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**Developing Alternatives: Citizens Perspectives on Causes and the
Ramifications of The 2003 Conflict in Darfur**



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Developing Alternatives: Citizens Perspectives on Causes and the Ramifications of The 2003 Conflict in Darfur

David Suaka Yaro,

Department of Mathematics & ICT Education, CKT-UTAS, Navrongo,

Email: dyaro@cktutas.edu.gh / davidsuaka37@gmail.com

Longi Felix Y.T.,

Faculty of Communications and Cultural Studies, UDS, Tamale

Email: longifel@yahoo.com

Abstract

This manuscript provides an alternative examination of the causes and the ramifications of the conflict in Darfur. The findings revealed the causes of the conflict to be religion, racial segregation, resources, geographical factors, the influx of weapons etc. and the ramifications are Genocide/Killing, Starvation, Rape, Fear and insecurity, Destruction of Property etc. The parties involved are Government forces, Janjaweed, USA, China Libya, Egypt etc. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 26 respondents which include, Diplomats, Civil Servants, Students and refugees. The instrument used for data collection was a semi-structured interview guide. It was conducted within the framework of 'identity politics'. The recommendation to the Sudanese Government is that the government has the following role to play: Protection of the civilian population by the Sudanese government. This can be done by: Publishing and disseminating orders eliminating the targeting of inhabitants, properties and indiscriminate attacks, and enforcement of orders prohibiting the targeting of civilians and civilian property and indiscriminate attacks. Publicise and enforce a policy that embraces zero tolerance for violence against women. Enforcement of UN/ AU Resolutions: The Security Council veto on invasive military flights must be enforced. The AU and NATO should agree on enforcement processes to be applied if Khartoum violates the injunction in United Nation Security Council Resolution 1591 and National Reconciliation: There should be reconciliation that comprises of prosecution of perpetrators of atrocities, the safe return of villagers to their villages and violence compensation.

KEYWORDS: *Central Africa, Sudan, Darfur, Janjaweed militia, Racial segregation*

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

An old saying goes as Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. The pressure for democratisation leads to desperate bids to remain in power; often by fomenting ethnic tension (Kaldor, 2001). African leaders often disenfranchise their opponents by eroding the basic democratic principles in their bid to consolidate themselves in power. The consequence of their actions becomes terrible. In most cases, it is the civilians who bear the brunt of such reprehensible acts apart from the fact that they, by their actions, knowingly or unknowingly put their country into an economic quagmire. Such is the misfortune of Darfur.

The Republic of Sudan is the largest country in Africa, home to deserts, mountains, swamps and rainforests. The country is approximately one fourth the size of the United States with a population of 39 million people. Until 1916, Darfur was an autonomous British colony under Kitchener Herbert. It was later invaded and incorporated into Sudan. Darfur is divided into three states administratively: North, East and South. It is also roughly one-third of the landmass of about 196,555 km squared (75,890 miles square) is inhabited by over six million people. North Darfur is characterised by desert conditions. The region experienced drought and famine since the 1970s. The inhabitants are mostly nomadic, who occasionally migrate in search of water and grazing land in the South (Zahorik, 2012, Salih, 2005).

The United Nation says the worse humanitarian crisis is unfolding in Sudan West Region of Darfur. The ethnic and tribal conflict in Darfur began in February 2003. One side of the armed conflict is made up of Sudan's military and the Janjaweed militia while the other side comprises the rebel movements. Janjaweed militias attack the black African's ethnic groups from which the rebels drew supports. The United Nations states that the conflict led to many as 450,000 people dead from violence, starvation and diseases. It left Some two and half million (2.5 million) people displaced. The precarious situation has reached an alarming height that the United States government describes it as 'genocide'. The system of terror is been spread to other neighbouring countries including Chad, and the Central African Republic.

The African Mission in Sudan (AMIS) is saddled with logistical, capacity and financial difficulties that it is impotent to contain the situation on the ground. Humanitarian Agencies are also not able to distribute basic aids such as food, medicine and cloth due to continuous rebel invasions on them, hence, compounding the starvation and deaths situation in the Darfur Region. Al- Bashir, the president of Sudan, has vehemently rejected the good effort of the United Nations to send UN forces to contain the situation describing the effort as 'colonization'. Nonetheless, plans are up to send UN and AU Peacekeeping Mission forces to the region, but, for how long should the darfurians continue to suffer torture until their 'saviour' arrives? It is against this background that the researcher has decided to explore the causes and the ramifications of the conflict. The study is guided by the following research questions: What are the causes of the Darfur conflict? Who are the parties involved in the conflict? What role has the African Union played in the conflict? What destruction has the conflict caused to the Darfur Region?

LITERATURE REVIEW

What are the major debates that are made on the conflict in Sudan? Does this conflict have any particular characteristics from the wars that we have witnessed in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda, Somalia, Ivory Coast, Liberia and all other war-torn areas that history has witnessed? There is no way that this could be done without a review of the literature. This review is both thematic and empirical. The thematic review has considered most of the theories propounded about the wars and conflicts. Empirical evidence discusses most of the practical experiences the world has witnessed about wars and conflicts. This study reviews the literature on the Clash of Civilisation and the Causes of the Darfur Conflict.

Theoretical framework

The manuscript is conducted within the framework of 'identity politics. Identity politics is about claiming state power through mobilisation of ethnic, religious, racial etc. The common feature is how labels are used for political claims, whether we talk of intra or inter-ethnic conflict anywhere, these conflicts are ethnic conflicts (Kaldor, 2001).

Some writers insist that ethnicity is culturally base rather than blood-based, the term 'ethnos' has a racial undertone (Kaldor, 2001). In the same amethyst, no racial basis of ethnic claims, which remains that these tags tend to be treated as something one's DNA (born with) and cannot change, neither can it be acquired through conversion or assimilation (Kaldor, 2004). The term refers to the claim to state power. Religious revivals or renewed interests of the church are simply a response to the stress of globalization. Campaigns politically to promote culture or religion may result in power demand. However, identity politics is not about such (Fukuyama, 2017 and Kaldor, 2004).

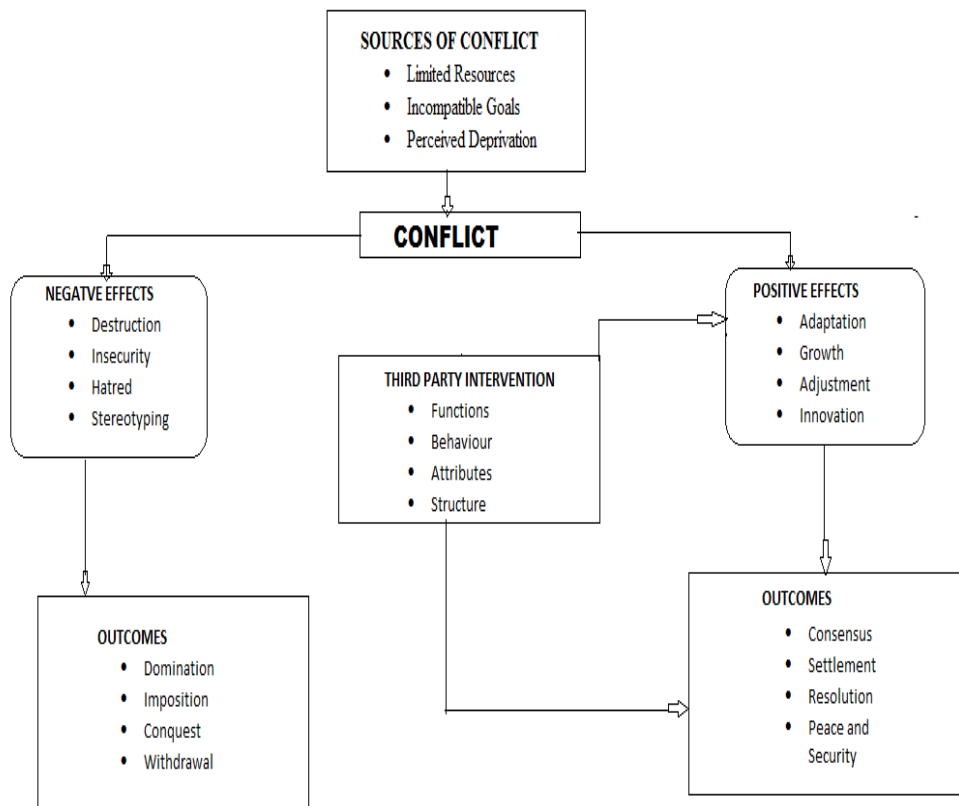
The politics of identity is constructed as the politics of ideas. The ideas are about looking forward to developments. Consequently, religious struggles in Western Europe in the nineteenth century were about freeing individuals from oppression. On the other hand, identity politics lean towards fragmented, looking backwards and select. They acquire meaning from insecurity and fear of remarkable antagonists. It comprises emotional discernment against those who categorised differently. At a smidgen, it leads to the inhabitant's genocide or expulsion (Kaldor, 2004).

This new identity politics bounded out of the fragmentation or destruction of new state structure i.e. the centralized authoritarian state e.g., the collapse of communism in 1989. In most post-colonial states, the ruling parties opened up politics to claims based on tribe or clan or linguistic group or religion (Kaldor, 2004).

Such was the situation that surfaced in Sudan. The dismissal of Turabi from his position as the speaker of the National Assembly and his arrest marked the beginning of the conflict. It resulted in a regional and ethnic dimension. Darfur and Kordofan Westerners went into opposition while most of the security officers and riverine Arabs stayed in government.

To consolidate himself in power, the ruling party adopted identity politics with the view to disqualify Turabi from the competitive race. The Nimirie's Military Solicit Government, for instance, suspended the constitution, banned all political parties, and created the Sudanese Socialists, which is a one-party state that ruled Union until 1985. Though it is too early to conclude, previous experiences could be obtained from Bosnia – Herzegovina to give us the gist of what could be the cause of the conflict in Sudan.

Conceptual Framework



SOURCE: Author's Construct.

Clash of Civilizations

Global politics is getting into a new chapter, in which the countless divisions among people and the dictating source of international conflict will be cultural. The highest cultural groupings of humankind are distinguished from others through tradition, history, religion, and language. These disunions are deep and growing insignificance. The culpability lines of civilization are the bone of

contention of the future (Huntington, 2007, Huntington, 1996). The conflict in Darfur has, among other factors, been caused by differences in culture as explained in Huntington's suppositions.

CAUSES OF THE DARFUR CONFLICT

Islamization of the Darfur Region

The people of Darfur are homogenously Sunni Muslims. Laws are written in Islamic and following Sharia laws. Tayeb Ibrahim 'Sikha' is quoted as saying: '*Citizenship (in Sudan) is funded on Islamic faith, not a race*'. Daju, Tujur and Wadai which the prehistoric states of (1500- 1650 AD) never saw Islam. These states are referred to as 'Pre – Historic' Ancient Sudan (O'Fahey, 1980). The Keira State of Darfur adopted Islam between the 17th and 18th century which contributed to the Islamisation of the state (Salih, 2005). For some time Islam and traditional rituals and believers co-existed. Islamisation of the Darfur Region took the form of acculturation of the Darfurians to the Arabic culture of the Muslim hinterland. Christianity was introduced mostly in Southern Sudan during the colonial period. The formation of the PDF had a hidden agenda of cutting off the Christian community. The Jihad was equally directed at the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) who made one of their preconditions for peace during the negotiations to be abolishing of Sharia law. The Popular Defence force (PDF) were active against dissidents of Northern Sudan including regions where the greater population were Muslim but not Arabs, e.g. the Numba mountains, Kordofan, Darfur, and eastern region (Salih, 2005).

The declaration of jihad to some extent is more than simply the invocation of an Islamic tradition. This has links with the National Islamic Front (NIF), whose followers are mostly those who are Arabic ethnic groups, which means that the Arabic character has been superimposed on African society to validate the domination of what is observed as the natural domain of Islamic indoctrination (Salih, 2005).

The idea of Islamisation of the Darfur region was spearheaded by Colonel Muammar Gaddafi of Libya. He dreamt of creating an Arab belt across the entire Sahelian region. He, therefore, accommodated refugees from the Sahelian Arabic ethnic groups that stretched from the Sudanese Ansar. They were trained and recruited into an Islamic Legion to spearhead his war in Chad. The militia group used Darfur as a settlement ground and flooded the place with arms and brought an ideology of Arab supremacist in the area. In retaliation, the Fur Organised the Village Defence Group and crashed it in the first Darfurians civil war. By the mid-1990s, the idea of militant Islam in Sudan which got to the highest level, was, therefore, weakened by internal contradictions and regional antagonism (de Waal, 2005).

The people of Islam alliance shielded inhabitants of Darfur from the historic processes of a violent attack of the people of Sudan borders by the Sudanese state and when that shield was lifted, war and massacre followed. On several occasions, the issue of Islamisation had sparked a fire in the

Darfur Region. The Arab government in Khartoum's effort to impose Islamic law, religion and culture on all of Sudan further alienated largely Christian and amidst South (U N, 2007).

Women conspicuousness in the public has become an issue in politics. To the NIF fundamentalists, the political meaning of women dressed code in the Islamic fashion is the visibility of faith. In November 1991, Khartoum issued a judgement that needs women to dress in an Islamic acceptable outfit in all the state offices and other general institutions. There were directives from the civil Aviation Authority banning female employees who did not comply with the Islamic dress code from entering the airport because the airport represents the image of Sudan to outsiders. Female students were required to wear Islamic dress. In line with the NIF's vision of Islamic society, Khartoum passed a law of sexual segregation in public (Salih, 2005).

Parliament decreed on 22 October 1996 that:

Men and women must not share the same seat on public transport and men should not watch women playing sports. Sportswomen are forbidden to wear sexually revealing clothes or clothes which expose their body. Co-education was banned in schools. Women and men must sit apart in class, public gatherings, theatres, cinemas etc. Women must not sit next to a non-close male relative, drivers on public transport or in private cars may not go shopping at night without the company of their husbands or close male relatives.

Men must have good reasons for walking along streets leading to girls' schools or women's gathering places.

ROLE OF NATIONS

Chad

The role of Chad in the Darfur conflict is one of the contributory factors. President Idriss Deby of Chad is a Zaghawa, a tribe also found in both countries. Severe drought and famine that hit the Chad region forced the Chadians to migrate to the Darfur region in the early 1990s. Most of the Janjaweed militias are of Chadian origin (Kagwanja & Mutahi, 2007). A Section of the Zaghawa and Masalit ethnic groups who are engaged in the Janjaweed militia by Khartoum has relatives across Chad – Sudan border. This has complicated the conflict. Following Idriss Deby's inability to make a political settlement in the Darfur conflict, Khartoum supported anti-Deby forces operating in Darfur (International Crisis Group, 2004). After the failed coup in N' N'djamena in May 2004, Khartoum accommodated and reinforced Deby's Zaghawa enemies in camps in Darfur where they planned to take over his government. Currently, three thousand (3,000) rebels made up of Chadians under the headship of Adlef Alsimah Gabriel are said to be working near Zalinier with the support of the Sudanese government. In response, Deby's government recruited fighters among the Darfur rebels to counteract any action by these rebels. (International Crisis Group, 2004).

It is on record that Deby came to power with the massive support of the Zaghawa from both countries. The crisis in Sudan is a regional conflict within the sub-region of which Chad is a part.

Both Sudan and Chad are vigorously sponsoring competing militia groups on their side of the border (Power and Interest News Report, 2006). The hostility of the two countries can be dated back to the 1970s when the regions' Arab population was actively involved in president Gaddafi's ideology of creating an Arab belt within the Sub-region. Libya-sponsored Sudanese militia in the war with Chad were harboured in the Darfur Region. Darfur, therefore, served as a fertile ground for training Chad's rebels.

In May 2006, the SLA and JEM made their base in Eastern Chad to recruit militia from the camps of Sudanese refugees. In retaliation, Khartoum stepped up air bombings in the North West Darfur and Chad, targeting civilians and refugees (Human Right Watch 2007).

Libya

Libya accommodated refugees from Sahelian Arab groups that stretched from the Sudanese Ansar to Tuareg rebels from Mali. Sudanese Ansars are factions of the Mahdi in exile as opposed to the Nigerian government. Gaddafi aimed at creating an 'Arab Belt' across the entire Sahel. In 1986, in agreement with Prime Minister Sadiq el Mahdi, Libyan sponsored militia used Darfur as a hindmost ground, occupied Darfur with weapons and brought an Arab ideology of supremacy. The Defence Group of Fur retaliated and that brought the Darfurian civil war in 1989. Libya has also worked with Khartoum to resist a large AMIS force and a stronger mandate. Sudan received the political backing of compassionate Arab AU member states, Egypt and Libya (Kagwanja & Mutahi 2007).

Geo-Politics of Sudan

The Environmentalist, Wangari Maathai, 2004 Nobel Peace Prize winner. Summarises the causes of the conflict in the following words:

The root of the Darfur conflict is a struggle over controlling an environment that can no longer support all the people who must live in it (Sudan Watch, 2006).

North Darfur is characterized by desert conditions. The region has seen drought and famine since the 1970s. The inhabitants are mostly nomadic people who occasionally migrate in search of water and grazing land in the South (Salih, 2005). Nomadic North migrants move to the South in search of grazing land. In addition to the complication of the state of affairs, is the increased movement of nomadic groups from Chad, Libya and other states. Dangerous living conditions together with the diminishing tolerance resulted in more tension between the natives and the strangers which led to violence with cross-border crises. The influx of small arms from southern Sudan, Chad, Libya, and Eritrea intensified the inter-tribal conflict with the occurrence of tribal militias. Some tribes believe that the government was not able to defend them against other tribes and armed criminal gangs who have more sophisticated weapons, which led several nomadic tribes to form their

defence groups. The region became an open market for arms, attracting many arms dealers to traffic in all kinds of weapons such as heavy, light, small arms, RPG rocket launchers and including armoured vehicles (Julian, 2007).

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative method and procedures were used to conduct the study. This section presents the profile of respondents and the methodological approach applied.

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Participant No 1: Refugee	Participant No 14: Civil Servant
Participant No 2: Refugee	Participant No 15: Lawyer
Participant No 3: Refugee	Participant No 16: Student
Participant No 4: Refugee	Participant No 17: Lecturer
Participant No 5: Refugee	Participant No 18: Refugee
Participant No 6: Refugee	Participant No 19: Refugee
Participant No 7: Refugee	Participant No 20: Refugee
Participant No 8: Refugee	Participant No 21: Refugee
Participant No 9: Darfurian based in USA	Participant No 22: Refugee
Participant No 10: Student	Participant No 23: Refugee
Participant No 11: University Student	Participant No 24: Refugee
Participant No 12: Political Science Student	Participant No 25: Diplomat
Participant No 13: Teacher and Darfurian	Participant No 26: Darfurian

SOURCE: Author's Construct

The researcher used a qualitative approach and supplemented by a quantitative approach (Silverman, 2000:88-91; Patton, 2002:4) preliminary data as a basis for collecting and interpreting the primary qualitative data. The study focuses on the meanings and understandings of the participants interviewed in their naturally occurring situations.

The research work used the explanatory case strategy (Yin, 1994:13; Punch, 2002:53). The case-study area is the Darfur Region. The case study is consistent with the qualitative perspective outlined and implements the qualitative approach and its internal logic (Babbie, 2001:339).

The study took place among Sudanese nationals residing in South Africa especially in Pretoria. The Sudanese Consulate and Diplomatic Personnel also participated. Human Rights Activists, United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Institutions and African Union officials, lecturers, Political Science students and many stakeholders contributed immensely to the research. Also, opinions among several American citizens and others were considered. This was tape-recorded and videotaped in the United States of America and handed over to the researcher for the purpose of the study.

The researcher selected respondents by the use of purposive sampling. All respondents were highly trained, experienced, educated and recognized experts in their own fields (Shanteau et al., 2002). Through purposive sampling, the researcher was able to focus on participants whose data information illuminated the research, constituted a critical mass and answered the semi-structured research questions of the study (Patton, 2002: 230). Twenty-six participants were interviewed. They were made up of ten (10) males and sixteen (16) females, fifteen were blacks and eleven were white. The age of the interviewees ranged from 18 to 62 and the education from standard six to doctorate level. The researcher established that all the twenty-six participants were either victim of the conflict or belonged to organisations directly involved in promoting peace in Darfur.

Several methods and instruments and recording processes were used in the data collection process. The researcher used semi-structured interview questions. A tape-recording instrumentation device was utilized with the permission of the interviewee. The researcher was the moderating human instrument rather than any other instrument (Creswell, 1994:145; Punch, 2002: 57).

The interview was done through one-on-one interviews, telephone interviews and it was conducted in offices and homes during working hours and outside working hours. Prior to the interview, the researcher first called the respondents to book appointments ahead of time. The researcher used a tape recording instrument as well as note-taking. Both overt and covert observations were used (Punch, 2002:58).

Ethical issues observed are voluntary participation, the researcher did not compel anybody to divulge any information without the person's consent. Participants contributed willingly and wholeheartedly. They were, therefore made to know the purpose of the research and agreed to do so. The participant's confidentiality and protection of their identities, places of work were maintained. This was handled independently from likely attempts by concerned factions to

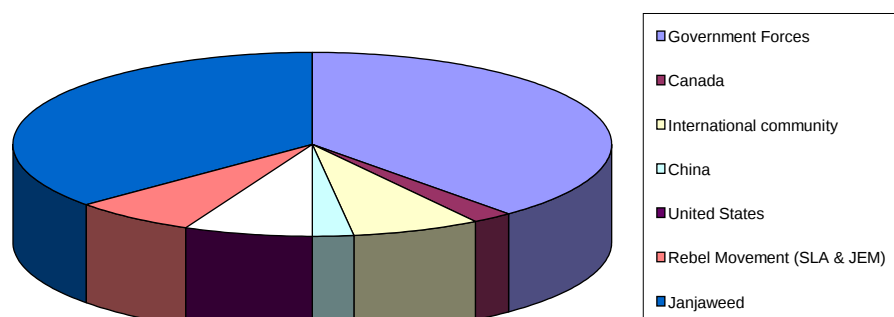
compromise the results. No harm to participants, the researcher ensured that participants base their participation on the understanding of the risks involved; (Babbie, 2001:468). Participants have the right to withdraw from Participating in the research but not the right to edit or disapprove the final manuscript in as far as their identities and organizations have not been exposed.

Data were coded using open coding, axial coding and selective coding after that and analysed. Data from primary and secondary sources of evidence were collected, transcribed and interpreted using several strategies (Glatthorn, 1998). Data was interpreted after transcribing the interviews reading through the interviews to identify categories of responses, testing the categories by classifying responses soon after the interviews and deciding which data remains to provide the internal focus of the study. Interpreted data were reported and displayed using narrative text, tables, charts and figures to clarify the main direction of the analysis.

Discussions of the Results

The purpose of this section of the manuscript is to explore and analyse the ideas and facts obtained from the data. The theoretical framework, the conceptual framework, the scope and research questions of the study are used to organize, present and discuss the data. The researcher presented with a better opportunity to examine the conceptual coherence of the study.

Chart 1 Parties involved in the Conflict



SOURCE: Author's Construct

The chart above shows the response of participants concerning the key parties responsible for the atrocities in Darfur. Each segment of the chart has been determined firstly, by the number of participants who stated each element. Second, mentioned placed by participants on the answer to the question and thirdly, by the consequence weighed in order of the responses. 38% of the participants said that the government forces are the main parties responsible for the conflict in Darfur. In most cases, the expressions ‘the men in green uniform’ or ‘the Askars’ who; judging from the context, are believed to be government forces. Contrary to the review of literature, the Janjaweed placed second and constituting 36.4 % of our participants. The rebel militias (SLM & JEM) were mentioned in passing by only three participants constituting 2% in equal rating with USA and the International Community. China and Canada could not escape the blame for the crisis. They were both rated 2% by our participants. To the utmost surprise of the researcher, none of the participants mentioned any involvement of Gadhafi Libya. The researcher observed that there are other ‘fake individuals’ who have taken advantage of the situation to call themselves militiamen just to achieve their diabolical objectives. Although Kagwanja & Mutahi 2007 stated that Libya has also worked with Khartoum to resist a large AMIS force and a stronger mandate. Sudan has vigorously implored and received the political support of Arab AU member states i.e. Libya and Egypt.

In the light of the above discussions and the conclusions derived from the review of literature, the researcher observed the following as being the causes of the Darfur crisis.

Racial Segregation

Identity problem, being racial, tribal, ethnic, religious etc. cannot disappear from African conflicts. President Mugabe claims that nobody has the right to intervene in African affairs. This is echoed by Moammar Gadhafi who said, ‘Africa is for the Africans’. Al- Bashir also said that foreign interference in his country amounts to ‘colonialism’. Racial conflict cannot be ruled out even though we are in the same country and continent. Sudan has two main racial groups: Indigenous ‘Africans’ and the ‘Arabs’ (Participant No: 1 &16). The researcher found out that the Arabs maintain supremacy ideology over the African population (Participant No: 16) to the extent that the Arabs impose their culture on the original Africans (Participant No: 18). The conflict is, therefore, a battle of Arabs in the North versus Africans in both South and North. (Participant No: 18). A 10-year pupil who visited Darfur was quick to note that the Darfur region (home of the Africans) was greatly marginalized. They lack socio-economic infrastructure such as roads, health centres, electricity, schools etc. (Participant No: 10). As if that was not enough, the Africans were more often than not being oppressed. (Participant No: 15). The Janjaweed who are mostly of Arab origin still commit atrocities against the African population and yet receive applauds and backing from the Sudanese government and other government-allied companies and countries due to their selfish interest. (Participant No: 2 & 9). The war can easily be described as an ethnic cleansing and racial conflict. A unanimous participant said: *The deep causes of the rebellion lie in the feeling of*

superiority and cultural elitism of the 'Arab', and of resentment and perceived oppression and neglect on the part of the Africans'

Religion

Another identity-related cause of the conflict is religion. The Muslim North constantly identified with the inhabitants of the province, African peasants and Arab nomadic tribes that has persisted on and off since 1955. Darfur ethnic groups, predominantly the African tribes, constitute the greater proportion (between 40 and 60%) of the northern troops. They are the people fighting against the southern insurgencies between 1955 and 1972. Again between 1983 and the present days. Islamic identity showed to be a resilient identity element than cultural and racial pedigrees. U N reports (2007), confirmed that the Arab government in Khartoum's effort to impose Islamic law, religion and culture on all of Sudan further alienated largely Christian and amidst South.

Resource Conflict

Darfur has enormous natural resources such as oil, natural gas, uranium and gold. Western nations such as France, the USA, Canada, China and Russia are showing interest in such God-given assets. But these countries are rather fueling the conflict by sponsoring the rebels or selling guns to the Sudanese government who use them in killing his people. With oil in mind, the rebels are demanding their share as a condition for peace' (Participant No: 3 & 4). Respondent No: 12 goes deeper to prove that certain companies are funding the crises due to the resources in the country. Wangari Maathai, the Environmentalist, 2004, Nobel Peace Prize winner, said "*The root of the Darfur conflict is a struggle over controlling an environment that can no longer support all the people who must live in it*" (Sudan Watch, 2006).

Geographical factors

North Darfur experiences extreme desert conditions. The demographic and Ecological change has a retrogressive effect on inter-tribal relations where desertification and drought led to crises and often violence over limited resources. In the 1970s and 1980s, the tribal conflicts became more extreme and bloodier, especially among the cattle herders and the farmers who in search of livelihood invaded agricultural land. The intricacy of the situation is the increase in nomadism from Libya, Chad and other parts of Africa. Harsher conditions together with the absence of tolerance resulted in more tension among the natives and the strangers which contributed to the violence with cross-border consequences. Weapons moving from Libya, Chad, Eritrea and southern Sudan intensified the inter-tribal conflict with the occurrence of tribal militias. Pressures from farmers and herders over vanishing grassland and water holes creep up to started the half-

century conflict between the north and South Sudan held at bay by an unjustified 2005 peace accord.

The southern Numba tribes, for instance, have cautioned they could resume the war because Arab nomads who were pushed southwards into their territory by drought, are chopping trees to feed their animals (camels).’ (Julian, 2007).

Land Acquisition

The administrators sourced from the British colonial, enforced the foreign idea of native administration on the African societies, in this sense, the so-called paramount chiefs had authority over particular terrain and its inhabitants, plus the fashionable supremacy to distribute land. Such systems undermine the mutability and tractability of customary land tenure and informal conflict mediation systems. After the demise of colonial rule, national governments continued with the imposing of their authoritarian models. As control over sharing of land altered hands, with increasing armament and the polarisation of ethnic identities, traditional conflicts acquired drastically different dimensions and scale (Participant No: 17). Sheik Hilal observed that:

When the land was plentiful, this was rarely problematic, but rapid using-up of free cultivable land and the degradation of the range meant that land disputes became more common and more bloody.’ (ACAS Bulletin, 2005:7)

The cause of the conflict is the inability of traditional systems for the distribution of resources (land and water) and the mediation of conflict to take place properly.

Power wrangling

Many political parties were created after independence in 1956. The first Party that was created was the UMMA party. The supremacy UMMA party compelled the formation of tough political parties like FRD, the NIF and NCP. Apart from that, Sudan has witnessed the successful overthrow of governments in 1958, 1969 and 1989.

Again, post-independence Darfur has seen the Northern Sudanese rulings that are of Arab origin dominating the government. The political educated elites, being dissatisfied with the dominance, complained of the largest sectarian political parties do not have much care about the people from the Darfur Province. They went to the extent of opting for political independence and therefore decided to retreat from Regional to National Politics. The Front for the Renaissance of Darfur was formed in 1985 but could not win the 1986 elections. The researcher realised that the overthrow of governments and the creation of political parties are done with the hope of developing the marginalised communities. But after securing the seat of government, they rather pursue their selfish interest first and fail woefully. This failure is compounded by a combination of severe

cynical human manipulation and ecological changes. As the ability of local communities to survive with famine and drought deteriorated over the last two decades and the capacity of their traditional systems of conflict mediation over fast weakening resources became incredulous, unscrupulous politicians take benefit of the condition. For example, in 1999, the opposition Westerners later produced ‘the Black Book’ that gives a detailed analysis of how successive governments had marginalised Darfur and Kordofan. This gave birth to the Justice and Equity Movement to fight in Darfur.

Table 2: RAMIFICATIONS OF THE CONFLICT

Effects on the Darfur Region	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Displaced People	10	22%
Genocide/ Killing	20	44%
Looting/ Snatching	06	13%
Starvation	02	04%
Destruction of Property	02	04%
Torture	01	02%
Diseases / sickness	01	02%
Rape	02	04%
Miscarriages	01	02%
Fear and insecurity	01	02%

SOURCE: Author’s Construct

Table 2 represent the views of participants on the issue of various degrees of atrocities that have been committed in the Darfur region. 22% of the participants believed that the Darfur crisis caused the displacement of people. The numbers of deaths are in the majority constituting 44%. Eyewitnesses of such killings describe the barbaric and bizarre manner in which the killings occurred (Participant No: 26). 13% of the respondents spoke of looting and snatching of property from Darfurians. Tied to this was the destruction of property such as buildings, animals, water sources etc. These form 4% of the respondents. Torture and diseases were 2% respectively. Rape was 4 %, miscarriage, which has never been recorded in the literature, was 2% and lastly fear

and insecurity was 2%. The following are identified as some of the major effects of the conflict in Sudan.

Deaths

The researcher noticed that several innocent civilians have died from starvation, diseases and attacks. Some of them were killed in execution-style which is a serious crime in international law. More than forty per cent of the respondents, as illustrated in chart 4.2. attest to the fact that the conflict has been bloody.

However, the researcher is sceptical about the nature in which these killings were reported. For instance, there have been inconsistencies in the figures received. UN estimates say about 450,000 people have died. Most Non-Governmental Organizations especially the Coalition for International Justice estimates from 200, 000 to 400,000. WHO says 70 000 people have died and 10,000 people die each month. Amnesty International says ‘Several thousand people have been killed. The International Crisis Group does not give any figure. To play it safe, they say: ‘The Darfur conflict has transformed drastically in the past years negatively. While fewer deaths were experienced than during the high period of fighting in 2003 – 2004. Estimates are not meant to be exact but when the gaps are so wide and inconsistent, it raises a lot of questions and doubts.

Economy and Business Climate.

The researcher is told from the onset that, firewood and coal have become the only source of employment for the refugees. Businesses have collapsed and many businessmen have had their working capital stolen by the Janjaweed and are now living in refugee camps. The surrounding countries have had their share of the crisis. For instance, since the war started, the Chadian and Sudanese administration have been blaming each other of supporting rebel groups in their respective countries. Workers near the border hardly go for work for fear of being attacked by the Janjaweed. This has affected the Gross Domestic Product of neighbouring countries.

Sexual harassment is the greatest abomination in the history of Sudan. For this reason, women prefer to keep mute for fear that it may cost them their marriages. The Janjaweed's have, therefore, resorted to rape as a weapon of attack. The researcher notices that women are even raped in public as a way of disgracing their families.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION

This study is conducted within the framework of ‘identity politics. Anytime we talk about tribal conflict, the collective mouth is the way we use labels for political claims. The researcher has now travelled beyond the Numba mountains to unravel the crisis in Darfur. The effects are deaths, starvations, famine, rape, lootings, torture bombardments, and many inhuman treatments.

No single recommendation can seamlessly and entirely solve the situation in Darfur, unless the parties themselves agree to lay down weapons and see each other as one, who have a common goal of building ahead of the Sudanese economy. The ruling classes concerned must bear in mind that the province is inhabited by the Arabs and indigenous Africans and they are bounded by blood and intermarriages. Ethnically- driven, weakening will endanger the entire sub- Saharan region and can attract extremists and terrorist organisation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made to alleviate the conflict in Sudan's Darfur region:

African Union: The African Union headquarters’ capabilities must strengthen their information management, command and planning. Rules of engagement that empower the AU to use force to protect civilians and IDPs in threat must be established. The African Mission in Sudan must be strengthened to enable and encourage it to commence all needed processes such as offensive actions against any humanitarian operations, attacks and threats to civilians.

Enforcement of UN/ AU Resolutions: The Security Council veto on invasive military flights must be enforced. The AU and NATO should agree on enforcement processes to be applied if Khartoum violates the injunction in United Nation Security Council Resolution 1591.

Enlargement of Civilian Components of AMIS: the inhabitant constituent of the African Union Mission with political affairs officers, sexual and gender and humanitarian and human rights officers – based violence experts should be broadening. The gender of African Union Forces should be balanced. This will allow effective management of the pervasive sexual and gender-based violence. It will also improve harmonisation and communication between the African Union’s troops, police, the African Union Forces and humanitarian workers whose operations the supposed to safeguard the African Union.

Accountability: there should be Proper accountability of Sudanese soldiers and police through training programs and forthright, public reporting by the African Union of violations of the ceasefire, interruptions in humanitarian aid efforts, and abuses against civilians. All the atrocities committed by the rebel forces must be accounted for by the rebels.

Sudanese Government: The Sudanese government has the following role to play: Protection of the civilian population by the Sudanese government. This can be done by Publishing and disseminating instructions ruling out the aiming at inhabitants, assets and unselective attacks.

Vet all selections to the institutions on human rights grounds, take out Ahmed Haroun, who has been indicted by the ICC, from all posts. Enforce the policy of discrimination against women.

Corporate fully with the ICC and submit two (2) accused subject to arrest warrants. The Government should combine forces with the African Union Mission and the distribution of new UN-AU forces, issuance and advanced visas and approval for vehicles and equipment Must take measures to disarm the Janjaweed's under UN Security Council Resolution 15556, 1654 and 1591; and prevent their further cross- border incursions into Chad.

National Reconciliation: There should be reconciliation that comprises of prosecution of perpetrators of atrocities, the safe return of villagers to their villages and violence compensation.

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