

Abstract:

As the people of Southern Sudan await the Referendum scheduled to be carried out on 9ili , January 2011, there are calls for separation of Southern Sudan from the North. There have been five years of relative peace, accompanied by sporadic violence from various militia and armed groups. Some believe that these militia were funded by Khartoum to disrupt peace, while others believe that it is a result of cattle rustling due to scarce resources and an injured economy that leaves few means of earning a living. The International community has had a large presence in Southern Sudan, from peace keepers in key areas to relief agencies providing food, non food items and development training to the citizens of Southern Sudan. The government of Southern Sudan has appealed to the International community to be ready to provide basic necessities for large numbers of Southern Sudanese returning to the South from the North. The influx is already high in Abyei, Unity State and Northern Bahar EI Ghazal, which border the North. So far, the government of Southern Sudan has successfully covered two major hurdles in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, that is to complete a census, albeit one with disputed results and to carry out a nationwide election which observers deemed to be below international standards. This period of peace was purchased, so to speak by the signing of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement in January 2005 at Naivasha lodge in Kenya. The document was signed between the Khartoum government represented by Ali Osman Taha, and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army was represented by General Salva Kiir Mayardit, the current president of Southern Sudan and first vice president of all of Sudan. The Peace Agreement was brokered by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, through its chief mediator, Major General Lazarus Sumbeiywo. Major Sumbeiywo was handpicked by the former President of Kenya Daniel Arap Moi to lead the initiative. The key question asked in this study is why did IGAD succeed where others had repeatedly been unable to broker a similar Agreement? Since IGAD was a regional organization responding to a long standing African conflict, and which was using mediation as a means to respond, the study endeavors to explore the conflict management role of IGAD, while comparing it with previous initiatives that came about to ameliorate the same conflict. This initiative also took place in the post cold war era and in a multi polar environment and this aspect is not lost on the study. The investigation was carried out through literature review of primary data, secondary data and one on one interviews and focus group discussions. The study concludes that IGAD succeeded because a ripe moment had been reached, which brought the parties to the table and allowed for various compromises on long standing views to enable the Agreement to be signed. Furthermore, the end of the cold war saw a decline in strategic interest of powerful countries in Africa leading to regional groupings that gave them greater collective influence and power. Such regional groups are better able to gauge and understand underlying regional factors in a conflict and therefore identify appropriate ripe moments. At the same time, the United Nations recognized that it needed to cooperate with regional organizations and gave them the Mandate to mediate conflicts. The emergence of a new brand of Terrorism after the September n' 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in the US saw a new direction in superpower interest in security and Sudan was considered a potential breeding ground for terrorists. These regional organizations also faced funding problems and a lack of proper hegemony or power structure to backstop the processes. When such organizations engage in mediating a conflict that has become internationalized, and the conflict involves the security of a superpower, combined with elements of high levels of natural resources, then funds and technical support can often be found as was the case with the establishment with a secretariat

under the auspices of IGAD for the purpose of mediating the Sudan conflict. The moment was ripe for the conflict to be mediated there was funding and technical support from superpowers, and the international community at large that backstopped any agreements that moved towards peace for Sudan. The regional partners provided further pressure to the parties to the agreement and had a sincere interest in the end of the conflict, also because of pressures on security due to influx of small arms and growing numbers of refugees and asylum seekers. The IGAD mediators also had the good fortune of being able to study previous endeavors and learn from them. They were also able to mediate on issues as well as values, which had previously not been possible.