

## PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES FACING THE NEWLY SPLIT SOUTH SUDAN STATE

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### ABSTRACT

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*This paper seeks to explore the possible problems and challenges facing the fledgling South State. It is this impartial approach to addressing such an issue that sets the current study as unique and exclusive. The people of South Sudan have finally managed to establish their own nation state after almost two-decade of internecine civil war. In fact wars between the North and South were fought ever since the dawn of independence, and even before. The newly independent State of the South Sudan has to be prepared to put up with lots of agonies partly seen and predictable and partly not. There are myriad of models of split States across the globe, however the reality of the Southern State is enormously different. The South has for decades been a battle ground for several wars and hardly ever a developmental program started there was fully accomplished as it was planned, no matter how vital was the nature of that project. The South is a land housing a multitude of ethnicities who disparagingly have their different set of cultural and social values with very slender common ground. The South, by its very tropical nature, provides a hospitable milieu for accumulation of diverse diseases. Positive aspects of independence as they shall form the future of the newly emerging nation shall receive their due analytical weight, as well.*

**KEY WORDS:** *split, corruption, social maladies, ethnicities, cultural and social values, hygienic awareness, newly independent*

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study derives its significance from the fact of addressing one of the sensitive issues current history of the Sudan in particular and the African continent in general. The study shall handle in the coming pages the unwelcoming realities of the emerging South State, which was doused by the merriment of independence as manifested in the military parades and celebrations performed in front of visiting world leaders. Southerners and their authority will wake up next day to face very dismal and depressing reality of a country considered by all standards the most underdeveloped country on earth. Simply it is a nation, in the light of the present realities, largely threatened by disintegration.

It is important to be acquainted with the sad fact that there is still in the jungles of the south a huge segment of population that wander naked while herding their cattle. Southerners, erroneously enough, have developed a kind of unpardonable hatred and revulsion towards their brothers in the North and held them answerable for all the malpractices of the English.

There is, but a very thin hope that the newly forming nation shall enjoy the fruits of independence. Millions of

dollars, the share of the South of the revenues of newly explored oil went to their pockets, failing to invest even the slightest amount of which in the building of their country. Seven different rebel militias operate in the south. In his presidential historical statement in independence celebrations, President Salva Kiir Mayardit said, "The Republic of South Sudan is at the tail end of economic development. The challenges are great but we must begin the task of nation building immediately"

It is essential to address in this respect the post-independence challenges, a thing that has posed a painful headache to both governments. The risks of the consequences in the wake of independence have been clear to domestic and foreign observers alike, that some have suggested proposals to handle the potential perils, including the extension of the transitional period for a few years before elections, while conducting partial elections for the key positions of the "President of the Republic, the President of the Southern Government and the Governors" and the postponement of the elections, legislatures for two or three years, cancel the referendum and be replaced by a confederation system that will give the South the right to establish a full sovereign State

linked with the North in a vertical relationship that shall not affect its internal affairs, in case the South has opted to break away. Most of the educated elite of South Sudan prefer not to go back to their homelands after they have finished their undergraduate or postgraduate courses. They stay either in the Western World or in the North where they enjoy the services and facilities missing in the South. It is true that they have entered long wars with the South, however, these wars were financed and directed by foreign agents and the Southerners had their lot of the dollars that filled their pockets and bank accounts. Lord of wars are rich individuals.

To catch up with the advanced nations of the world, the fledgling State of the South has to accomplish great deeds and withstand enormous challenges as shall be portrayed and analyzed in the subsequent parts.

After exploring in-depth the different views of the experts in political history, journalists and politicians, we would then be in a better position to judge whether the new State shall have a brighter or grim future.

### **HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK**

In a paper presented in Arabic, and published in Sudanese on line, by Professor Faisal Abdul Rahman Ali Taha at The Monday Forum Secretariat at The Sudanese Socio-cultural Center in Abu Dhabi, the presenter gave a lengthy and informative debate about the British Policy in Southern Sudan. The presenter stated that the British policy aimed in general to the closure of the south to curb the tide of Islamic influences: language, religion and dress as these are the immediate modes of culture. More emphatically, he added that it was hoped that the Southerners would develop behind this barrier until they reach the level of the North, but it did not happen until the break of the World War II.

The South isolation continued until 1945 that the Government of Sudan has not taken a solid opinion on the fate of South Sudan, whether to be attached to the North or East Africa. In the first case and as a large minority that was advanced and interconnected must resist the authoritarian behavior, which is still practiced by the Arab of the north, while in the second case, they have to make huge leaps to catch up with the fastest progressing areas of East Africa”.

It is, therefore, clear that the British policy has always viewed South Sudan as a separate entity, largely on ethnic bases. The British administration’s policy toward the South was reformulated in the note sent by the Administrative Secretary Harold McMichael in January 1930 to the then British administrators working in the south and to the heads of government departments. The procedures required to implement this policy as expressed in the note are:

- (A) create a cadre of staff - administrators, clerks and technicians – who do not speak Arabic.
- (B) Reducing the use of Arabic in the south.
- (C) Reducing migration to the south of northern traders and merchants and encourage migration of Syrians and Greeks.
- (D) The use of English as it was difficult to communicate with the local dialect.

In the concluding paragraphs of the memorandum the Administrative Secretary referred to the fact that, although the reduction of the use of Arabic an essential element in Southern politics but its use gradually retreat because it is not the language of the rulers or the ruled. Then he pointed to the need to fight the perception among southerners that Arabic is the official language.

Even the Juba conference in June 1947 I did not find what predicts the existence of overlapping and political interaction between the North and South. They said that the south had been divided amongst Christian missionaries and was under the influence of these Christian groups , and that any intervention of Islamic missionaries could provoke these Christian societies.

The Graduate Congress did not ignore the South. In a memorandum submitted to the Government by its Chairman President Ahmed Ibrahim, calling for the following demands in relation to the south:

A - abolition of laws on the closed areas and lift of the barriers and borders for trade and movement of the Sudanese and their movements within the borders of Sudan.

B - The abolition of subsidies that the government offer to schools of the missionaries and the unification of the curricula in schools in the north and south schools.

Who closely studies the British documents, the most important justifications for the British policy in the South was to protect the South from the exploitation of southerners by northerners and northern slave traders. For example, said Alexander Kadoqan Britain’s representative in the Security Council in 1947 that the administrative distinctions posed by the British administration in the past between the South and the rest of the country dictated by the humanitarian imperatives to protect the primitive , unarmed people of primitive unarmed people not to be exploited by their brothers, who are comparatively most advanced. On the occasion of the conference wrote Abdullah Khalil Secretary General of the Umma Party to the Administrative Secretary asking for precise clarification of the meaning of the word «Sudan», and asked to explain in a convincing manner to link the north and south, and in order for the man in the street to identify the geographical boundaries of their country.

### **JUBA CONFERENCE**

To explore the viewpoints of Southerners and British administrators working in the South, the recommendations of the Sudan Administration Conference were presented on a conference held in Juba on June 12, 1947. The conference was attended by seventeen Southerners selected by the directors of the Equatorial and Upper Nile, as representatives of some of the tribes of the south and the educated class of the southern Sudanese., amongst those from the South had been Clement Amburo , and Philemon Majok, Hassan Fartak, and James Tambura, basil and Cher, and Olak Lado, and Booth, Dio, and Sersro Aero. Participated in the Conference of the From the North Shanqeeti Mohammed Saleh, Ibrahim Badri, Hassan Ahmed Osman (Al-Kad), and Saror Ramly and, Habib Abdullah.

The powers of the Juba conference has been defined in the following points:

- (A) To consider the recommendations of the Administration Conference on Sudan in the south .
- (B) Consider whether it is right for the South to be represented in the Legislative Assembly proposed.
- (C) Consider the introduction of safeguards in the law to ensure that the Legislative Assembly of Southern Sudan shall guarantee that the differences in language, race, traditions, customs and aspirations as regards Southern Sudan shall not impede the political and social progress of the South.
- (D) To consider establishing a Consultative council for South Sudan to handle the affairs of the South, and that South deputies for Legislative Assembly to be elected from among its members.

(E) To consider the recommendations of the Administration Conference on the Standardization of Sudan's policy of education and teaching the Arabic language and the abolition of trade license for the year 1928 and improve transportation , standardizing personnel and encourage the movement of staff between the north and south. In his speech to the Congress Robertson pointed out that the policy of the government in 1945 was designed to upgrade the South economically and educationally to become self-reliant in the future , whether in the end they decided to join northern Sudan or East Africa, in whole or in part. But he added that the economic developments and education that have occurred in the south since 1945 necessitated that the South is more heading to the north and not to Uganda or Congo, which entailed re-formulation of government policy for southern Sudan to be as follows: «The people of Southern Sudan are characterized of being African and negro. And thus ensure the preparation through the educational and economic developments to assume positions and play roles the Sudan of future as equals to their brethrens in the North socially and economically ».

It was clear from the historical review that the British policy towards South Sudan was inconsistent and was desperately active to isolate it even in the long run. The question of the South Sudan has always been there staring in the face any new regime that takes over power in the country. The referendum has shown a powerful indicator that 99% supported the secession.

## **THE STATE OF SOUTH SUDAN , A FUTURE LADEN WITH DANGER**

The ninth of July 2011 witnessed the born of the new South Sudan and crept to the light as a new geopolitical entity that carved out of the Sudan almost 620 thousand square kilometers. This miserable reality accounts for the sole fact of the State's inability to attain reasonable rates of economic development sufficient to extricate people out of poverty, underdevelopment and to satisfy even their very basic needs.

Border problems are the most critical of all, on top of which is the disputed area of Abyei, Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile area. Now, we shall turn to consider the basic elements of the paper in more details.

## **SECURITY CHALLENGES**

In an interview by Gazeera Satellite Channel Professor Tayeb Zain Al-Aabdin cited a number of key security challenges, posing threats to the stability of both the North and the South, alike. Which they depend on in watering cattle and herds all the rainy season.

One of the grim images drawn in this paper which are likely to take place in the North where the signs of it have already started to loom, is that insecurity and armed robbery may boost in the areas of tension (Darfur , South Kordufan and Blue Nile).

Another repercussion as originating from the secession is the increase of political unrest in the territories of Northern Sudan in their pursuance of more decentralized governance and sharing of wealth with the center and in protest of the government failure to handle effectively certain issues such as the implementation of the East agreement and resettlement of the Manaseer folk whose villages, dwellings and farms have been affected by the construction. An increase in international pressure on Khartoum is also possible particularly in connection with human rights issues to force the government to respond to the demands of the people of

Darfur, Southern Kordufan and Blue Nile or else the system of rule shall be changed.

As for the South, after the referendum was over and secession has become a solid fact of life , the traditional Northern foe shall disappear and that as a result many observers fear fractures in the newly split State of the South. Failing to do so shall mean a relapse, which will be followed by political turmoil and social unrest as the Southerners have started to cherish high hope and now have awakened to discover they have been chasing the mirage.

Corruption as both a social and political phenomenon is one of the hectic ills that the Government of the South Sudan has to stand so strongly in its face. Words of General Gration, the US administration's special envoy to Sudan depicted the future of the South perfectly well, "If the south votes to break away, as General Gration believes it will, the question is whether the north will let it go without a fight. He added so emphatically, "The United States must not only head off a war, General Gration said, but will also have to pour in resources to help southern Sudan build its government and economy by July 2011, when independence would take effect. We sure don't want a failed state or a country at war."

Abyei, and its effect on the future politics of the two countries:

Abyei, a land of 10,000 square kilometers in the heart of Sudan is of very important strategic position and symbolic significance to both northern and southern Sudanese. Ethnic tensions and the rush for oil reserves are an alert of a frightening confrontation in Abyei, and adjoining borderline areas between northern and southern Sudan. Dajo people now scattered in Darfur and other parts of Kordofan and Blue Nile provinces were all parts of northern Sudan. A substantial number of the local ethnic Dinka Ngok, who were one day populated the area, have also deserted the place and moved into Khartoum in search for better life and escape death, with the effect swelling the numbers of the slum-dwelling residents of the shantytowns surrounding Khartoum.

The Permanent Court of Arbitration based in The Hague, Netherlands, gave the Misseriya tribesmen grazing rights in Abyei together with the Dinka Ngok pastoral peoples. The settled Dinka Ngok people also have grazing rights according to the 2004 Protocol on the Resolution of the Abyei Conflict in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the Sudanese government headed by President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir's National Congress Party (NCP) in 2005. Under the terms of the CPA, the people of Abyei are to decide in a "popular consultation" whether the region is to remain administratively part of northern Sudan or whether it is to become part of southern Sudan. The inhabitants of these areas are administratively governed as integral parts of northern Sudan, however, their political loyalties lie with their kith and kin in southern Sudan and with the SPLM.

## **SPLINTER-GROUPS**

Security, social and political are intertwined issues. The pessimistic reports attributed their grim situation to the separatist legions on top of which are the splinter groups.

A few months before the declaration of independence, the government of the South appeared so fragile in the face of the rebellion groups, the armed ones particularly. In 1956, three months ahead of the independence the Sudan government found itself facing an armed uprising in the South. Jeffrey Kaye, of Global Health Watch, reports from Southern Sudan,

says “On the banks of the Nile River in South Sudan, entrepreneurs pump water to fill up tankers. One of the unhygienic things that people suffer in both the North and South is the problem of water. It is a very sad fact to say Sudan has the largest resource of fresh potable water, but people are thirsty and drinking polluted water. The effect of that is that people develop water-related problems such as diarrhea and all types of abdominal disorders.

In South Sudan health care system, such as it is here, is barely functioning. Inpatients here, most suffering from malaria, malnutrition, respiratory infections and diarrhea, often share beds or sleep on the floor.” De describes the case of a citizen woman who walked all the way to the hospital barefoot from her village 50 miles away, carrying her 3-year-old son suffering from convulsions brought on by cerebral malaria.

Jeffrey further reflects on the ailing health situation and provides a more documented facts by drawing on authoritative sources “South Sudan’s dire health conditions are reflected in a recent United Nations compilation of what it calls ‘scary statistics.’ Most people have no access to safe drinking water or sanitation. A 15-year-old girl is more likely to die in childbirth than finish school.”

Katie Morris is a program manager for Catholic Relief Services, which, among other projects, provides support for 43 health facilities in Southern Sudan She says “Program Manager, Catholic Relief Services: If you look at it by the numbers, it paints quite a grim picture. Simply, local doctors and nurses know their folk and environment and are better able to put with their harsh surrounding “Over 60 percent of the health facilities in Southern Sudan are supported financially and in some cases operationally by international or national non-governmental organizations. Now, officials and health workers are combating preventable diseases with more basic steps: education, better nutrition, and simple drugs.

The worst effect of the civil war in southern Sudan was so strongly felt on the children, who—after witnessing so many atrocities—now have very limited access to quality education. The majority of children in southern Sudan do not even attend primary school. However, the people of southern Sudan are committed to rebuilding their communities and supporting their children’s education.

Construction of schools and training institutes is closely linked with security and stability. Again, according to the UN, some 90% of southern Sudan’s population is estimated to live on less than \$1 a day. Earlier this week, a new report found that fewer than 400 girls make it to the last grade of secondary school and only 8% of women are literate.

Therefore, this is the reality of the new Split country of South Sudan.

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