

Postscript on New Developments

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So many new developments happened after the papers that comprise the chapters in this book were submitted for publication. The very controversial issues raised in the book, especially in the section dealing with consequences of referendum vote for secession, became a nightmare in the relations between the Sudan and South Sudan. The unresolved issues stipulated in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) are the very cause of tension and limited war between the Sudan and South Sudan in April 2012. The independence of South Sudan on 9 July 2011 invited a host of complex security relations between the north and the south. The SPLM/A was a national liberation movement, which extended beyond the 1956 boundaries of South Sudan. The CPA was explicit on the southern Sudan alone, but was elusive on Abyei, Blue Nile and the Nuba Mountains. It recommended referendum for the Ngok Dinka and popular consultations as a solution to grievances expressed by the Ingessana and Nuba people. The exercise of popular consultation succeeded in Blue Nile to the disappointment of the NCP regime in Khartoum. Consequently, the process of popular consultations in South Kordofan was marred by irregularities, which resulted in renewed violence. Failure to secure unity of the Sudan compelled the government in Khartoum to declare war on South Kordofan and Blue Nile under the pretext of disarming the SPLA on its territories. This led to the removal of the Governor of Blue Nile using military force. The Sudan went ahead to accuse South Sudan of supporting the SPLA troops in the region. Analysts of north-south relations cannot fail to understand that Khartoum has been attempting to implicate South Sudan in the rebellions in Blue Nile and South Kordofan to justify attacks on oil fields in South Sudan.

Oil production in South Sudan was a security concern for post-referendum Sudan. The bulk of reserves lie in the South Sudan, but the oil is exported in pipelines that run through the territory of Sudan to the oil terminal on the coast of the Red Sea. Several key oil fields lie along the contested north-south border. Another issue of concern is that oil provided as much as 98 per cent of the revenue accruing to the government in Juba. Despite this fact, South Sudan went ahead to close production of oil on its territory. The border areas where oil fields are located remain dangerously militarised to the extent that oil dispute raises stakes for drawing borders between the two countries. Oil has become a notable impediment for establishing normal relations between the Sudan and South Sudan. The dispute over oil has threatened the implementation of other pending issues such as citizenship, trade and border demarcation among others.

The Sudan and South Sudan are virtually in the state of war with one another. This assumption is substantiated by the closure of the common air and land borders. Free movement of people and goods between the Sudan and South Sudan is severely restricted; if not absolutely forbidden. Returning IDPs to South Sudan were caught in the middle of the inter-state dispute. Thousands of people were stranded at the water port of Kosti for months while hundreds of others are unable to leave Khartoum and many other cities in the Sudan. It is only after concerted efforts of the UN agencies that the Organisation of Migration was able to airlift the stranded families from Khartoum to Juba.

The independence of South Sudan and the ensuing conflicts with the Sudan over the many unresolved post-independent issues seem to be drawing countries of the Greater Horn of Africa and China into uncomfortable diplomatic realities. The strained relations between the Sudan and South Sudan affect some countries such as Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya. The international community, China and the African Union (AU) are already drawn into the oil dispute between the new neighbours. The launching of an alternative pipeline project intended to run from South Sudan to Lamu in Kenya or to Djibouti increased tension in the region. This development further complicates security, border, citizenship disputes in which oil is used as a weapon of revenge. The dispute led to a shutdown of the oil sector in early 2012, which has triggered a brief border war in April. Most remaining oil wells are now in the South, but the infrastructure such as pipelines; refinery and the export terminal are in the Sudan.

Amid tension and cross-border military confrontations, the President of South Sudan paid an official visit to China in April 2012 to seek economic and diplomatic support. China's role in oil exploitation in South Sudan and

in Sudan makes her a potential broker of peace between the two countries. China is well positioned to exert influence in the conflict, given its deep trade ties to the resource-rich south and decades-long diplomatic ties with the Sudan.

During talks held with South Sudanese President, the Chinese President urged the two sides to remain calm and refrain from escalating the current tensions and properly resolve their differences through negotiation. China is making multiple efforts to promote dialogue, mitigate conflicts and maintain regional stability. Chinese ambassadors to Sudan and South Sudan, as well as China's permanent mission to the United Nations, have been mediating between the two sides through multi-track diplomacy. Both South Sudan and the Sudan are under serious economic pressure that could not only make their governments unpopular, but could lead to either of them losing control over the state.

Hence this book offers interesting reading about how scholars identified intractable issues that were expected to derail peace not only in the Sudan and South Sudan, but also complicate relations in the Horn of Africa and East Africa. Disputes between the two countries remained a low-key conflict until it flared into border violence on 10 April 2012. The AU and the UN are actively trying to put an end to the instability.

