited two years to receive the helicopters it required to monitor the Darfuri expanse.

- **Canadian Peacekeepers:** In addition to discussing UNAMID generally, participants were invited to consider what impact the presence of Canadian soldiers has had on the peacekeeping mission, and whether a larger deployment would improve the security situation or generate ill will amongst the local populations. There was general agreement in the room that who led the mission was less significant than whether or not the mission had a strong mandate and the tools to enforce it. It was noted that Khartoum is resistant to any peacekeeping force, whether it is African or otherwise. Some participants argued that Canadian peacekeepers would be preferable to the current mostly-African contingent, because they would be coming from a more thoroughly-professionalized armed forces, and would have a better normative grasp of human rights. This stimulated some debate. Another participant noted that Canada has a privileged place among other Western nations in the hearts of Sudanese people, because the Americans are perceived as pursuing an agenda, while the British and other Europeans bear the baggage of their colonial pasts.
- **Gendered Violence:** The vulnerable position of women in Darfur was a recurrent theme of the conversation. In the camps, rape and sexual harassment are relatively common-place. As mentioned above, this threat emanates from a variety of sources, including government and UNAMID forces as well as men in the camps. One participant noted that as a result, suicide rates amongst women have become tragically high. It was suggested that because of their marginalization as well as the important role they traditionally play in community life, special efforts should be made to empower women in the camps and villages to become leaders and peacemakers.
- **Isolation versus Engagement:** There was a debate about whether or not Canada could best influence the Sudanese government by taking a hard or soft line. Some participants argued that Canada has maintained overly-friendly relations with the government in Khartoum out of fear that otherwise the CPA will collapse and the country will revert to civil war. In this sense, it was suggested that Bashir has taken the country hostage, and leverages its instability in support of his leadership. It was suggested that Canada has amassed significant diplomatic capital, and that it should not be afraid to threaten a 'stick' rather than 'carrot' approach. Many participants agreed that Canada should work harder to pressure signatories of the Rome Statute to apprehend Bashir at any cost. It was also suggested that Canada should apply more pressure to countries like China, which have supported the Bashir regime. Other participants,



however, responded that historically Khartoum has not responded well to pressure, but has rather acted out. It was argued that the NCP was enticed to endorse the CPA by the promise of better relations with the United States, rather than any external threat. The examples of Iraq under Hussein and Libya under Qaddafi were cited to demonstrate that isolation of a country sometimes fails to generate improvements for its people. Also, participants were reminded to be realistic about Canada's clout on the world stage, and its ability to transform Sudan alone. One participant noted that Canada could do little to prevent China from pursuing its national interest in Sudan.

- **Darfuri Diaspora:** It was suggested that international advocacy organizations tied to the Darfuri Diaspora have lost momentum recently, and are no longer as vocal and visible as they were. One participant said that internal divisions have weakened the movement, and that there is a leadership vacuum. It was agreed that before peace can be achieved in Darfur, Darfurians living in the diaspora must seek and achieve unity.



## **Panel 4: The Sudanese-Canadian Diaspora and Canada's Role in Sudan**

In the final panel of the day, participants turned to their roles as members of the Sudanese Diaspora, in stimulating change in Sudan and in enhancing Canadian foreign policy.

The group was presented with an example of diaspora engagement: the Sudanese Physician Re-Integration Program of the University of Calgary. A group of Southern Sudanese refugees living in Canada that had received physician training were eager to return to Sudan after the signing of the CPA to practise medicine. Because there had been a time lag since their initial medical training, they approached the University of Calgary to provide a medical upgrading program. They were supported financially by Samaritan's Purse Canada. About 100 doctors from Calgary donated their time to teach in this program, which ran five full days a week for 9 months. At the conclusion of the program, the physicians were sent to Kenya to complete their residencies. Subsequently, they returned to Southern Sudan where they now work in hospitals and clinics. The University of Calgary continues to provide support to the graduated class. This is an example of a project initiated by the diaspora itself at a substantial financial and time cost, which has become an important Canadian contribution to the improvement of health care in Southern Sudan.

Participants were also presented with the key findings of "Profile of a Community: A 'Smart Map' Of the Sudanese Diaspora in Canada", a report into the condition of the Sudanese Canadian community and its potential to enhance Canadian foreign policy that was funded by DFAIT and conducted by the Mosaic Institute in 2009. The report is available on the website of the Mosaic Institute: <http://www.mosaicinstitute.ca>.

During the subsequent panel and round table discussions, a number of suggestions were directed both towards the government of Canada and the Sudanese diaspora living in Canada. Some key ideas are listed below.

### **Suggestions for the Government of Canada**

- *Recognition of Credentials:* Multiple participants identified international credential recognition as a fundamental hindrance to the success of the community in Canada. It was noted that Sudan loses some of its most highly-trained and well-educated citizens to Canada, where those



professionals are almost universally underemployed in menial jobs. Participants complained that international immigration officials falsely misled them into believing that they would be able to work in their fields of expertise, which very few currently do. This is an issue of immediate concern to Sudanese Canadians for obvious reasons, and it also impedes upon their ability to contribute to Canadian foreign policy and the Canadian role in Sudan. The example of the Calgary physicians illustrates the danger of losing qualifications over time when skills are not used. Participants agreed that this problem above all others inhibited the diaspora from achieving its potential, and they encouraged the Government of Canada to expedite its efforts to address it.

- *Involve Sudanese Canadians in CIDA projects:* One participant suggested that Sudanese Canadians could play a useful role implementing or monitoring on-the-ground development projects funded by CIDA. It was argued that they are well-positioned for such involvement, by nature of both their knowledge of Sudan and their appreciation for Canadian norms of efficiency and accountability.
- *Diversify the Foreign Service:* One participant noted that in their experience, Canada's foreign embassies did not reflect the diversity of the country. Because this is the face of Canada that immigrants and refugee claimants first see, and because members of diaspora communities have important local knowledge of foreign locations, it was suggested that DFAIT make an effort to bring more visible minorities into the Foreign Service. It was also noted, however, that this effort has been ongoing, and that the current embassy staff in Sudan is diverse in its make-up.
- *Facilitate Exchanges:* Numerous participants suggested that the Government of Canada create opportunities for Sudanese Canadian professionals to return to Sudan for work terms. For example, it was suggested that Sudanese Canadian teachers that are unemployed or underemployed be given the option to teach for 1-3 year terms in Sudan at the rate of pay that they would receive in Canada.
- *Replicate the University of Calgary Program:* Participants responded enthusiastically to the presentation about physician re-training at the University of Calgary, and suggested that the model be repeated for other professionals such as accountants, lawyers, etc. It was noted that this initiative originated with the diaspora itself, and that the first step would be to organize at the community level.
- *Continue the Conversation:* Many participants agreed that the one-day conference was insufficient, both for Sudanese Canadians to express their



views on the complex situation in Sudan, and for the government of Canada to fully benefit from their expertise. They encouraged representatives of DFAIT, CIDA and the Mosaic Institute to expand this national conversation.

## **Suggestions for the Sudanese Diaspora**

- *Microfinance Projects*: It was suggested that Sudanese Canadian community organizations could mobilize their constituents into investing in microfinance projects in underdeveloped regions of Sudan, through platforms such as Kiva.org. It was argued that investment in the private sector could generate more stable, long-term development than aid, but also that this investment is unlikely to come from the Western private sector given perceptions of instability and corruption in Sudan.
- *United Nations Volunteering*: Participants who wished to contribute their professional skills to peace and development in Sudan were encouraged to apply as volunteers in the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) program. It was noted that participation in this programme is open to citizens of Canada and other countries. There was some debate over the efficacy of the UNV program versus other models that focused on developing indigenous expertise.
- *Build Bridges in Canada*: One participant encouraged the others to remember that they had obligations not only to Sudan but to Canada as well. It was suggested that Sudanese Canadians should engage Canadian institutions and civil society, and also that they should build bridges to other communities rather than allow themselves to become isolated.



# Appendix 1: Panelists and Participants

## **PANELISTS**

### **AMEERA ABBO**

Originally born in Western Darfur, Ms. Abbo resided in Central Sudan until arriving in Canada, where she helped to form the Darfur Association of Canada. Through this organization, together with her strong efforts in human rights advocacy while serving as Vice-President of the Darfur Diaspora Association, she helped to bring the crisis of Darfur to the doorsteps of Canada's media. Moving to Alberta, she formed the Sudanese Women for Change Organization in Calgary, concerned with assisting women and children who were victims of violence and war in Sudan. Ms. Abbo is currently the Cultural Advisor for the Lengana Foundation as well as the Vice-President of the Cush International Foundation of Canada.

### **ISMAIL ADAM**

As an avid human rights activist and former trade unionist, Ismail is actively involved in Sudanese politics, especially issues pertaining to the Darfur region. A former President of the Darfur Association of Canada, Ismail was born and raised in Elfashir, capital of Northern Darfur. Later, he graduated with a B.Sc from the University of Khartoum and came to Canada in 1993. He is passionate about finding a non-violent solution for his people in Darfur, and has spoken at more than fifty events as well as conducted numerous radio and TV interviews. Ismail is currently working as a Systems Analyst for a financial institution in the Greater Toronto Area.

### **GORDON AJAK**

In the last ten years, Gordon has attended various workshops, training seminars and conferences related to refugee settlement, community leadership, and the political situation in Sudan, and is currently working as a Resettlement Counselor at Settlement and Integration Services Organization (SISO) in Hamilton, Ontario. In addition to an LL.B in Law from Alexandria University in Egypt, Gordon has a Leadership Certificate from the Bay Area Leadership Training facility in Hamilton as well as a Refugee Settlement and Forced Migration Certificate from York University in Toronto. Gordon is a Board member of the Canadian African Heritage Coalition (CAHC), Chair of the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) in Hamilton and a contact person for the SPLM Caucus in Ontario. Furthermore, Gordon is a previous chair of the African Sudanese Association of Hamilton and an executive member of the New Democratic Alliance (NDA), Niagara Region.



## **ELFADIL ELSHARIEF**

Mr. Elsharief was the founder and President of the Canadian Chapter of the Sudanese Human Rights Organization from 1995-2003, and is a seasoned leader in community development, human rights advocacy, and issues of diversity, access and equity, and capacity building. Researching in areas pertaining to economics and human rights issues, he also possesses a deep commitment to the anti-oppression principles framework and practices. Elfadil holds an MA in econometrics from Northwestern University, Illinois, and an MA from University of Buffalo, N.Y, USA.

## **WELDON EPP**

Weldon Epp is a career foreign service officer, working for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada. He is currently based in Ottawa, as Director for Policy Research within DFAIT's Policy Staff, prior to which he served as Counsellor (Political) at the Canadian Embassy in Jakarta. In addition to postings in Beijing and Taipei, and temporary assignments in Geneva, Islamabad and Phnom Penh, he held positions at headquarters within the human rights, China, and human resources bureaus. A graduate of the University of Manitoba, Mr. Epp is currently completing a PMPA at Queen's University.

## **CHRISTINA GREEN**

Christina Green is currently the Director of CIDA's Sudan Program where she began as Senior Analyst in 2007. Prior to that, Christina served in Kabul, Afghanistan as First Secretary Development and in Kandahar as Development Advisor to Regional Command South. She first joined CIDA in 2003 as Program Analyst for the Iraq Task Force. Christina's work and interests have predominantly focused on fragile and conflict affected states. Through her work at CIDA she has developed an expertise in managing programs in fragile and complex contexts. Before joining CIDA, Christina worked for Industry Canada and Canadian Heritage. She holds a Master's Degree in Political Studies from Queen's University and a Bachelor's Degree in Government and French from St. Laurence University, Canton, NY.

## **CHRIS HULL**

Joining DFAIT in 1997, Chris Hull has served in Algiers, Damascus and Cairo as the head of the Political Program. In Ottawa, he has served in the South East Asia Division, on the Iran-Iraq file and, since 2009 as Deputy Director in the Sudan Task Force.



## **MAHGOUB KHAIR**

Mr. Khair is working with the Mosaic Institute as a consultant on Sudan. Mahgoub holds graduate degrees in development planning and worked for the Council of Ministers and Ministry of Local Governments in Sudan, as well as for the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Eastern Province, in Saudi Arabia. Mahgoub served as Principal Researcher for the Mosaic Institute's 2009 research report for DFAIT, entitled "Profile of a Community: a 'Smart Map' of the Sudanese Diaspora in Canada", that laid the foundation for this conference. Mahgoub is a Board member of the Sudanese Community Association of Ontario (SCAON), Toronto chapter, and has participated in several conferences, workshops and meetings on development and environmental issues pertaining to Sudan.

## **MADIT KUET**

Mr. Kuet graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University of Khartoum in 1985 and worked as a lawyer with Professor Peter Ngot Kok's office. Madit returned to the University of Manitoba's Law School and trained with the Manitoba Law Society, and is now currently practicing with the Merchant Law Group in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

## **GBONGA LORO**

Ms. Loro received a B.Sc in Biology and Psychology from the University of Zambia in 1981, becoming a research officer in Juba, Sudan and training in diagnosis and vaccine production at Kabete Veterinary Research Laboratories in Kenya. Gbonga then continued on to an M.Sc in Virology from the University of Reading, UK, in 1985. Prior to entering university, Gbonga helped to advocate the Addis Ababa Accord through the Anya Nya Movement and continued to work as an Administrative Secretary to the late Peter Gatkuoth and late Clement Mboro, Commissioner for Repatriation and Rehabilitation. Gbonga formed various women's organizations in Nairobi, toured the liberated areas to identify pilot projects for women sponsored by LWF and UNICEF, and organized a historic rally in Nairobi's Uhuru Park televised by KTN and CNN. She helped form the Sudanese Canadian Community Association of Edmonton and was elected its President and CEO from 2007 to 2010. Since 2010 she has been the Co-Founder and President of "The Foundation for Strategic Development of African Refugees and Immigrants".

## **JOSEPH LURI**

Mr. Luri received his Bachelor of Commerce degree from the National University of Lesotho, South Africa before completing his M.Sc in Economics in 1997. Currently Joseph works as a Settlement Practitioner for the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, helping to empower new immigrants in their transition to Canada, and also consults in micro-economic development. Currently he is the Chairman of the SPLM Chapter of Edmonton. Joseph has



received several awards for his community leadership.

### **AMIN MALIK**

Dr. Amin Malik is an expert in international development and program evaluation who holds graduate degrees in program evaluation and agricultural economics. Dr. Malik has worked for various UN development projects, the European Commission and USAID in Sudan, Sierra Leone, Zambia, Malawi and Saudi Arabia. He is currently working as a Quality Assurance Specialist in the child welfare sector in Toronto.

### **RUTH PARENT**

Ruth Parent is the University of Calgary's Program Manager for the SSHARE (Southern Sudan Healthcare Accessibility, Rehabilitation and Education) Program, and was previously the Program Coordinator of the Sudanese Physician Reintegration Program at the University of Calgary. She has traveled throughout South Sudan, and has served as a liaison between the university and Sudanese diaspora members in the Calgary area.

### **DOUGLAS SCOTT PROUDFOOT**

Mr. Proudfoot has been Director of the Sudan Task Force since the summer of 2007, following a year as the Director of the Afghan Task Force. Diplomatic postings include postings in Vienna, Delhi and Nairobi. In Ottawa, Mr. Proudfoot has worked on nuclear disarmament, India-Pakistan, Western Europe, and South Africa.

### **ABDEL SALAM SIDAHMED**

Dr. Abdel Salam Sidahmed is an Associate Professor in the Political Science Department at the University of Windsor, Canada, teaching international human rights, Islamic and Middle Eastern politics, and politics of the developing world. His research interests include contemporary Islamism, Sudanese affairs, and contemporary application of Shari'a laws in Muslim countries. His publications include Sudan [*The contemporary Middle East Series*] (Rutledge/Curzon, 2005), and Politics and Islam in Contemporary Sudan, (Curzon Press, 1997). He also Co-edited and contributed to Islamic Fundamentalism, (Westview Press, 1996) and has published various articles in academic journals and book chapters in edited works within his field of interest. Before joining the University of Windsor, he worked as a researcher and Middle East Program Director at the International Secretariat of Amnesty International.

### **NOURELDEIN SULEIMAN**

Born in South Darfur and raised in Khartoum, Nouraldein Suleiman is a human rights activist seeking peace and justice for Sudan. After completing his



undergraduate studies in Engineering at Ankara University, Turkey, he went on to complete his Masters in Sedimentology with a concentration in fresh water lakes. Mr. Suleiman has been employed for the last fifteen years by various public and private institutions throughout Turkey, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Canada.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

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David Mabior Atem	Gbonga Loro
Shams Atroun	Joseph Luri
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Rizig Hamet Bona	Amin Malik
Hamid Bushra	Hashim Nouren
Bako Dabi	Ruth Parent
Mohamed El Faki	Scott Proudfoot
Elfadil Elsharief	Dr. Abdel Salam Sidahmed
Weldon Epp	Hammad Silah
Reuben Mayen Garang	Noureldein Suleiman



## Appendix 2: Survey Results

Conference participants were asked to evaluate their experience through a survey. The results are displayed below.

Overall, feedback was very positive. Numerous participants suggested that the conference could have been longer, allowing panelists more time to present and for break-out discussion sessions in smaller groups. Participants also suggested that the contents of the conference be made available to the broader Sudanese-Canadian community, and that in future, there be better representation of women and youth.

	<i>N=25</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	<i>n</i>
1	Overall, I found today's conference to be a positive experience.	15	9	1			25
		60.0%	36.0%	4.0%			
2	I found Panel #1, on "Key Challenges to Development in Sudan", to be valuable.	12	10	2	1		25
		48.0%	40.0%	8.0%	4.0%		
3	I found Panel #2, on "Canada and Sudan after the Referendum", to be valuable	14	8	2	1		25
		56.0%	32.0%	8.0%	4.0%		
4	I found Panel #3, on "Human Rights & Conflict: Darfur and Beyond", to be valuable.	9	10	6			25
		36.0%	40.0%	24.0%			
5	I found Panel #4, on "The Sudanese-Canadian Diaspora and Canada's Role in Sudan", to be valuable.	10	10	3	2		25
		40.0%	40.0%	12.0%	8.0%		
6	I believe that meetings between Canadian government officials and members of the Sudanese community, such as today's conference, are valuable opportunities for the two-way sharing of information and the expansion of networks.	23	2				25
		92.0%	8.0%				



7	I am optimistic that the quality of Canada's official relationship to Sudan and its response to the ongoing challenges in Sudan will be enhanced by meetings such as today's conference in Winnipeg.	20	5				25
		80.0%	20.0%				
8	I believe that conferences such as the one we have participated in today are an important way of bringing together and building trust among different members of the Sudanese community in Canada who might not otherwise know one another.	19	6				25
		76.0%	24.0%				
9	I believe that Canadians have an obligation to work cooperatively with each other and with the Canadian government to promote strategies for achieving peace in countries like Sudan	21	4				25
		84.0%	16.0%				
10	I would be willing to participate in future meetings like this one.	23	1				24
		92.0%	4.0%				



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