

United States Institute of Peace  
Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training  
Sudan Experience Project

**Interview #18 - Executive Summary**

*Interviewed by: W. Haven North  
Initial interview date: September 21, 2006  
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The interviewee concludes that there will be two countries following the referendum in 2011. “There is a lack of a grassroots effort in the North that would make unification attractive to the Southerners; the Northerners are letting the opportunity slip through their fingers.” The main weakness of the CPA “is that it rests on a deep bed of distrust between the North and the South given 50 years of enmity.” He notes that neither the Northern nor Southern Governments are “legitimate”, i.e. having been elected by the general population. John Garang was a strong supporter of a unified, secular country and would likely have been able to bring the South along at the time of the referendum had he survived. The main questions: will the CPA be sustained for five years, given the history of agreements dishonored; and if the referendum occurs, will it be honored and binding?

The CPA process was “brilliant” starting with Ambassador Danforth with his four tests of willingness to cooperate. Carter and IGAD should get credit for getting the North and South together on non-contentious problems such as guinea worm eradication, drought and other development problems. The main motivation for proceeding with negotiations was that the leaders in the North and South realized that “going forward with more war was destabilizing the nine states and creating a huge human catastrophe... the solution would never be military and had to be political.” “It (CPA) was brilliant in terms of having a widely applicable model for conflict resolution, getting people to speak with each other.” “Yet there were apprehensions that, if they broadened the debate, it would have made it much more difficult.” “It is easy to see why they tried to isolate the two principal combatant forces, but by doing so it is really no longer nor ever was fully comprehensive.”

On the specific protocols, the one on security “has been quite successful,” with its monitoring with international troops. The boundary protocol may be more contentious than any of the other protocols. The location of oil producing areas, particularly Abyei—is “a potential flashpoint for the collapse of CPA.” The Darfur situation is “putting everything in jeopardy.”

The international community needs to “upgrade its role in securing the peace in Darfur,” work on the urgent humanitarian crisis, keep the border issues discussions rolling, work on transparency of the oil revenues and other practical topics and, most important, build up the infrastructure of the South.

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*Q: Tell us about your association with Sudan, in terms of how long or what was the nature of your involvement.*

A: My first sort of thinking about Sudan was around about 1968 or '69 when I was a graduate student in Anthropology at Northwestern University preparing for my PhD in research plans and I was either planning to go to Sudan or to Kenya and the Sudan opportunity emerged. So in the fall of 1970 my wife and I, a fellow graduate student, went to Sudan for two years to conduct our PhD research. And then we went back in '75, went back in '79-'80.

*Q: What was your research about?*

A: My research was on urbanization, urban anthropology, looking at two urban communities in the Khartoum area. In 1981 we had more colleagues who were in Sudan studying so we formed the Sudan Studies Association, which has now celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The SSA, Sudan Studies Association, meant that we would have annual meetings, a newsletter and international meetings on Sudan. I am currently the executive direction of the Sudan Studies Association.

*Q: What was the focus of this group?*

A: According to our legal principles of incorporation, 501(c)3, we are an educational organization, non-profit and non-political. We have continually met and produced our newsletters for over a quarter of a century. This has meant that I have stayed in very close touch. In recent years I have worked on political asylum cases for Sudan and led tours even to Sudan so I do stay pretty much up to date.

*Q: Have you covered much of the country?*

A: I have been to the North, East, West, through all of Kurdufan. I did not go to Darfur and I have been to Upper Nile and Bahr Al Ghazal provinces. So I have been to 80 percent of Sudan, in some cases very repeatedly.

*Q: Does this study group have a particular subject or orientation?*

A: The Sudan Studies Association deals with all aspects of Sudanese culture, history, politics, economics, developments, gender, so we have now something like 300 members around the world and we have an annual meeting that usually draws something like 100 people.

*Q: Now to turn to the CPA (Comprehensive Peace Agreement) and that process, what was your understanding of the situation before the CPA came into play?*

A: My understanding was very concrete because I used to be an employee of the Ministry of Southern Affairs.; in 1970 and '71 or so. I have to check the dates but in those periods right after the 9<sup>th</sup> of June declaration declared regional autonomy for the South and led ultimately to the Addis Ababa accords and peace between the Northern Government of Nimeiri and the Anyanya, which had been fighting for secession. I was in the South with Nimeiri and with Joseph Garang, the Minister of Southern Affairs, so I was pretty much involved in that daily.

*Q: What was your role?*

A: As a journalist working for the newspapers that were produced from that ministry. I was really happy that from the ratification of the Addis Ababa accords from '71 or '72 until 1983, peace was established, and there was goodwill and potential development and no war. And this was after many years of war from essentially '55 to 1970 or '71. I knew that peace was possible, but it had to be on the basis of developing mutual trust and accountability. Now, my optimism went to despair after 1983 or even earlier in the '80s when Nimeiri began to erode the principles of the Addis Ababa accords, and consequently, when the SPLA was formed, the Sudan People's Liberation Army, and its political wing SPLM (Sudan People's Liberation Movement); this was just horrible because it meant that the agreement which had been so carefully structured had failed. This ushered in from '83 to the signing of the CPA in 2005 after two decades of horrible warfare, even a larger scale and more destructive and longer than the previous period.

*Q: You knew both sides, so what your understanding of what triggered this break up?*

A: What triggered this basically was on a number of levels: Nimeiri had three, let's say, incarnations. His first was pro-Soviet; it was during the Cold War, and he was an Arab Nationalist and sort of Socialist. His next incarnation, after '71, having come to power in '69, was an abrupt break and indeed the destruction of the Sudanese communist party; and then he turned to be pro-West, pro-Capitalist and really made an about face, something like what happened with Sadat. But in the third incarnation that seemed to wither away, he became an Islamist. He was the one who introduced Islamic law or an Islamic state, essentially. He was the one who had the application of the harsh measures of so-called *hadoud* crucifixion and execution, and it was Nimeiri who executed a leading Sudanese intellectual for apostasy. And so at this point, the hope and future from a Southern point of view was lost. It was, as Abel Allaire said, too many agreements dishonored. The Northern people were interested only in an Arab and Islamic identity, which they sought to impose on the country by force. So that was the straw that broke the camel's back. And when the Bor mutiny took place in '83, John Garang (American military-trained PhD in economics from a U.S. university) said enough was enough. Rather than complete his assignment to suppress that mutiny, he used that moment to create the SPLA and usher in these 20 plus years of war.

Of course, the difference with the SPLA is that their goal under the leadership of Garang was to have an united and secular Sudan whereas the Anyanya had the goal of separating; ironically the goal of separating failed to reach regional autonomy. Now the goal of unity may very well pave the way for actually the creation of two states —so untoward conclusions.

As for the more immediate background of the CPA, huge credit has to go to, first of all, the Carter initiatives and the IGAD efforts to have Northerners and Southerners and regional actors get together on problems that should not be contentious, like guinea worm eradication and other development and drought programs. The idea that he had was if they could just get together in friendship and harmony and cooperation, this could pave the way of trust building.

Carter was totally correct and deserves a lot of behind the scenes credit for getting a whole series of roundtables and talks on Koka Dam and Machakos and Naivasha and finally Abuja even with Darfur. That groundwork was laid by Carter. Clinton, unfortunately, did not pick up on this, I believe, and he was by the force of circumstances, concerned more with global security issues and actually bombed Khartoum, which did not do much to improve communication between Khartoum and Washington.

And then when the administration changed again, the George W. Bush Administration was now playing to a different constituency in the U.S., that is to say, Evangelical Christian, they took a heightened interest in the South. While I have a lot of differences about U.S. policy in other parts of the world, Bush deserves a great deal of credit for coming forward with the political pressure, particularly with the brilliant appointment of Ambassador Danforth to bring the CPA, the so-called Naivasha Accords of January 2005, into fruition.

*Q: Where was the leadership initially of having a CPA process underway with the IGAD? I was thinking about how the leadership was involved in bringing about the start up of the CPA process.*

A: They just kept on having people meet, determining the Declaration of Principles and various memoranda of understanding and deconstructing the huge thorny problems -- political, military, tactical, logistical, security, economic -- and so paring them all out. Solving them in a step-by-step procedure. This approach was used and finally did reach a conclusion.

*Q: Who were the principle leaders in that process?*

A: The principle parties were the SPLA and the Government of Sudan. The rest were facilitators, especially appointments from the Kenyan Government, General Sumbeiywo.

*Q: And for some reason they were willing to cooperate on this process?*

A: They realized that going forward with more war was destabilizing the nine states, creating huge human catastrophe and going nowhere and the solution would never be military and had to be political.

*Q: This is the view of both the North and the South?*

A: Ultimately the view of both, more reluctantly from the North because it did mean that they had to suspend their Islamic images of a Muslim state; recall that Bashir was initially a supporter of Osama bin Laden who resided there for about six years.

That view had to be suspended. It was particularly tricky in Khartoum, because, at least for a third or half of the administration of the National Peoples Congress Party, how it morphed into

the National Islamic Front with Hassan al-Turabi still in the influential king-making position. Consequently, he had to be sidelined for this CPA to go forward. Those are the principle historical, headlines, background to what had to happen.

*Q: What about the CPA process itself once it got started leading up to the agreement?*

A: Leading up to the agreement meant a lot of walking on eggs by all parties because they had to not only sell all the complicated component parts to each other, North/South, but they had to sell them to their military and political leadership within those constituencies. Now for both of those parties, SPLA and Government of Sudan/Khartoum, that was problematic. If the CPA does fail, which it might, one of the reasons is that neither of the parties was elected by anybody. John Garang, certainly very popular, massively popular, was never elected, and there are other constituencies in the South-South dialogue which were not consulted.

In the North, even more dramatically because it was simply a military government with no democratic accountability, voted in again by nobody. And so the weakness of the CPA, (I think I have outlined some of the promises and the strengths and futures which should give us encouragement), but the weakness is that it is on a deep bed of distrust between North and South given 50 years of enmity and violence and bloodshed. But the other weakness is that neither of the parties, especially not the Northern Government, has any way to demonstrate legitimacy beyond the force which they command.

The other part of that same story is that in the North there are many other parties, traditional parties, sacred parties, let's say, like the Umma, and traditional other groups like the National Democratic Alliance with which they are deeply associated or even small parties; I mean there are Baathists and communists and so forth. And officially, even though there is now a Government of National Unity, the GNU, it is a marriage that is not a very happy one because of the two vice presidents after Bashir, one of course is from the North, Taha, and the other from the South, now Salva Kiir. They have many disagreements about domestic and regional policy, most particularly about oil and Darfur and so the clock is ticking.

I should say two clocks are ticking. One, will the CPA itself be sustained for five years? There is a lot of history that suggests it could be another agreement dishonored. But assuming that it does last until 2011 when the referendum should be taking place, we have this 800 pound gorilla sitting on the whole political arena in Sudan: they have practically never had referenda that were honored and binding so why should this one be? And assuming they really do have an internationally supervised and legitimate referendum, the broad feeling is that the South will absolutely vote for separation even though the tragically dying John Garang wanted a unitary secular Sudan that is not on the present drawing board.

*Q: What about the CPA agreement, it had a lot of components to it; are you familiar with each of those components? There is one on security, there was one on oil, boundaries and so on.*

A: On security, the issue has been quite successful. There is essentially peace between the two regions, not necessarily within the two regions because the South still has the Lord's Resistance Army issue in Equatoria and the North still has Darfur to contend with. But the abridgements or infringements on the North-South conflict have been largely well controlled. So security is probably the best success so far.

*Q: Wasn't there something about redeployment of the Northern troops?*

A: Yes. And this has mostly been solved. There are a few places like Eastern Sudan, which is not completely solved. But this is partly because there is a lot of international military presence, sort of separation forces, and they really are peacekeeping forces rather than peacemaking forces. There are joint monitoring teams composed of international observers, SPLA and Government of Sudan forces. So I would say of all the components, the military security and the separate peace monitoring, between the two regions anyway, not so much within them, has been successful.

The part about oil, which is hugely important, and is just going to get more and more and more important because we are up to something like half a million barrels of oil a day from only two principal fields being brought on line with one pipeline, the second one in process and more fields are expected to be brought on line. Southern Sudan has got a huge amount of oil. But almost all the oil is in the South. There is some idea there might be a little bit in Southern Darfur and I have just heard some stories about maybe in the far North in Wadi Halfa. But to date that is not in production in any serious way. The only pipeline is going from the South to the North so this is very problematic. There have been quite a few disputes about the lack of transparency, first of all, in declaring what the revenues are and having the South get its share that was agreed on; so that clearly is a point of contention.

*Q: Is there a commission that is supposed to monitor this?*

A: There are monitoring bodies for all of these principles that have descended from the acceptance, the multi-signed acceptance.

*Q: Petroleum commissions?*

A: Yes, there is a National Petroleum Commission and it functions, but there is the contention that it is not functioning fully.

*Q: Made up of both the North and the South?*

A: Yes.

*Q: What about the Boundary Commission?*

A: The boundary is another issue which maybe under more active contention than any other issue. The traditional boundaries in terms of the old three Southern provinces are pretty much intact. But we have the Upper Nile not resolved; we have Abyei close to oil producing areas and highly contentious in terms of how one interprets where the boundaries should be drawn. A commission was set up, the ABC, Abyei Boundary Commission, made their recommendations, which were probably quite fair, but they were completely rejected by the Northern Government. So Abyei is a potential flashpoint for the collapse of the CPA, particularly as it also intersects with the potential oil aspects.

The Eastern Sudan equally is problematic because that is where the forces have not yet been fully separated; that is where one part of the National Democratic Alliance, of which officially

the SPLA is a member, is still contested near the border area adjoining Eritrea. That is still not resolved. So at least these three, Upper Nile, Hamash Koreb, and Abyei, are not resolved and the CPA was signed with them not being resolved.

*Q: Is anything being done to try to resolve them now?*

A: There is something being done but not enough, and it is still sitting there as a potential flashpoint.

*Q: What is being done?*

A: There are still calls by the overarching CPA authorities to resolve them, but, in fact, it is being discussed periodically but not urgently because Darfur is putting everything in jeopardy. The Government of South Sudan, the GOSS, is pretty much opposed to the government policies in Darfur, except ironically and in a contradictory way they (Darfur) are a part of the same government. There are many different parts for police, civil service, for banking, I do not have it all just in front of my eyes, more or less every structural, any functional part of a state or regional state or a federated state was there, for the fish and game, for wardens, for customs, for transport, for every feature, was provided for in this agreement.

But here is another irony. Even though the CPA is extremely thorough and meticulous and well developed in that respect and it seems to be comprehensive, in fact the big problem with the CPA is that it is not so comprehensive. It seems to be comprehensive relatively to two parties, but, there are so many other parties in Sudan that are in conflict and they are not included distinctly, not present, not included, not participatory.

*Q: Which parties are you referring to?*

A: I am speaking about all the rebel movements in Darfur; I am speaking about the NDA (National Democratic Alliance) in the North; I am speaking about Nubians; I am speaking about Equatorians, and, initially, I was speaking about the other Southern parties, especially the Nuer but lately they have joined in with the Government of South Sudan. So there are so many places that this could break down. The history of broken agreements is so overwhelmingly present that, while I profoundly and sincerely wish that peace and a unitary and secular Sudan could be there. The potential for it not to be unitary and not to be secular or at least not regional or thereby making unity between North and South untenable, is definitely a major factor.

*Q: What is your view about the CPA process? Up to the point of the agreement signing?*

A: I think it was brilliant. Brilliant in terms of having a widely applicable model for conflict resolution, getting people to speak with each other and yet because there were apprehensions that if they broadened the debate then it would have made it much more difficult.

*Q: You mean by involving other people?*

A: By involving other people and parties. And they are probably right. I can easily see why they tried to isolate the CPA to the two principle combatant forces. But by so doing it really is no

longer, or it never really was fully comprehensive, because it was only comprehensive within the combatants— and not with other people with a stake.

*Q: Now we are in the implementation stage, how do you size that up?*

A: We are a year-and-a-half into this implementation, approximately, and of the six-year period we have then just four-and-a-half years to go so we are getting substantially into this. On security it is mostly good, a good story, a positive story. On the unfinished business, it is lamentably still unfinished business; these are the boundary issues.

And on the potential of Darfur, it was essentially only in its infancy. Recall that Darfur, this round of the conflict anyway, broke out in 2003, and it had not reached its more horrendous layers or levels until more recently and Naivasha was just getting itself into its final form by the end of 2004, beginning of 2005 when it was finally signed, so they hoped that, indeed, the CPA would be a model for resolving the conflict in Darfur. Even though it was negotiated in Abuja rather than Kenya, the DPA -- the Darfur Peace Agreement -- was clearly modeled on the CPA and it had all the strengths and weaknesses of the CPA. The strengths being it was consultative and encouraging people to talk under very difficult circumstances. But the DPA is deficient in that one branch of the SLA, the Abdel Wahid faction, and the JEM (Justice and Equality Movement) movement as well as another splinter of JEM were not included; and they are still engaged in combat against the Government of Sudan.

And so if Darfur fails -- and it is looking grim these particular days -- then that could have a ricochet, ripple effect into the CPA too. That means, for example, what will happen with Mini Minawi and Omar Bashi? Will that become a military alliance? Not likely. But they may have to go and join the war against the other rebels. We have got, of course, these other huge issues about AU (African Union) and the UN forces — Blue Hats are building up the AU. And there are so many thorny problems; problems on that horizon that could reverberate straight back into the CPA.

*Q: For example?*

A: For example, if they go back to the Government of National Unity, they could easily collapse the Government of National Unity because Salva Kiir certainly does not want to join or send the SPLA army into Darfur to conquer the SLA; that is more or less the last thing he wants. And the potential for his withdrawal from the GNU (Government of National Unity) is great because, while he certainly did believe and does probably still believe in Garang's mission for a unitary secular Sudan, he knows full well that there is no heart and soul for that in the South; they are fed up with the North and pretty much want to take the oil, take their resources, and the North can just stop bothering them.

*Q: And then the intentions of the North?*

A: The intentions of the North relative to the South in that particular respect is a bit schizophrenic because, on one hand, they do not want to give up the notion of having an Islamic state for all of Sudan in terms of the more extreme ideologically driven members of INF or the National Congress Party. But they also realize that it has been a failure, a military failure, and



they might say maybe it is better to cut our losses and make our Arab Islamic state in the North and let the South just go, because it is consuming our attention and resources.

*Q: Is there some indication in the North that they are thinking that way?*

A: Oh, for sure. Especially for the young men and the families that are fed up with Vietnam-like circumstances where it is just consuming lives and resources which could be used for development in the North.

*Q: Let's turn to the monitoring of the CPA process. What kind of monitoring is taking place, if anything?*

A: We have the security monitoring which is basically 24/7 and there are troops from, I just cannot tell you all the nations but there are Asian and there are Chinese, there are African troops, there are Scandinavian troops, Norwegian. There are troops, I believe, from Nepal, from many different countries that are in this separation force. The biggest success has been is that it really is peacekeeping, unlike Darfur where there is not even any peace to keep.

*Q: And these monitors are under whose auspices?*

A: Under the overall authority of the CPA and I think it has also -- I would have to check the document to be sure about AU versus UN authority -- but I think it is mostly AU. But that is a legal principle. This certainly is the part that is working best.

*Q: And then monitoring of the other components?*

A: The same authority, especially from the host, Kenya, General Sumbeiywo, who is operating under the authority, the host authority of the Kenyan presidency. This would all be found in the legal documents though.

*Q: Is he the active aspect?*

A: He slightly stepped away from the situation, although I just saw him last week in Washington so he is highly engaged in talking about it and playing an influential role. I think his actual position might have -- he has other people on the ground looking out for it, receiving information about any potential violations.

*Q: What role is the international community playing or should be playing?*

A: The international community has to upgrade its role for securing the peace in Darfur. You might say well, we are talking about the CPA. One of the biggest current stumbling blocks for a good resolution of the CPA's objectives is how Darfur unfolds. And I think if it becomes a contest of wills between, let us say, Bush and Bashir whether there are Blue Hats in Darfur or not, I think it may be the case that African Union forces are not adequate in their numbers. But if they have inadequate capacity, let's build up the AU because Bashir will accept the presence of AU then they can move to peacekeeping and separation. But with UN troops -- which Bush insists upon (but I do not know which countries they are coming from because UN troops are not very well suited to be a military invasion force) -- Darfur, while it seems to be a separate issue

and it has some important degrees of separation, it is very much connected. The one thing that the international presence could really work on is the very urgent humanitarian crisis of significant proportion.

Meanwhile, relative to the South, keeping up the positive features, getting the border issue discussions rolling in a substantive way rather than just having reports, study commissions and then having them rejected, getting those border issues resolved and then of course working on the transparency of the oil revenues because those are the big flashpoints. The other practical things of customs, game wardens, banking, those are all ultimately practical problems, which should be able to be ironed out.

In the South, the other thing of critical important for the South is that the infrastructure in the South is almost nonexistent. This includes every basic feature of infrastructure: water, power, roads, schools, clinics, hospitals, staff, civil service; they are mostly not there. And to the extent that Southern aspirations are rising but not fulfilled in these critical aspects, that could make the SPLA hugely unpopular. People's patience is not going to be limitless and the stability of the South is at risk. So the calls for major amounts of aid to the South, which should be able to get going in terms of agricultural productivity, of oil revenues. Unless this goes forward in a much speedier way -- it has been a very slow and hesitating process -- so the international community has a huge opportunity at hand, and if they think it is not urgent that would be a big mistake.

*Q: Are you familiar with a major effort to create a Southern Government system?*

A: Yes, it exists, actually. It existed in embryo form through the SPLA administration; they had some schools, some clinics. Of course, they clearly had a military and political presence but now that kind of structure in wartime is very different than the kind of structure in peacetime. Now something like more than one million people have already returned from Uganda, from Kenya, from Northern Sudan and they have to find some kind of job; they have to find accommodation; they have to find healthy circumstances, safe circumstances and so consequently this is very different.

*Q: What is likely to be the reaction of the North if there is a massive development effort in the South?*

A: Most Northerners do not care. They are fed up with the whole war. I think there are a lot of Northerners, less those who are really ideologically driven, who probably would not really care if the South separated because it has just been such a failed effort at forced marriage. But of course, without any proper elections or debates in a normal public referendum or public forum. People can say things in Khartoum but they will not have any necessary effect because the government is not accountable to them.

*Q: What about the European involvement and other than the U.S.?*

A: The EU is very involved and they have played a positive role, but now it is time to pull in the pledges for development aid for the South. The time for political positioning is over and the money really needs to be forthcoming. The stability and security of the South unto itself is critical, whether they stay together or separate from the North.

The greater presence of Christians in the South also helps to bind them more to the EU. The allies that the SPLA had were more often found in America and Western Europe so that is certainly something that the EU has to take much account. There are so many demands these days about Third World Asia, Africa, the Middle East and South America, but this is clearly something that has important implications for Europe, not least of which refugee issues, human rights issues, and these are quite prominent within European debates. These days throughout the press of the world, there is lots of attention on Darfur, not so much action, but the South is falling off the radar scope and, unless it can regain some prominence, it could just simply slide back into a despairing situation.

*Q: What about the role of the UN, apart from the Blue Helmets?*

A: The UN has been a key actor in other areas, especially UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization); all of these important agencies of the UN were providing relief, education, health in refugee camps especially in Kenya for the Lost Boys and Uganda but also elsewhere like Central African Republic and to a lesser extent in Ethiopia and even in Egypt. I should say virtually all UN agencies with focused concerns have been brought into action. But the UN always has its particular problems of lack of funding and political debate and intrigue and being used as a forum for all the different parties.

*Q: Is there a role for the UN in trying to bring the parties together even on the various components?*

A: I would advocate more at the African regional level as has happened with the leadership of the Kenyan government. It was more personal, more direct, both in the strengths and weaknesses aspect that I mentioned before; the right parties could be brought in contact with the right parties without a lot of other static and interference.

*Q: Is it possible to revive the IGAD process?*

A: Yes, I think it is totally possible, because it never was undermined; it was legitimized; it got Naivasha to the finish line and if we could get on the same spirit of the prominent actors in Africa that would be from South Africa, from Nigeria, from Ethiopia and, of course, lesser but still really important, from Kenya and Uganda, this will help.

*Q: Anybody talking about that?*

A: Not too much. I think that South Africa has got its huge problems; and meanwhile, Nigeria has its own electoral issues; it has got the Delta problems and, of course, they have been hosting the DPA conferences in Abuja. There is just so much attention anybody can muster. The South is falling away from that level of high focus.

*Q: Any particular initiative the U.S. should be taking?*

A: Development aid for the South; making the South viable, whether it stays in a unitary Sudan or does not.

*Q: There was some talk about a new representative, was there?*

A: Yes, Andrew Natsios, who has just been appointed, I think maybe yesterday.

*Q: How do you see his role?*

A: I think it will be really good. He has played a positive role. He is committed to the principles of the CPA. I think he is, as far as I understand totally on the same page as Senator Danforth was.

*Q: Do you know what his instructions are?*

A: I think it is exactly to nudge the CPA forward and also deal with the interconnectiveness of Darfur. The gap between the Danforth resignation and Natsios's appointment probably accounts for the fact that the South fell off the radar scope. Needless to say Afghanistan and Iraq are major distractions for the Bush Administration and consequently there are only so many places and things you can say in 24 hours. The Natsios appointment brings a new sense that we are serious, that we have to go forward, this is a unique opportunity that needs to be pursued, so how it unfolds it is unclear because he just started.

But I think it represents a good initiative. Indeed the U.S. has under the Bush Administration and under the present circumstances has heightened the role of Africa massively. Africa was always just viewed through European ex-colonial lenses. Africa had been from a military point of view under EUCOM and now there is active discussion to create an African command structure for U.S. military. The U.S. is clearly from the words of Ambassador Rannenberger, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African affairs, shifting belatedly; it is pretty late, but they finally are shifting gears and seeing that Africa has key strategic resources, key security issues, key questions about Islam and about terrorism. We could now have a small investment with big return.

And I think that there has been a tidal shift in the last six to twelve months or so, maybe 18 months, within Department of State that Africa has been neglected. Luckily we did not make too many mistakes so now is the chance to really have a very fresh perspective.

The U.S.'s impending rivalry with China in Africa is already at hand, particularly in Sudan but everywhere. China is coming along like gangbusters economically, politically, development infrastructure projects in Sudan, with dams, with bridges, with oil, with pipelines, refineries, with shipping and military. And the U.S., because of its boycott of Sudan descending from the attempted assassination of Mubarek, the U.S. actually has very few cards to play in Sudan, and China is the really much more powerful actor. So this is a whole new domain in foreign policy.

*Q: You said that there is an effort to pull the U.S. Government resources together and get new leadership...*

A: It is actually underway in many of the military fora, and to some extent State think tanks and colleges and teaching centers. As an example, they have just had at the National Defense University a whole daylong seminar with hundreds of people in attendance, key speakers and actors focusing on the CPA. That is pretty much unprecedented.

*Q: Is there a special task force or anything like that?*

A: I am not involved exactly in the planning circles, but I think that both within military planning, intelligence as well as diplomacy, all of these agencies of American foreign policy are pretty much on the same page, and they realize what is at stake even in Newport (Naval War College) they have gone from having basically no courses on Africa to one or two and already this year they will be offering five courses on Africa. With full-time people and part-time people now involved. So that is unprecedented.

*Q: Are there any special initiatives to be taken re each of these sort of commissions or these sub points?*

A: The main initiative that I am hearing as adjunct at the War College myself, is that we have to find an approach which authenticates and legitimizes African security objectives and finds what we have as our security objectives in America and where we can marry those two. If we can work together on those it is basically the same mentality that we had for Naivasha courts. If we can find common ground, maybe not on the biggest things that are on our mind or their biggest things, but we can still find common ground, then there is hope to work together and expand the areas of cooperation. So joint security interests seem to be where we are headed. I think it is a reasonable and realistic and appropriate way to go on issues even beyond the Sudan but, in fact, a general architecture: a mentality, policy, large strategic framework that can apply to the continent as well as to Sudan or to the subsets of Sudanese issues.

*Q: Is there anything we have not touched on or that you would especially like to bring out?*

A: If I had the full CPA in front of me we could have gotten more detail on some of the legalistic principles. So, I think I did hit the principle pivot points, where there are strengths, where there are weaknesses, where credit should be given, where problem areas lie. So I think as a sort of overall summary that is where we are on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September, 2006.

*Q: Are you optimistic or pessimistic for the future?*

A: As a human being I like to cautiously optimistic. As a veteran Sudanist I am an habitual pessimist. If I would shine up my crystal ball and wonder what happens in 2011, at this particular moment I think that there will be two countries, because there is just not the grassroots effort in the North to make it attractive to Southerners to be together.

*Q: It is really up to the North to pull it together?*

A: The North has an opportunity that they are letting fall through their fingers. It is really up to them to be democratic, to be open, to be inclusive in a fundamental way that they more or less have never experienced because they are so wed to an Arab-Islamic identity that antagonizes Southerners deeply. They still could turn it around in a few years, perhaps a change in regime in Khartoum might have that happen; but then again, even full scale democracy that has repeatedly been in Khartoum did not get these things solved either.