



House of Commons
CANADA

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

FAAE • NUMBER 032 • 3rd SESSION • 40th PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Tuesday, November 2, 2010

—
Chair

Mr. Dean Allison

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

Tuesday, November 2, 2010

• (1535)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC)): I want to welcome everyone to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, meeting number 32, as we look at the ramifications of the referendum in Sudan.

Before us today we have James Dean. I like that name, James Dean. That's a great name. Mr. James Dean is from Simon Fraser University.

We also have Mr. Abunafeesa, senior political officer with the United Nations Mission in Sudan. I'd like to welcome you as well, sir.

I believe that Mr. Simmons is on a plane coming from New York, so I think we'll do the same thing we did the last time. We'll get started with our witnesses. We'll give you each seven to ten minutes to do your presentation, and then we'll ask questions and go around the room. I'll give further instructions in terms of how that will work before we get started. Then we'll work in Mr. Simmons when he arrives. We may have started questions already and we'll go from there.

Mr. Dean, in your remarks you said you had some maps that you wanted us to hand out. I would need unanimous consent. They are not in French and English, but they are maps of Sudan that you were going to refer to in your presentation.

Do I have unanimous consent to be able to hand these out to members?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay. We'll do that as well, if that's all right.

Why don't I start with you, Mr. Dean? We welcome you. We'll let you make your presentation. The floor is yours, sir.

Prof. James Dean (Emeritus Professor of Economics, Simon Fraser University, As an Individual): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I am a retired professor of economics from Simon Fraser University, but I've spent the last four months in Juba, southern Sudan, as senior advisor to the Bank of Southern Sudan. I've been working for Deloitte under a contract to USAID.

Our mandate was to help the Bank of Southern Sudan become independent from the Bank of Sudan, which is based in Khartoum; they will presumably vote for independence on January 9, 2011. The overriding concern we had was installing a new currency.

We had our initial meeting early in June, in Nairobi, with half a dozen senior Bank of Southern Sudan officials. We said you should use the U.S. dollar for the time being because everybody uses it anyway and it would be chaos to introduce a new currency. Within half an hour they had turned this completely around and said that's absolutely unacceptable; we want our own currency, as a symbol of independence.

That was a financial challenge, to make a new currency credible. After the 2005 comprehensive peace agreement, for example, the governor of the Bank of Southern Sudan, who is still the governor, permitted the photocopying of money so he could pay off the southern people's liberation army. Naturally, that money was not very credible.

But I'm not going to talk today about the problems of installing a currency, unless you want me to. I'm going to focus on Canada's role in Sudan, as I understand it.

I think we spend about \$117 million a year in Sudan, mostly on Darfur and southern Sudan. Proportionally we spend more than the U.S. I believe we're the third largest donor, after the EU and the U.S. Since fiscal year 2004-05, we've spent over \$1 billion.

About \$100 million of the \$117 million is spent by CIDA and \$17 million is spent by DFAIT. I understand that DFAIT's projects are largely security related. We have RCMP officers who are training southern Sudanese police, including police women, and we have about 50 military advisors there. I'm not sure what they do because, unlike the Americans, we are not training the southern people's liberation army to move from being a bush army to a real army. We don't do that. But we do provide security support for delivering food and vehicles for part of the UN's effort and a lot of other things.

CIDA's projects, the \$100 million, are focused on food aid and food security—delivering the food—on welfare and education of children and youth, and on institutions, governance, and justice. We're also putting money into supporting the EU's monitoring of the January 9 referenda. There are two of them, as you probably know: one in southern Sudan, and another one in Abyei, which is a contested area just north of the border. We're also going to support the Carter Centre with their election monitoring.

Like other donors, we spend a lot of money on short-term so-called emergency aid. That's to deliver food and to help avert the almost daily firefights and atrocities that occur in Darfur and between tribes in the south, especially between the two majority tribes, which are the Dinka and the Nuer. That's not to mention the firefights and violence instigated by civilian militia groups, such as the Lord's Resistance Army, which comes from Uganda and has now taken refuge in southeastern southern Sudan.

Both the north and the south have long histories of using these civilian militias. And both the north and south use their own greed and grievances at the time to attack territory in dispute, using these militias as proxy. It's probably true that the north is now using militia more than the south. Certainly that's what we were told by our friends in the south. The north is using these militia to stir things up in the south and in Abyei, with the intent of delaying or discrediting the upcoming independence votes scheduled for January 9, 2011.

• (1540)

The alternative to emergency aid is long-term investment in sustainable development. Schooling and health are obvious candidates. Children are now back in school, after 20 years of civil war and recruitment as child soldiers. But beyond elementary or, at best, high school, the prospects for education are dim.

I visited the University of Juba once when I was there, and it's a delightful place. They have a wonderful faculty of art, music, and drama—I'm a musician and I loved it—but they have no economics department, no business faculty, and no law school. Juba is kind of a cesspool of dirty water, mosquitoes, and cow dung, and that breeds cholera, yellow fever, meningitis, and of course malaria. Everybody gets malaria.

It's also kind of a cesspool of thuggery and murder. Now, to be fair, it's much better than it was even two or three years ago. In fact, people tell me they feel safer on the streets in Juba than they do in Nairobi, which now has the nickname "Nairobi robbery". Nevertheless, we had all kinds of things happen. We had intertribal fights at the bars. Much to our annoyance, of all the foreign aid groups, those of us working for Deloitte were not allowed to go out after 10 o'clock at night, I think because they thought we would sue them. But the UN is out until two in the morning getting stabbed, getting into bar fights, and all kinds of stuff. Our security adviser told us about that every morning to scare us from staying out late.

Schooling and education are no-brainers, but it's much more difficult to foster long-term economic growth, independent of foreign aid and oil, because southern Sudan is almost totally dependent on foreign aid and oil. Foreign aid is running at about \$2 billion a year, but that doesn't go into the average person's pocket. In fact most of it probably lines the pockets of consultants and goes back out of the country. Oil is virtually the only export. There is agriculture, but it's relatively small. Oil is the major export by far, and oil revenue is about \$2 billion a year.

Oil revenue represents 98% of the government's non-aid revenue, and about 30% of the budget of southern Sudan's government is for the military and mostly imported equipment—recently helicopters, when I was there, and some out-of-date Russian tanks. In short, some of the oil and government money disappears into private

pockets, and it's typically deposited abroad, or at least across the border in Kenya.

To summarize, about \$4 billion a year flows into southern Sudan, and about half is from foreign aid and half from oil, plus a few hundred million as remittances from the southern Sudanese diaspora living abroad, sending money back.

The population of southern Sudan is a little over eight million, so from government revenue alone, if you divide the eight million people into \$4 billion you get about \$500 a year that should go into each person's pocket. Very little income is generated by domestic production, and much of the domestic production is production in kind. It's cattle, subsistence food crops, and so on, that are never traded and therefore never monetized. But the per capita income in Sudan is not \$500 a year; it's less than \$300 a year, or about 80¢ a day. Admittedly, that \$300 a year ignores all the income in kind, like delivery of food aid, which is substantial. Nevertheless, \$200 million are missing, and a lot of that is from capital flight—wealthy, powerful people sending money abroad—or wasted aid.

So the difference between what flows into the region and out again, just to repeat, is in military spending, wasted aid, and corruption. To put it another way, most of the money that flows into southern Sudan flows out again by way of military imports, consultants' incomes, not that consultants are completely useless—I was one—and capital flight.

• (1545)

Any country that relies heavily on either oil or foreign aid is subject to disincentives to develop other sources of income. Moreover, the oil production in Sudan is likely to peak in 10 or 12 years. So it's imperative for Sudan to develop another export industry. The best prospect is agriculture. Sudan is not only the largest country in Africa, it is one of the most fertile. The beautiful Nile River runs from Uganda in the south all the way north to Egypt. There's the Blue Nile. We were encamped on the White Nile in Juba.

Traditionally the main agricultural enterprise has been cattle. The southern Sudanese particularly are cattle herders. They don't call them cattle in Sudan. They are genderless, but they call them cows, whether they're male or female. We had herds of cows right beside our camp, and there was an abattoir and they were slaughtered as we slept; the stench was terrible.

What I'm getting at is that now agribusiness, big, large-scale agriculture in crops, is well under way: cotton, maize, palm oil, and even flowers. It's particularly under way in the north, but there's more potential really in the south because the south is more fertile. The agribusiness, like the oil, is funded and organized by foreign firms. Most of the oil is funded and organized by the Chinese, but the agriculture is subsidized by the Middle East and a lot of other people.

So far, so good, and there's nothing wrong—as an economist, I don't think there's anything wrong, in principle—with foreign direct investment. But in Sudan, principle has floundered in the face of unprincipled investors, who are aided and abetted by Sudanese government officials, both in the north and in the south. In the past year alone, southern Sudan's department of agriculture has sold off thousands of hectares, millions of acres, of fertile land to foreign firms. Now, there's nothing wrong with that either, in principle. Here in Canada we sell off our birthrights of oil and potash to foreigners. But in practice what's happening, I'm told, in southern Sudan and in the north is that communities and tribes and subsistence farmers have essentially lost their traditional tenure on the land. There are virtually no land tenure laws in northern Sudan.

Since the food shortage in 2007, the Sudanese government, mostly in the north but increasingly also in the south, has sold or long-leased—a long lease is typically 70 years—hundreds of thousands of hectares, millions of acres, of agricultural land. They're now leasing more land long term than any other country in Africa—

• (1550)

The Chair: Professor Dean, I'm just going to ask you to wrap up. We're going to get this translated for you to get it out to the MPs.

Prof. James Dean: I've got a little example of a land grab here, but let me just read what I've got in italics. The upshot is that these agricultural sell-offs are very likely to stoke the fires of further intertribal violence, because evicted farmers migrate to new lands and they attack or are attacked by traditional tillers and grazers of those lands. This was the legacy of the long-lease of oil rights to the Chinese in the late 1990s—the local people forced off their lands—and it could well be the legacy of the current rush to long-leased agriculture and agribusiness.

I just want to close by saying that CIDA has funded some of the NGO work on land tenure in the south, and I think this committee should inquire whether in CIDA's informed opinion the new land tenure laws are adequate or even properly complied with, because what I hear over and over again is that they're not. CIDA has to respect the sovereign decisions of national governments. CIDA's contract is that they can't just walk into the minister of agriculture's office in Juba and demand to know whether the letter and spirit of the new land tenure laws is being respected. But my understanding is it's not and that the ministry is signing very lucrative deals and putting people off their land.

I think this is an issue that maybe hasn't received enough attention. It's a long running issue and it's a complex issue, because agribusiness will increase productivity in agriculture and they need that. It's largely for export and it's not necessarily going to get into people's bellies.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Professor Dean. I appreciate that.

We're now going to move over to Mr. Abunafeesa, who is going to provide input.

The time is yours, sir. You have 10 minutes.

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa (Senior Political Officer (Retired), United Nations Mission in the Sudan): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to address the members of the standing committee of the House of Commons.

My thanks also go to Ms. Christine Vincent, for she was the link between me and this respected committee.

I have the pleasure to say that this is my second time addressing a standing committee here. Four or five years ago I was introduced by the Honourable David Kilgour. That was before the war in Iraq, and I was working for the United Nations in the Middle East at that time.

I have handed out some information about myself, but I would like to say something about that. I just retired from the United Nations. My last position was in Sudan. I also worked with the United Nations for 17 years in their peacekeeping division. I was over almost all the world, in the field. For a short time I worked in New York. I was in Cambodia in 1991 and 1992. Then I was moved to South Africa for peace promotion and observation of the elections in 1994, which were the fairest multi-ethnic, multi-racial elections. I was in the northern part of South Africa, which was the most critical and dangerous area.

At that time I had the pleasure of knowing the Speaker of Parliament, Mr. Peter Milliken, who was there; the former Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa, Christine Stewart; David Kilgour; and some other people.

I was also in Afghanistan twice. I saw two or three governments fall in Afghanistan. I spent three years in Afghanistan and was there again after the war for a while. I was in Iraq twice. I was in the Oil-for-Food Programme for three years, and then I was in the green zone after the war for three years. I was also in northern Ghana for resolution of conflict and to address the problem of proliferation of small arms. I was also a former member of parliament in Sudan for some time.

However, before going straight forward on Sudan, I would like to say that the eclipse of the multilateral world in the post-Cold War period brought us into a world of insecurity, instability, and terrorism, with financial and political problems that impacted not only the developing world, but the advanced world.

Sudan is the largest country in Africa and the richest in resources. It is a pioneering country in democracy in Africa. Sudan's independence was in 1956. Its first democracy was from 1956 to 1958. Then there was a military coup for two years, and then another democracy for less than four years. Then there was another military coup that stayed for 16 years. There were then three years of democracy, and then a military coup that has remained in Sudan for the past 21 years. That gives you an idea that Sudan has suffered over 40 years of military rule, compared to 11 years of democracy. Those 11 years were not straight.

• (1555)

Before the 40 years, until the late 1960s, Sudan was known for being a peaceful country, having good relations with its neighbours and with the international community. For the last 40 years exactly, from 1970 onward, we started to have problems.

Today Sudan is in a position to be or not to be the largest country in Africa. The reason is the continuous wars without United Nations attention at all—I say “at all” because I worked in the United Nations and I’m a Sudanese Canadian and I know what was going on there. The UN was not there at all.

However, for the last 20 years, the current regime has treated the south in a different way from previous military or civilian regimes. Wars between the south and the north started in 1953 and continued until 2005, with some periods of negotiation and reconciliation, especially the one in 1971. That stayed for 11 to 12 years, and then the military regime aborted it. People went to war until 1983, and then again until 2005, when the peace accord took place.

The major problem of the peace accord, or the CPA, as people say, was that it was not a United Nations peace accord. The United Nations had no role at all in the CPA. The CPA was influenced by the United States and some European countries.

Of course, political parties in Sudan, and all the Sudanese, agree that brothers in the south have the right to self-determination. But the way the CPA came about I think damaged the situation in Sudan.

Even if the south separates, there are questions about the relationship between the south and the north, let alone, of course, the situation in Sudan. Other secessions and separations might be in the pipeline. That is because of the way the CPA, or the Naivasha treaty, was made.

The regime in Sudan bears most of the blame with regard to this CPA, but I’m going to say that the United States also bears part of that blame. The international community, or the United Nations, as such—pre-Cold War, post-Cold War era—was for unity, especially with regard to nation states.

Nation states are composed of a variety of cultures, races, and everything. That’s why the United Nations, according to the charter, has to maintain international peace and unity of states, not dismemberment of states. Unfortunately, we have come to an era, at the eclipse of the multilateral system, where we are now witnessing disintegration in some parts of the developing world.

• (1600)

In the case of Sudan, which is in Africa, it is the only exceptional case of secession taking place.

Eritrea separated, or actually Eritrea became independent from Ethiopia because it was not part of Ethiopia. Eritreans are different people.

Therefore, the issue of Sudan, I think, also might have some implications or ramifications for Africa, especially in neighbouring countries, such as Congo, Uganda, Kenya also, even Ethiopia—there are also minorities there—and even Chad, where the Arabs and others also have other problems.

So while several parts of the world are in the third millennium and are coming together, people are coming together and trying to unite, regrettably, the situation in Sudan, or in Africa, or in the largest countries of Africa, is one of dismemberment.

The Chair: I know 10 minutes is not enough time. All of you could spend at least an hour or so. I’ll just ask you to wrap up.

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: Okay. I will wrap up.

There are various expectations for post-referendum. People speak about war. The boundaries are also one of the problems, the debts, the southern Sudanese in the north, and vice versa, the northern Sudanese in the south, and Abyei is a hot spot.

Of course, there is the issue of nationality. Is it going to be dual nationality or not? Still, there are some things put up for discussion. There is also the issue of the border, as I said.

These are the major issues. There is also the problem of the debts. Sudan's debts are an issue for disagreement or agreement. There is a need to deal with these issues.

However, I will stop here. I am ready for any queries.

• (1605)

The Chair: Sure. Hopefully, we’ll get some during questions and some other information. Thank you very much.

We’re now going to welcome Mr. Simmons. I understand you drove in from Burlington, Vermont, to be here today, so thank you. You’re with FAR Sudan. I’m not really knowledgeable about that organization. You can maybe tell us a bit about your organization. You have 10 minutes, and as you get close, I’ll try to get you to wrap up. Then we’ll go to questions from the members.

Mr. Mark Simmons (Country Director, FAR Sudan): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I apologize for my lateness. The only way I could get here from Khartoum was to fly through New York to Burlington and to then drive up from Burlington. So I’ve come straight from Khartoum, via New York and Burlington.

I should tell you something about my organization first. I direct an organization called FAR, which is based in Toronto. It's a Canadian organization. I'm also the vice-chair, currently, of the INGO Forum. I represent 72 international NGOs in northern Sudan. For the last four years I've been either chairing or co-chairing the INGO Forum, so I come with that perspective as well. Before I worked for FAR, I worked on the peace process in Naivasha and then in Abuja and Asmara, to the east of Sudan.

That's something brief about my background.

It's good to have the opportunity to be back in Canada. Thank you very much for that.

As I started to say, I come from a Sudan that is quite fearful at the moment. There's a lot of uncertainty about the future, and people are very nervous. There's conflicting information coming about the future with regard to citizenship, population movements, and that kind of thing. There's a lot of intimidation and a lot of pressure to vote in the referendum in a certain way. People are being beaten up if they're suspected of voting for unity—that's southerners in the north. We've recently had the expulsions, also, of Arab groups from Upper Nile in the south and an increasing movement of southerners from the north to the south.

My agency runs the wharf in Kosti, in White Nile, which is a place that all the IDPs going to the central and southern part of southern Sudan pass through as they travel on the barges. We've seen an increase from 800 people last week to 6,000 this week. There is a dramatic increase in people moving southwards. This is in advance of the registration period, which starts, as you know, in just under two weeks.

I think one of the challenges we face, always, in Sudan is the question of numbers. You've heard in previous submissions to this committee differing figures of citizenship in Sudan, from 8.2 million up to 16 million. To register to vote, you have to trace your lineage back to a southern tribe. That's usually meant to be within four generations. I dread to think where Canadians would come from if you were allowed to claim nationality from four generations back. Clearly, there's a challenge there about who is really southern and what that means for the vote.

We've moved to a place where the government, in a sense, has tried to downplay significantly the number of southerners in the north, because they feel that to be to their advantage. Now they're quickly trying to inflate the numbers of southerners in the north. We've gone from a claim of one-half million southerners in the north to claims of between 1.5 million and 2.7 million southerners in the north. That's quite significant. On the other hand, even if one added to the figure of 10.5 million southerners taken at the CPA, the 2.7 million maximum figure that's been quoted by some sources, and if you assume a normal developing world demographic—meaning half the population is under 18 and therefore half is eligible to vote—we'd still need, even if everybody in the north at the maximum figure voted for unity, one in eight people in the south to vote for unity for a majority to win. So I think we can assume that the south is going to separate.

For us as NGOs, I think that has two main impacts, and I should focus on those, given the limited time. One is the question of

contingency planning—how to plan the repositioning of resources, how to anticipate the movement of people, and how to respond to those needs—particularly, for example, the question of UNMIS. It is being asked to provide more troops for the border area. But it is also being asked to provide support for the referendum process. How will they balance, with their limited resources, the need to be manning polling stations and the need to be manning the border where the oil fields are and where the likely clashes will be? That will be a significant challenge.

The other one, of course, is humanitarian access.

● (1610)

At the moment, in Darfur, you have a northern government still bombing. And they don't have military reasons for doing this; they have terrorizing reasons for doing this. I hesitate to say this in a public forum, but I think it's very clear that the Government of Sudan has a dual strategy. One is trying to starve populations whom they believe to be supportive of rebel groups by denying any humanitarian agency the access to those areas and basically forcing them to have no food, no water, and no basic services. It's slightly better this year because we had a good rainy season, which is just finishing, so the situation is perhaps not as bad as it would have been this time last year. The other strategy the government has is to try to incentivize recovery, or use recovery as a political tool—I should express it like that. They will go to an area and say, if you stop harbouring rebels, we'll build you a school. They come to us, the NGOs, and say, go to that village and build a school; we promised them one. We say, no, we can't possibly do that. We would then be a political tool of the government and we take the fall for there being no service provided.

We're in a very difficult position, politically, where the discourse has moved away from the basis of need towards using humanitarian intervention as a political tool, and that's something we're very cautious to avoid where we can.

The reason I mention this in the context of this committee—looking particularly at the referendum—is there's a good chance that the government in the north and the government in the south, which I'm afraid, in a kind of Stockholm syndrome way, has copied many of the mistakes of the north, will deny access to humanitarian workers of any area where they feel the local population is not entirely supportive of them. That could be, for example, the entire Kingdom of Shilluk in Upper Nile—I don't want to get too geographically specific because I don't know how well you know the country. There are going to be areas of the country where the people are not necessarily considered to be entirely supportive of the northern government or the southern government where we could well be denied access and where services will not be provided.

I think perhaps I'll leave it there, because that gives enough of a flavour for now and I don't want to overuse my time. We can wait for questions if there are more clarifications required.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Simmons. I appreciate that.

We're going to go around the room on the first round of seven minutes, questions and answers, and then we'll follow that up with as much time as we have until 5:30, with questions of five minutes back and forth, alternating among the parties.

I'm going to start here with the vice-chair of the committee, Dr. Patry. The floor is yours, sir.

• (1615)

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

[English]

Thank you very much to our guests today.

I have a question for Mr. Dean and Mr. Simmons. If the south Sudan votes in favour of independence next January, without having, at the same time, the referendum in the Abyei region, do you think that in the near future, following the referendum, the Khartoum government will allow or not allow a referendum in the Abyei region?

My second question is this. If the south always votes in favour of independence, what are the potential implications for large-scale population movement coming from the south and also from the neighbouring countries following the referendum?

Merci.

Prof. James Dean: On the question about Abyei—and then I'll refer this to Mark and Elsadig, because they may know more about it.

I believe that the international community, starting with the United States, is going to do everything it can to ensure that the referendum goes ahead, voter registration or no voter registration. They're still arguing in Addis Ababa about whether to register voters because the demarcation of the area has not been completed. The boundaries are clear, but the actual physical demarcation.... So it's a silly thing to argue about.

The north's strategy will be to move in—what's the name of the tribe in this area?—the Misseriya tribe...they're seasonal cattle herders. They're going to move as many as they can into Abyei to influence the vote. The attitude that I heard in Juba is that we don't want to hang up the possibility of our referendum just because the referendum in Abyei might be delayed. My personal judgment is that it won't be delayed, but it will not be recognized by the north. There will be furious argument about who's entitled to the oil, as you know, that's in Abyei.

The other question, just remind me, was about?

Mr. Bernard Patry: About the population movement.

Prof. James Dean: I think Mark probably knows more and has a better idea about that than I do. There were, however, fears in Juba that the so-called djellaba Arab traders would be expelled or worse. They're a core part of the economy in Juba. They're good traders, but they're not citizens. When I was there, they were stopping people in vehicles and so on to check their registration. We were told they might even go door to door in our camp to check who we were, but that didn't happen.

The one problem is the possible expulsion of northerners of Arab descent who are living and working, often very productively, in the south. The other possibility, as we heard from Mark, is that anywhere between half a million and a million and a half people might move

into Juba. Now Juba has grown from 125,000 maybe five or six years ago to, by some estimates, over a million. It's a remarkably stable community given the piles of foreign aid helping out. In the next half year, if another half million people come in, that could be the biggest problem of all—not to mention these refugee camps.

Maybe Mark has something to say about it.

Mr. Mark Simmons: Thank you.

I think on the question of population movement, one has also to bear in mind that the southerners in the north will not necessarily be welcome in the south. Many of them are considered to be politically on the wrong side because they didn't stay. You have the age-old problem of any refugee community anywhere—the context in Afghanistan is similar—where populations that didn't stay and fight are mistrusted when they return home because they weren't involved in the fight for independence, if you like.

In terms of numbers, we're looking at around half a million who would voluntarily return and probably another million who would be forced out if the government of the north decided they would not be welcome in the south. It's not clear where they would go. I think there's a lot of concern they would end up in sort of no man's land along the border, because they wouldn't be welcome in their host communities necessarily and they wouldn't be welcome in the north. The border is, of course, also where the oil fields are. A lot of land is being demarcated now for oil fields, so is not available for use and for people to camp out on.

You also have in three main areas west of Abyei, around the Heglig-Bentiu area and Upper Nile, long stretches of border between nomadic groups and the river. If those borders are closed, or there's fighting along the border, as we expect, then you have probably a couple of million nomads who can't get their cattle or their camels to water.

That will be a delayed problem that I just raise because the movement won't normally happen until February or March, so it won't necessarily be a movement related, strictly speaking, to the referendum, but it will be a result of potential border skirmishes. So you're looking at movement of somewhere between half a million and possible three million or three and a half million people.

• (1620)

Mr. Bernard Patry: Thank you.

Mr. Mark Simmons: On the referendum, my view is that whether or not the referendum goes ahead, the south will declare independence. That's an interesting question for you, given your history in Canada.

The question of Abyei will really depend on how they share the oil and the status of the Misseriya. If the Misseriya are allowed to vote and the oil can be shared, they can work it out. If they can't, you're looking at another kind of Kashmir situation on a smaller scale, because the population is small. You're talking about a population of about 35,000 people, not three million, but it would still be significant.

The Chair: Mr. Pearson.

Mr. Glen Pearson (London North Centre, Lib.): Mr. Dean, I appreciate very much your insight into this.

My worry around Sudan is that while the civil war was going on, people trusted their military, the SPLA, and others to help care for them. Although foreign aid wasn't really coming into the border regions, they were in a war, so people expected that.

Once peace came after the CPA, people in the border regions expected that a lot of the aid dollars from the west would come up to their regions. That really didn't transpire very much, yet that's where a lot of the war was fought, that's where the oil fields are, and that's where a lot of the Darfur people were coming. Juba, on the other hand, because it was being enticed by southern leaders, was trying to get Canada and others to invest around Juba and build air strips, and all those kinds of things. It seems to me the west bought into that, and as a result, Juba has become this massive arrangement.

I appreciate your challenge to CIDA about farming, but it seems to me the places that are the most toxic aren't getting the development dollars. I've been to those regions and I've seen them. They still complain to this day that Juba will get another university, or whatever, and they can't even get a high school.

We have to figure out as a committee what we will do after the referendum, if it does happen, and how to invest our aid dollars. Can I get your view on that?

Prof. James Dean: I don't have much of an informed view on that, because for security reasons we were not allowed to leave Juba. But lots of other aid workers in Juba were going up there all the time. It was the rainy season and very difficult to get there, as you well know. So there's the simple problem of finding people who are willing and able to deliver services to those areas. Sometimes even the landing fields are blocked.

I'm not sure whether that's the real reason why we and other donors have not delivered to that area. Is it simply the persuasiveness of the very charming president and vice-president of southern Sudan—particularly the vice-president—who have sucked the money into Juba, or is there something more malicious going on? I don't know.

Do you know?

The Chair: Make a quick comment, and then we'll come back again.

Mr. Mark Simmons: I think part of it is just that the south copies the north, and the north is heavily centralized, so that's how the south has learned to govern. It's repeating the same error.

My NGO is present in two of the border areas, Upper Nile and Warrap. Our access is okay, provided we work with all communities, which we do. We have quite a lot of funding from CIDA and the European Commission for food, security, and livelihood work in that area. But it's very hard to reach the huge numbers of demobilized or not yet demobilized young people. That's really the challenge in those border areas—those groups of armed young men who don't have anything to do except fight.

I was on my way down to one of our sites in Upper Nile about a month ago. I was hauled out of my vehicle, beaten up, and threatened at gun point. I had my glasses smashed by SPLA soldiers because they said I splashed their vehicle in the road. In a rain storm on a muddy road it's possible. But there's a very high level of aggression among those young people who haven't been harnessed

into a police force or been given any alternative livelihood. That's one of the big challenges in those areas.

• (1625)

Prof. James Dean: The Lord's Resistance Army has encamped itself in the southeast of Sudan. Meanwhile, the World Bank, for very good reasons, is trying to regularize and establish agriculture there. These efforts have become almost impossible because the Lord's Resistance Army has displaced, raped, and committed unspeakable acts on 20,000 people since January. Hundreds of villages have been displaced, and that's going on right now. So there's a vivid example of how difficult it sometimes is to deliver aid and development assistance to the rural areas.

The Chair: We have to get you in here, so go ahead. Then we'll move on to our next speaker.

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: Thank you.

I think the situation in Juba or in the south right now, even after the secession that is going to happen, is just like Karzai's government in Kabul, because Karzai has no authority outside of Kabul. Right now the government in Juba, outside Juba, with the differences, which are one way or another now wrapped up in an agreement between the various political forces in the south.... Law and order, apart from Juba, is not that, I think...could be depending on. That's my feeling on it.

Regarding Abyei, there is a lot of talk now between the SPLM, the government, and the United States about reaching some kind of agreement in the south, and at the same time the government will also be cleared from lists of countries using children for war—and actually it has happened. Something like that has already happened, but the government is still on record in the United States with regard to terrorism and all those things.

In Abyei the referendum might not take place, because the people of Abyei are not only the Misseriya. There are people from other tribes within Darfur coming through Abyei with their cattle, not only the Misseriya. So Abyei is a hub of problems, not only for the people who are inside Abyei, but also for other tribes that are there.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Dorion.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean Dorion (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Gentlemen, thank you for sharing your expertise with us.

Not much has been said about how the north's leaders are behaving in the current conflict, especially with the approaching referendum preparations. Are they giving inflammatory speeches or employing vote-buying methods to try to influence people from the south? This was hinted at when we talked about NGOs that let the government buy, in a sense, the support of certain villages.

I have another question about how people can become registered voters for the coming referendum in the south. If my understanding is correct, even people living in the north who were originally southerners can vote in the south, as long as they provide proof of having belonged to a tribe from the south for four generations. How can they provide this kind of proof in a country where, I would think, there are very few civil registers? How does that work?

I asked two questions. I'll repeat them, as I'm not sure the interpretation came through. How are the north's leaders behaving at this time? Are they making an effort to win the support of people from the south, or are they resorting to intimidation? In a country without a civil register, how do people go about proving that they have belonged to a tribe of a given region for four generations?

• (1630)

[English]

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: Thank you very much.

For the first question with regard to the Sudanese people trying to intimidate or win over the southerners in the north, I would like to state something very important. The peace agreement was made by the regime in Sudan, not by the Sudanese people. The Sudanese people were not part of it at all. The Sudanese people today also are living in a situation of ambiguity. They don't have a role. They don't have a say at all, because there is not any freedom of speech or anything for the Sudanese people. The major political parties, which of course have most of the people of the Sudan, were not part of the negotiations or the signing or the implementation of the CPA.

Unless the government ignites problems with the southerners in the north, generally speaking the Sudanese in the north are not going to hamper the process if there is a referendum in the north. I doubt very much indeed that there will be a referendum in the north, in Khartoum and other places, because most of the southerners in the north are in Khartoum. What I understand is that the movement the gentleman talked about was actually by the government of southern Sudan, who wanted to bring these people to the south in order to increase the voting rate and to reach 60% of the registered people.

But with regard to the Sudanese in the north, generally speaking, I don't think they are part of the whole mechanism of obstructing the referendum, because they are out of the picture of this thing.

I hope this is a sufficient answer to this question.

On the other question regarding the southerners in the north, I think people have to know that of the half million or one million southerners in the north, probably 70% of them have no idea about the south. Quite a number of the people aged 40 to 50 years in the north were born there. They have no relation with the south. Culturally even, and linguistically, they actually became Arabic in one way or another, although they have a different religion. So my point of view is that these people have been pushed by the government of the south to go back, although there are fears that the government in the north probably might intimidate them, in case there is a referendum in the north, not to vote for a decision or something like that.

From my point of view, as I lived with these people and know them, quite a number of them have no relation with the south. If you ask them where they would vote in the south, they have no mother,

no father, no house, or no place to go to there. That's why the gentleman probably said they might be on the border, because they have no land.

That's my brief answer to the question. I don't know whether it's clear or not.

• (1635)

[Translation]

Mr. Jean Dorion: How can those people show that they have belonged to a southern tribe for four generations? How does the government expect them to provide proof of something like that?

[English]

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: Sorry, could you repeat the question?

[Translation]

Mr. Jean Dorion: How does the government expect those people to show they have belonged to a southern tribe for four generations, seeing as how there's no civil register—and this is just my assumption—there are no archival records, and so on? How can such a claim be proven?

[English]

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: Absolutely, that's a major thing.

I say that because it's important to know that if you meet two people from the south, one of them is more likely to be Ugandan. But you could say I'm a Nuer, I'm a Dinka, I'm a Shilluk, and so on. That's a big problem, actually, because there is no way to identify the southerners exactly, especially on the borders of these countries: Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, and the Congo. These borders are not monitored. There is no exact border monitoring, and people enter here and there and move here and there. The movement in one way or another is also a problem.

So I agree with you that these people will be in a dilemma, unless the government of the south says, okay, you are southerners, come in just for political matters.

The Chair: Mr. Simmons, do you have a quick response?

Mr. Mark Simmons: Yes, I have quick comment to make on the question of the civil registration.

Pardon me for responding in English.

[Translation]

I should have responded in French, but English is easier for me.

[English]

Usually the way it's done is that the community leaders will verify that a particular person or household comes from a particular place. That's the normal way it's done.

Politically speaking, there is now a desire on the part of the northern government to have as many people as possible register in the north, because it will skew the 60% and then the majority figures that follow from that, in terms of voting for the referendum. So there is some support now in the north to encourage people to claim southern citizenship and to be eligible for voting, because that will raise the number of registered voters and reduce, therefore, the percentage of voters who may be more likely to vote for independence.

Does that make sense?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean Dorion: Do I have any time left?

[*English*]

The Chair: Madame Deschamps, a quick question.

No, Mr. Abunafeesa first.

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: I have just one word to say.

Frankly speaking, the government in Sudan is actually not eager for unity. I'm telling you this very, very clearly. The government in Sudan is relaxed, even if the south separates; therefore, they are not keen to harass people to vote for unity or something like that. No.

The Chair: Okay.

Madame Deschamps.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Johanne Deschamps (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Thank you. I would like to go over two small matters very quickly, if the allotted time will allow me to get back to this later.

At the very end of your presentation, Mr. Dean, you said something that startled me a little. Your comment was about NGOs that are in the field and that are involved in landholding activities.

Could you tell me what their work entails? I am, of course, referring to your concern over whether the NGOs are complying with the spirit of the law. Perhaps we need to look into this.

I also have a question about what you said, Mr. Simmons. You said that an increasing number of southern residents, hailing from the north, end up returning to their roots. Given the fact that much of southern Sudan's farmland—we're talking about thousands of hectares of land—is being sold off to foreign investors, where are these people to go? These are my questions for now.

• (1640)

[*English*]

Prof. James Dean: Well, there is a land tenure law in southern Sudan thanks to the activities of foreign donors and of NGOs. There's an organization called Pact. Pact has been active in I'm not sure righting but certainly trying to observe whether the spirit and the law of the land tenure laws is being observed. In the south it's better than the north. My understanding is that the indigenous people are often permitted to remain on their farms after the agribusiness moves in, but they lose their major natural asset, which is their woodland, their plains, and their pastoral commons for grazing.

In contrast to the north, the government of southern Sudan is in the position to enact its own land laws, and has done so, to some extent, under the terms of the CPA., the comprehensive peace agreement. But what I hear from my friends—and this is only really what I hear and read from the reports they write in organizations like Pact, which is an NGO partially funded by CIDA—is they go out in the field and they ask, who is the agribusiness that has recently bought up all this land? Nobody knows. They say that every person they ask gives them a different answer. There is a complete lack of transparency in the south as well as in the north. So one suspects that there's money in it for the minister of agriculture and that they are

wilfully overriding the spirit, at least, of the land tenure law, which is that the indigenous people should be able to carry on as before.

There's a lot of money involved. And, as I said before, it's a dilemma, because this agribusiness will be productive. On the other hand, it's mostly money for export. Now, that should trickle down to ordinary people, but it doesn't necessarily. And we have famine and food shortage, large-scale food shortage, existing side by side with large-scale agribusiness that is shipping the money out to countries with a lot of desert, in Saudi Arabia and so on. But it's not just Saudi Arabia. I think the Americans are in there—I know they are—and probably the Canadians as well. There's an enormous amount of money, with high risk, to be made from growing crops in one of the most fertile...and certainly the largest country in Africa. You see what the Egyptians have done along the Nile. The Sudanese have never taken advantage of that.

So that's the dilemma. Should we subcontract this to foreigners and put constraints on them? What do you do?

The Chair: Thank you.

We're going to have to switch over to Mr. Goldring, sir.

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm not sure who to pose the question to, but Mr. Abunafeesa, perhaps you can help me out. There was discussion earlier and I'd like a little clarity on it.

From the notes that I have, only 80% of the border is being set going into this referendum. We were distributed a little map that detailed here traditional north-south boundaries established many, many years ago. Perhaps you can enlighten me on whether the border has been set, in particular through the oil region. I believe there are older oil fields and newer oil fields, and the capacity of the older ones may have some serious limitations to them in a very short period of time. Perhaps you could help me understand whether those may be possible border areas, if the referendum goes in a positive way. Have those oil fields been delineated well on a map so that there's no discussion on it or no confusion on where the potential border might be?

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: Thank you.

On the question on the borders specifically, that part is still unclear. It is related to Abyei area and the other borders. The information I have is that there is a postponement. Of course the arbitration court has an opinion on that. There was supposed to be a commission for the demarcation of the border, but that commission was not able to work: one, for lack of equipment or resources; and two, there were security problems.

My understanding on the issue of the border demarcation is that there is some unspoken agreement between the government and the SPLM to leave this method and others until later. When people talk about the referendum in Abyei, it's not the Abyei town itself; it's also the rural areas where there are oil fields or oil areas, and so on. These areas are in some kind of disagreement on their borders.

•(1645)

Mr. Peter Goldring: Would we not be viewing this? If that's an area for future discussion, it would seem to me it's not just an area of delineating border and land circumstances; it's delineating the economy of the potential country. It's a serious aspect.

I have difficulty understanding how that could possibly be sorted out at a later date. I would think it would be something that should be thought about and delineated now, before you enter into the bigger unknown of potential outcomes.

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: Correct. Apart from the economic side of these areas, what I know and what I hear is that there are politics. There is a lot of politics between the government and the SPLM regarding concessions to be made, especially with regard to the government and the United States. The United States is the broker between the two partners, if you like.

Probably this issue of the economic importance of this area and the demarcation of the borders is still in the basket of the political manoeuvres, if you like. That's what I understand of what's going on in that area.

Mr. Peter Goldring: It seems to me that this goes hand in hand with some type of preliminary discussion on distribution of national debt.

There is another issue that has been talked about and touched on. It's that there is a considerable amount of aid coming into the area and into the country. How does that relate to food supply and food shortages? Are there food shortages? Are there food constrictions in various parts of the country? Is this a reality now?

If so, then you have the additional problem here with the large tracts of land that seemingly are contracted out of the country for export purposes too. Is that not going to be a source of future difficulty? Obviously if there is land available for a food product, the country people would think they are the country and they should be fed first.

Would these contracts on large tracts of land, which you've expressed are political contracts, be a point of serious contention with a future government, which may even look at reversing some of those contracts under a form of nationalizing the land and food supply for the people? Would that be a potential problem for the future?

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: It's a small thing, actually. On the issue of the shortage of food, some Sudanese are suffering from a shortage of food, and land is sold for economic reasons for the government. In the north, also, life is very difficult, despite the fact that it's an agricultural country. Lands in Khartoum are more expensive and dearer than in New York. To buy land for a house in Khartoum is more expensive than in New York. Yes, I'm not exaggerating. You can ask. That is the first thing.

Second, the government sold quite large areas of land in agricultural areas to foreigners, from the gulf area specifically. These areas, which were made agricultural lands, became a reserve area for producing oil and other things for export. There are now six sugar factories in Sudan, but to buy a kilo of sugar in Sudan is more expensive than having it imported. The imported sugar in Sudan is cheaper than the sugar produced locally because the locally

produced sugar, which is good quality, is exported. They import the lower-quality sugar, and it is cheaper in spite of that.

In poor areas like the south, for sure, there is a local problem with regard to food and shortages.

•(1650)

The Chair: Thank you.

I'll just ask for a quick response, then we're going to move back to this side for questions.

Mr. Mark Simmons: Okay.

I would add to what Dr. Elsadig said, particularly relating to South Kordofan and eastern Sudan.

In South Kordofan, a recent survey we did of 1,000 villages gave a figure of around one-third that didn't have enough food for one meal a day. In the east, the figure is around one-half. So that's quite significantly food insecure.

South Kordofan has no permanent watercourse, so it's very dependent on seasonal rains, and that also makes food security very problematic.

We have a long hunger gap in Sudan, usually from January. It depends on the rains; next year it will be a bit later. Maybe it will start in February or March and go until July, when really nothing grows. It's very hard to feed people, especially in that time.

That's relevant especially in the light of the referendum and what will happen after that.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Goldring.

We're going to move back over here to Mr. Dewar. Sir, you have seven minutes.

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Thank you, Chair.

Thank you to our guests, particularly Mr. Simmons for his determination to get here today. I appreciate that.

I'm just hearing as of today that there was a resignation of the south Sudanese representative as a commissioner for the referendum. Basically he was pushing to have a delay in the referendum. We have the Abyei process, which we have discussed, which went off the tracks before we even got started, in terms of delay. The White House was involved in trying to push that along.

Nonetheless, most people are asserting in the case of the referendum that it will go ahead. When we have commissioners resign—I think it was yesterday, the resignation of the commissioner—I'm concerned. If we don't have a referendum going ahead because they're not prepared or there is some involvement from other parties to obstruct it, I'm concerned that we'll have conflict again, frankly.

Maybe I'll ask Mr. Simmons, first. What's your take on the referendum itself? Is it something Canada can help with, or is it something they're just going to have to untangle themselves? In light of yesterday's resignation, what's your read on what's happening with the referendum?

Mr. Mark Simmons: My read would be that the people who are prepared to say that something could go wrong are not well tolerated. Immediately after the resignation yesterday morning came a law from the southern Sudanese government detailing the dates of the registration period and the referendum period that are extremely optimistic.

You have a population in the south of somewhere between 8 million and 16 million. That's already problematic; I would probably suggest it's somewhere between 10.5 million and 12 million. Sudan as a whole is the size of Quebec and Ontario combined. Southern Sudan, which is the Ontario equivalent in size terms, has possibly as much as 100 kilometres of paved road. How on earth are you going to do a registration of voters there, and in Canada, and in Ethiopia, and in the U.S., and in the U.K., and in northern Sudan, in six days, which has now been extended to 17 days? Even so, how realistic is that, and how realistic then is a referendum in six days, from January 9 to January 15?

I think one thing, and it relates to some of the comments my colleagues have brought up earlier, is the very limited way in which the National Congress Party in the north and the SPLM actually represent the people. So they've certainly come to a point where the SPLM hasn't done any kind of voter education, or any kind of public information, or any kind of managing of expectations.

When you talk to ordinary men on the street in the south, they think that on January 10, 2011, the Arab occupation will have ceased. There's this massive expectation for wholesale change without really being able to clarify what that change would bring, how it would make things different on the ground. Because there's been no management of expectations and because the SPLM realizes it's going to have to become more accountable if it loses the north—it's not going to have that common enemy that keeps it together in the same way—it's going to have to become more accountable to citizens, especially in the margins of the country. It can only do that by forcing the referendum to be on time.

• (1655)

Mr. Paul Dewar: With Abyei, and you were touching on it, what I'm reading from afar is that they're looking at negotiating this so that the sanctions the U.S. has placed would be lifted, that the south would guarantee revenue sharing, and there'd be access to grazing for those tribes that are nomadic; I guess those are the Misseriya peoples. So I guess that one is simply left.

If that can work, fine, it's a negotiated settlement. I give Mbeki a star for taking on the job, but I'm not sure I'd want it. Again, if that's the deal, is there anything Canada can do in that, or should that be left to...? Well, what I described sounds like what the option is, but is it realistic?

Mr. Mark Simmons: I have to say that we wish Canada would be a little bit more involved than your southern colleagues, or that your colleagues directly to the south would sometimes be a little less involved in some of these things, because their involvement is not always very helpful. I would have thought that Canada, with its particular history and circumstances, has quite a lot to offer the Sudanese people. I think examples are very useful of how states can work in a federation and a confederation and so on, but maybe the time for that has already passed.

One of the challenges in Abyei is the extent to which the Misseriya will feel that they've been sold out by the government. There have been Misseriya groups joining JEM, for example, in fighting the Riziegat, who are seen to be more pro-government, so there's a lot of tension there. It's not clear that the Misseriya will really feel that the government, the north, adequately represents them.

In terms of Canada's role, it's hard to know how best you can incentivize people to make the right decisions. None of this is particularly complicated if there were the political will to implement it.

Mr. Paul Dewar: Yes, and I think with respect to negotiating we've been there before, in terms of north-south. Granted, the CPA is lacking for recent attention, but Canada had a role there.

I guess we're looking for specific recommendations. Please—not today, as you ponder this—send them to the committee. We're going to be doing a report with recommendations to the government, so keep that in mind.

I see Mr. Dean wanting to speak, so I'll stop.

• (1700)

Prof. James Dean: Well, I mean, this touches on the question of a niche role for Canada, independent of the U.S.

I was struck by your remarks on the role of the U.S. The U.S. was instrumental in engineering the CPA, and you said that it was a bad thing, that it should have been engineered on a multilateral basis. You hinted that perhaps it wasn't in the interest of Africa as a whole for separation to occur in a large country within Africa. Certainly Mbeki himself is on record as saying that he wants unity, because most African countries, not all of them, but most, don't want to set that precedent.

Are you saying that the U.S. has played a counterproductive role by actively encouraging the separation? The sub-question is whether you think independence for the south is going to be dysfunctional.

The Chair: He's asking your question.

Prof. James Dean: Is it going to be dysfunctional for...?

The Chair: We have the witnesses asking questions now.

Prof. James Dean: Is separation of the south from the north going to be dysfunctional in the long run for the country of Sudan, and in particular, for the south? And second, is it going to be dysfunctional for Africa as a whole? Has the U.S. played a role, has it wrongly played a role, in encouraging the separation? If that's true, should Canada then go in and support unity?

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: Thank you. That's an important thing to raise.

First of all, the conclusion in the minds of most Sudanese is that the United States' policy, the international policy of the United States in many places or several places, causes havoc. Working in the United Nations and in the field, I saw that for some policies of the United States, maybe the intention was good, but the application and implementation were wrong. My point is that with regard to the CPA itself, if you read it carefully and fairly, you will find that already the secession was signed on that day in 2005.

Once our brothers in the south signed the CPA, they were already working for secession. Now the national anthem in the south is ready and it has been given voice. Nobody could go to the south and say that the people of the south are working for unity. Even the people in the north know and the government itself knows that. My point of view is that the U.S. was working for secession. That was very clear to me from the manoeuvres, from the CPA, and so on.

Of course, that secession is a right for the people of the south to have. But if it is planned in an international forum in a way that... If there was some kind of transparency, some kind of national administration for it in one way or another, that might be tolerated. But I think the way the United States has involved itself in this CPA and in the implementation of it, although the government in the north carried out its policy toward implementation very badly indeed....

Here I have to inject something. It was very surprising to me that Canada lost the seat for the chairmanship of the Security Council. That was a disaster, because as a UN staff member throughout, I'm very familiar with the role of Canada. Canada is a country for peace development, peace-building, economic development, and human rights, and there's no reason for Canada to lose that seat now unless there are things that went wrong with regard to this issue.

Therefore, it is too late now, in my view, for playing a role. Let things go, because the south is going to separate. Let things go. Then there will be a role for Canada in the relations between the two states. I think that is a big issue. Something will need to be done.

• (1705)

Mr. Paul Dewar: I just have a quick question on the UNMIS, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan.

There is a concern because the north is saying no. The south wants the protection of the border. Is there any resolve on that? I don't want a long answer. The south said they will welcome additional peacekeepers. Many people are concerned about security on the border. The north's saying no. Do you see any resolution of that?

The Chair: A quick response, please.

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: I think there has to be international pressure. The government in Sudan is weak, by the way; it is not that strong. I know it very well, and they are weak. I think there has to be international pressure, and specifically if the UN comes to the front line with regard to peacekeeping. That's their role. The United Nations should come in the front line, not to have the U.S. present it. I think here is Canada, there is a role for Canada to play to put the UN in the front line, and then the Sudan government might not actually be in a position to reject that. Because according to the charter, the UN could have a more vigorous and stronger level of action in things that might threaten the peace in that area.

Mr. Paul Dewar: So that would be a recommendation from you. Very good.

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: My recommendation is that, yes.

Mr. Paul Dewar: Thank you—duly noted.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Van Kesteren.

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Essex, CPC): Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Dean, my colleague who has left just wanted me to say that she too is an economist and a musician, so she shares much in common with you.

I have a few questions, but I don't know if I want to jump into this fray. It was an interesting dialogue between the two of you, and I share that too. I'm reluctant even to go here. I don't know, maybe I'll just make a comment and say that much as we may criticize the United States, what has filled the vacuum is, at very best, no better, and I think, when I look at the implications for the future, far worse. When I see what's happening to the oil fields, how they're being exploited, and how land is being sold, and to where it's being sold, I shudder.

I would also say that as far as reasons why we should be in here are concerned, I can think of no other reason than humanitarian. There comes a point, though, that as a country you start to ask yourself, is there any solution? I hope and I pray that there is a solution, but it gets to the point where you think, what a quagmire.

That being said, I've got a couple of questions. Maybe somebody wants to make a comment on that. I just figured I had to get it off my chest, because the more I hear this, the more, quite frankly, I despair.

Mr. Dean, how is the currency established, the value of the currency? I would imagine that's done by the world just by trade. And these are my colleague's questions: Is there a willingness to share debt? Are they looking for debt relief? What steps is the government—I suppose she meant the government in south Sudan—preparing for governance?

So first of all, how's the currency established, the value of the currency?

Prof. James Dean: We've drawn up a design for the currency, but it can't legally be implemented until May 2011. There is a body of thought within the Bank of Southern Sudan that they should print and circulate the currency immediately, because there's a paranoid fear that the south will cease accepting the old currency, or, even worse, that the south will reintroduce the old Sudanese dinar, which they used until 2007. There are these rumours that they didn't really burn the old currency, but it's up there in the vaults in Khartoum. I think that's very far-fetched, but there's a real possibility that they would stop accepting payments in Sudanese pounds from the south.

To establish a new currency that is convertible into foreign currency, people have to believe that it can be converted on demand into foreign currency—i.e., effectively, U.S. dollars. When I arrived in Sudan, in the Bank of Southern Sudan they had deposits in foreign banks, mostly in Kenya, of 500 million. They now have 400 million because in early July we discovered that the north had begun to pay us for the south's oil. Khartoum was paying the Bank of Southern Sudan 100 million Euros a month, and in July we instead got 100 million euros worth of soft currency, the Sudanese pound, which can't be spent abroad. So we lost, essentially, \$100 million before that was sorted out.

Anyway, the currency issue is far from sorted out.

What was the second question?

• (1710)

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: Is there a willingness to share debt?

Prof. James Dean: Yes. The debt was contracted by Khartoum and an awful lot of it hasn't been paid for 30 years. So because of accumulated interest, they owe an enormous amount. They're one of the few countries in the world that has a long-term outstanding debt to the IMF.

But they have two other kinds of recently contracted debt. One debt is to the Chinese for drilling the wells and building the pipeline, and they regularly make payments to those; otherwise the Chinese will stop working. So they're very regular on their payments to the Chinese and also to the Middle East, particularly the Saudi Arabians. The rest of it is seriously in arrears.

And frankly, I'm a big advocate of debt relief, even for evil governments such as Khartoum. I expect that one of the incentives the White House is putting out right now is to say we'll support you on a Paris Club and other negotiation to relieve you of the debt. I think it would be apocryphal if the south was expected to come onside to pay back that debt.

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: So you're expecting the U.S., possibly, to forgive the debt.

Prof. James Dean: I think the U.S. will try to use its influence in the Paris law, if it was bilateral Paris Club debt, to negotiate a Paris Club writeoff of that debt—if Khartoum cooperates. He hinted that if the U.S. couldn't do it...even though they buggered things up here and there, but any country would. I'm less persuaded than Dr. Abunafeesa that the U.S. has mangled things.

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: Are there steps being taken now to prepare for governance?

Prof. James Dean: Yes, absolutely. That was the Deloitte/USAID-funded project that I was on. It was called core institutions in southern Sudan. Almost all of our efforts went into advising. There were only three of us in the Bank of Southern Sudan, but there were lots of other people in the other ministries, particularly the ministry of finance. So I think the U.S. has correctly realized that building that institutional capacity is important. We even had a team of people training the president and the vice-president to be good on television.

The Chair: That's all the time we have. I'm going to move back over here to Mr. Pearson and then back to Mr. Lunney.

Mr. Glen Pearson: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Simmons, I think you're uniquely positioned to maybe try to answer a couple of my questions.

I get frustrated that we get so fascinated about the geopolitics of the region and what will happen. All that is very important; I realize Canada might have some roles to play.

But I know that during the war years, when it was very difficult, part of the reason the CPA worked—and I was at the three different rounds—was that civil society had already begun to work, even when the belligerents between the north and the south were not. So you were seeing these regional peace accords happening across the border regions. You were seeing markets that were set up with Arab and Dinka, or Arab and Nuer, or Dinka and Nuer leadership, because it was of benefit to both.

One of the things we've heard in this committee is that there were women's groups from northern Sudan that were in contact with women from south Sudan, and they were trying to help bring about peace. I know this is something Ms. Deschamps is very interested in. They now feel they're being isolated. The closer it gets to the referendum and the south voting to probably leave, these people are now feeling isolated.

My question to you is this. For things like CIDA or for the Department of Foreign Affairs, we eventually get to the point where we invest big time in Juba and other places, when really these are the regions that had already worked out accommodations in spite of some of their own tribal differences, and so on and so forth. Are we wise, as a country, to try to invest on both sides of the border in those regions, by finding groups like your own that are working in those Nile areas and others, rather than just looking at Juba? Should we not be more creative in how we as a country should invest in funding the groups that initially had put skin in the game when it came to peace, long before the big two did? Could we not be funding those groups—NGOs like your own, and others—much more than we do, to help bring about certain outcomes, especially the women's groups?

● (1715)

Mr. Mark Simmons: Thank you very much.

Absolutely, I agree. I think the biggest priority we have and that Canada can play a role in is the question of the ongoing integration of border communities. The biggest outbreak of violence will be along the border, partly because it's not demarcated, partly because of oil, partly because of politics. But that's the role that we can have, how to keep those communities working together.

When you have groups of Arab tribes expelled from the upper Nile back into the north, it's only by negotiation with local leaders in those communities that those people can move back. There's not enough focus or investment in those local leaders at that level; they're the ones who have the capacity on the ground to resolve something. The political elites in Khartoum and Juba don't sufficiently represent the people everywhere to be able to negotiate at that level on their behalf. What we've seen in Darfur is exactly the same. The more you can promote village-to-village mediation of some kind, economic trading, something that means they have some reason not to kill each other in the future, the better the situation will be. That's really where I think we can most make a difference.

Mr. Glen Pearson: Does anybody else have anything to say on that?

Mr. Mark Simmons: Can I respond on the America thing? I did want to clarify that, just very quickly.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mr. Mark Simmons: Senator Danforth was very helpful in the beginning. I think the challenge was back in 2003, with Machakos. The expectation wasn't managed. As soon as it was agreed that the southern Sudanese had the right to self-determination, that was the beginning of independence.

Senator Danforth and President Carter have played very helpful roles over the years, in my view. I think the challenge has been the “lost boys”. Those sorts of people have a heavy advocacy voice—or not necessarily an advocacy voice, that’s maybe too negative, but it’s easy to sympathize with them from a number of different backgrounds, whether you want to sympathize with the marginalized or sympathize with the blacks or sympathize with the Christians, or however one generally, quite simplistically, wants to categorize them. It plays to those sympathies. So the expectations just haven’t been managed at all in the south because of that.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Lunney.

Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and I apologize for being a little late for the meeting. It was unavoidable.

I regret missing the earlier part of your presentation, so I hope my question isn’t redundant.

Coming in a little late on this discussion, I appreciate the expertise of the people at the table here, and I believe you’ve cast some very interesting perspectives on what is a very puzzling situation to some of us trying to get our heads around the realities on the ground in Sudan.

I’ve been trying to deal with how this referendum can actually take place when we don’t know how many people are involved, registration isn’t complete, there hasn’t been education. We summarized the challenges very effectively a few moments ago.

I think I’m hearing a consensus from the end of the table that there’s an attitude of inevitability that the south will separate; the expectations are high that, whatever happens with the referendum... My concern is that if there isn’t a sense of legitimacy to a vote, how are we going to avoid descending right back into conflict if the results of a questionable process are not accepted?

I seem to hear a future being proposed that perhaps Canada will have a role to play in helping the two sides afterward, regardless of what happens, as the new realities emerge of two neighbouring states. Canada may have a mentoring role in trying to help the two sides develop relations and develop capacity and live in harmony.

Is that a summary of what your expectations are, that with all of these insurmountable problems in having a legitimate referendum, the result may be a new reality that’s going to emerge, and that we should be looking beyond that to how we move to the next steps?

• (1720)

Mr. Mark Simmons: Yes, that would be my view.

I think we have to accept the inevitability of independence of some sort. The south pretty much already has independence anyway, so not all that much will change on the ground, I don’t think, except for people’s perceptions. A lot of this is very emotional.

Even when we were asking southerners about their desire to return, 86% of southerners who we interviewed in the north—and that’s 22,500 people, families—said of course, they’d love to return, but only 15% of them said they had the means to do so. There’s always this emotional reaction, and then the reality is sometimes

different. The reaction now in the buildup is very emotional. There are a lot of mixed messages, a lot of confused signals.

When we actually get there, I think we’ll find that as long as the north is able to continue to access the oil fields and the south feels it’s getting the benefit of those oil fields, and there are citizenship arrangements or some kind of pre-citizenship nationality thing, probably they’ll work it out. But they haven’t really worked out how they’re going to live together afterwards, and I think you’re right, that’s where the future will be.

The Chair: Would anyone else care to comment on that?

Mr. Elsadig Abunafeesa: Yes, thank you.

There is a role to be played for Canada, but that has to be post-independence.

By the way, quite a number of southerners were educated in Sudan and there are thousands of them. They speak the Arabic language very well indeed. If you speak to them and see them, you will think they are northerners because of the cultural understanding they have, and the relationship between them and between those who are educated and their peers in the north. There is a lot of common experience in the past, where there was war or no war.

With regard to the relationship between the two states in the future, there is a positive role to be played, not a political one only but also a developmental one. The most important thing is to look to the future stability of the south before we look at the north. In the south there is a problem, although later in the conference in Juba they came together. Dr. Lam Akol, the spearhead of the conflict with Salva Kiir, came to the conference and there was a communiqué saying that now they agreed on a consensus for government, and so on.

So there is a need for stabilization in the south, domestically because of the tribal conflicts and tribal rivalry between the three important and major tribes: Dinka, Nuer, and Shilluk. Each one has its aspirations, and so on. Even the minority tribes fear the domination of the Dinka. The Dinka are the most rich and they are in large numbers. They are also warriors. So there is a fear among the minority tribes in the south with regard to domination. There has to be some kind of involvement for countries that could be trusted to build peace and have development play a role.

Democracy is important in the northern part of Sudan. If any country or international community plays a role to have democratization in both countries, including peace and stability, I think the future of both countries will be good because the resources are there. What is lacking and what’s feared is the instability between the two countries.

There is an idea for the future. Because of the relationship of hundreds of years between the south and north, apart from the maltreatment or anything like that—that is something for the historical record—a dual citizenship for the people of the two countries could also play a good role. There is a chance for that if things go smoothly.

I think there are ways to do things. I think Canada could do something in that discussion, but Canada needs to get the people there who would be able to do that job. That's also another thing. The instruments are more important than the objectives and ideas, and so on.

• (1725)

The Chair: Mr. Simmons, a final word.

Mr. Mark Simmons: I wanted to make sure we had spoken about South Kordofan and Blue Nile, about the transitional areas, because we've hardly touched on that at all today.

I think it relates very closely, as well, to what you were saying about integration, because there you do have populations geographically inside northern Sudan politically supportive of the south. They need to be integrated. The presidential election didn't take place in South Kordofan or Blue Nile. They still have, before January, to have a presidential election, a popular consultation, a

referendum registration, and a referendum. It's a pretty implausible timetable.

It's certainly an area we need to be focusing very heavily on, because there's a big potential for violence, but there is also a big potential for integration, because you do have those communities existing already in Blue Nile so far in relative stability. So if they can be models for how the south and the north would cooperate with each other after the referendum, I think that would be very positive.

The Chair: I just want to take a second to thank our witnesses. I think each of you, on your own, we could have spent two or three hours with.

I thank you for working within our time constraints. You are great witnesses and that was a great dialogue we had today.

Thank you very much.

With that, the meeting is adjourned.

MAIL  POSTE

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

Lettermail

Poste-lettre

**1782711
Ottawa**

If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:
Publishing and Depository Services
Public Works and Government Services Canada
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5

*En cas de non-livraison,
retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :*
Les Éditions et Services de dépôt
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Additional copies may be obtained from: Publishing and
Depository Services
Public Works and Government Services Canada
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5
Telephone: 613-941-5995 or 1-800-635-7943
Fax: 613-954-5779 or 1-800-565-7757
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca
http://publications.gc.ca

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the
following address: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

On peut obtenir des copies supplémentaires en écrivant à : Les
Éditions et Services de dépôt
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5
Téléphone : 613-941-5995 ou 1-800-635-7943
Télécopieur : 613-954-5779 ou 1-800-565-7757
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca
http://publications.gc.ca

Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à
l'adresse suivante : <http://www.parl.gc.ca>