

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

Interview #3 – Executive Summary

Interviewer: Barbara Nielsen
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The interviewee was a USAID contractor from 1998 – 2002, working closely with the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD). The interviewee credits General Sumbeiywo with breathing new life into the IGAD process during this time. The interviewee stresses the importance of the Statement of Principles agreed to by both sides in 1993, which included a commitment on the part of the Khartoum government to accept the idea of an autonomous South, and that Islamic law would not apply to the South. These two bedrock principles laid a foundation for the CPA.

The interviewee provides an analysis of the Clinton Administration's Sudan policy, chronicling the shift to a more balanced policy that occurred around 2000. In commenting on the success thus far of the implementation of the CPA, the interviewee points out that one of the difficulties inherent in the agreement is the fact that the SPLA does not speak for all of the South, that the Southern Sudan is as much a mosaic as the entire country, with the Dinkas simply the largest and most dynamic tribal group, but by no means the only important one.

In terms of the negotiations themselves, the positive, behind-the-scenes role of Norway, the US and the U.K. is highlighted. While IGAD is credited with successfully managing these very delicate negotiations, the U.S., in this interviewee's opinion, breathed life into the process at a crucial stage and kept it "from collapsing altogether." The important role played by U.S. domestic political opinion is also explained. The results of Congressional passage of the 2002 Sudan Peace Act, in the view of this interviewee, are decidedly mixed; he is critical of those in the U.S. Congress who see things in simplistic, black/white terms, in which the South is entirely "good" and the North "bad."

This interviewee concludes that the CPA was successful in achieving two broad objectives: it stopped the fighting, and it established a mechanism that gave the South a chance to achieve its legitimate future aspirations, while the North had a chance to prevent the country from splitting apart. The interviewee believes the negotiation was "pretty tough," and that it achieved "about all we could manage," since many feared that "if it were expanded, it would just fall of its own weight."

Finally, the uniqueness of John Garang's vision for holding the country together is stressed, along with the idea that Garang was an individual of such stature and

charisma that he could have played a role in resolving the situation in Darfur. Unfortunately, Darfur has become a constraint on U.S. involvement in the CPA implementation process, already rendered extremely difficult by the lack of infrastructure, trained manpower, and the like, which severely hinder all development.

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Q. Let's begin with your involvement in the Sudan Comprehensive Peace Agreement process. What role did you play in those negotiations and then in the implementation process?

A: My involvement with Sudan itself began in 1976. I served there from 1976 to 1979, and then, from 1982 to 1985, I was the Director in the Office of East African Affairs. At that time that office included Sudan. In that sense I was among the people around in the late '90s who had some Sudan experience. I did not have any formal responsibility in the sense of being part of the Africa Bureau here at State but, between February 1998 and May of 2002 I was on contract at USAID working for the Greater Horn of Africa Initiative or GHAI. The Greater Horn of Africa Initiative included Sudan in terms of the region it covered and it worked closely with, among other organizations, the InterGovernmental Authority for Development, IGAD, the headquarters of which are in Djibouti. So in my AID capacity on the one hand I was involved with AID missions in East Africa and the Horn of Africa, working on, among other things, issues related to IGAD. The relevance of that is that at one point IGAD was given the lead responsibility for facilitating the negotiations in a formal sense. I was involved, and had contact with the Kenyans who were playing a role. Now, the man who over the longer term played a key role was General Sumbeiywo, and I got to meet him, attending different IGAD meetings with him. His predecessor was a Kenyan diplomat and that man felt very constrained by his own political authority, which is to say, President Moi, and we were not very happy with him. He seemed to be excessively reluctant, not dynamic enough, and so I was among those who interacted with him and then took part in the discussions

within our own Government over how we felt about this, what to do about it and from time to time in Nairobi I would meet with him and try to urge him to do more.

In contrast, when General Sumbeiywo took over, clearly at that point President Moi had decided that it was in his interest either as a national or regional leader to permit him to play a more active role and indeed he himself also recognized that. This is an example of how I was involved, but not necessarily either as the lead person or the central person in this, but again there was a group of us over time that were those who in our day-to-day discussions, in our day-to-day exchanges, formulated the different policies and approaches we took. Obviously the ambassador in Nairobi in those days played a role in this process as well. The other way I got involved was that in the late '90s, during the Clinton Administration, at a time when they were trying to keep the IGAD process alive, which is to say the negotiating process that brought the Government and the Southerners -- the SPLA, SPLM -- together, I was asked once to attend a session in Nairobi, I'm sorry in Addis Ababa. My recollection is that the talks had begun earlier in the '90s and, among other things, a basic Statement of Principles had been agreed to that really laid out the broad outlines of what ultimately became the Agreement. The Statement of Principles was very important because in that Statement of Principles, which I believe was developed in 1993, the Government in Khartoum accepted the idea of an autonomous South and that Islam would not apply in the South. Now, I may need to be corrected, but my recollection is that those principle elements that later underlay the basic negotiations were agreed to, but more importantly, notwithstanding all the problems that had existed, all the fighting and the efforts by the regime in Khartoum to push the Islamic envelope, they never withdrew their commitment, at least their official commitment to that. In the negotiations that I attended we did raise this point with the Government officials: "Will you still accept this as the basic underlying element of the negotiation?" and the answer was always "Yes."

Q: The reason you raised it was because you had some doubts?

A: Yes, of course, I mean, you know this phrase, “If you walk like a duck and quack like a duck,” well, basically their whole behavior otherwise was very antagonistic to the South. This was in the late ‘90s. You know there was terrible famine, there was fighting, there were some serious battles in the oil fields up in the Upper Nile. The Government was still stridently Islamic. Turabi was still in power in those days and so, in the context of the negotiations, if they ever withdrew their commitment, the negotiations would have collapsed.

Q: Why would they ever withdraw their commitment if they could get away with behaving however they chose, but still paying lip service?

A: Well, that’s just it. Let’s at least get lip service. Then the question is can we get more than lip service. In a sense, by definition we did because they got the Agreement. Now of course there’s still criticism about how faithfully they’re implementing the Agreement, but in terms of the history of the negotiations, I will just say that in the late ‘90s, which is when I got involved, there was a feeling that it was absolutely essential that at a minimum the Northern regime maintained its commitment to, I think it was called, the Declaration of Principles, the DoP. Now, in Addis, I think it was 1998, there was a negotiation and it wasn’t quite clear how well they were going to adhere to the DoP. For example, one of the issues was where was the Northern boundary of the Southern Sudan and at times we thought there was an agreement in principal at the time that later seemed to collapse. It wasn’t a particularly successful negotiation.

Now, the reason I was sent out was because they wanted someone whose first name was “Ambassador” to be there so that they could tell the press that we attach importance to this, because we’re sending an ambassador to be there. You could argue that it was fairly cynical given the Clinton Administration’s approach to the Sudan. They were extremely negative toward the Government in Khartoum and they were actively working through sanctions and otherwise to put pressure on that regime. I would contrast that to the later period, say around 2000, the last year of the Clinton Administration, when they seemed to take a somewhat more, let me say, balanced view, that is to say they remained very

skeptical about the bona fides of the regime in Khartoum. They continued to put pressure on them in a variety of ways. I think there was a feeling that the policy that they had developed was not as successful as they had hoped. Around that time the Foreign Minister of Sudan in some public statement said, “The Government of the United States is trying to isolate Sudan, but it’s more isolated than Sudan is,” which was probably accurate. That is to say we had very little support internationally at that time for really putting pressure on the Sudan. None of the other developed countries was really going as far as we were. Certainly the Arabs were supporting Sudan and so forth. I think toward the end of the Clinton Administration, when they brought in Harry Johnston, a former Congressman from Florida, to be a Special Envoy, they began to ratchet up their involvement.

Now, I attended a negotiating session in Nairobi around that time and met with people like Riek Machar, who at that point was a Southern leader who had broken with Garang and was, if you will, aligned with the Northern Government. In fact, our Charge for Khartoum at the time (based in Nairobi), and I had a meeting with Riek Machar in which we pointed out to him that that night the authorities in Khartoum had raided his villa in Khartoum. Riek Machar looked very disenchanted. He represented that he was Nuer -- as distinct from being Dinka. He represented, if you will, a challenge to John Garang’s primacy in the South, and earlier he had reached an agreement with the North. Ironically, his official position was that the South should be independent, and yet he was working this arrangement with the North. Now, today, he is Salva Kiir’s deputy. These guys went back and forth.

Q: What does that say about how much you can trust them?

A: I don’t know what you can say about any of these people. I think they seriously negotiated the Agreement. They negotiated very seriously. It was a tough negotiation, but you know it remains to be seen how it works out. It is a very delicately balanced negotiation. As difficult as it was, it was only successful up to a point. It was more than

had ever been done before, but it was only successful up to a point. I just wanted to say that I attended that earlier session in Addis and I attended the session in Nairobi.

Q: The Nairobi session in 1998?

A: My recollection is that I started with AID in 1998, so I don't think it was before then and the Nairobi session was probably 1999 or maybe 2000, I just don't know. I'd have to go back and look at my personal papers. The interesting thing about the 1999 Nairobi session was that we met separately with the Government delegation and with the Southern delegation and they briefed us. It was very interesting because Salva Kiir was the head of the Southern delegation. He was rather quiet and he allowed a man named Pagan Amum to really do most of the speaking. Pagan Amum was a senior military officer and he was fairly impressive. Salva Kiir didn't hog the spotlight or anything. I mention that because recently, with the death of John Garang, Salva Kiir has stepped forward and he is known for being quiet, and, in effect, not that kind of a glad hander. Pagan Amum is one of the top members of the Southern Government now. These personalities are still out there and some of their personality characteristics were apparent even then.

On the Government side, there was the man who was Foreign Minister at the time. He has a very outgoing personality. Ismail was his name. He's now an Advisor on Foreign Affairs because the Foreign Minister is a Southerner. I would attempt to ingratiate myself by speaking Arabic. One of the members of the delegation was a man named Nafie al-Nafie. He is one of the Islamic hardliners. I remember him looking at me with a fairly beady eye. You could tell that he was not sure he was all that comfortable with having the Americans in the room. Actually, at one point, we spoke privately with Ismail trying to persuade him about something important. I can't remember specifically why. Perhaps the most interesting thing about the Government delegation was that it was full of Southerners, Equatorians, which is to say members of the far south of the Sudan who resent the Dinkas and who were not necessarily all that supportive of the SPLA/ SPLM. So, one of the things that came out of that session was a recognition that the Government

could appear to be willing to work with the South because, after all, they had all these Southerners on their delegation, who would then describe the human rights violations and various other problems of the SPLA. I don't know how important that was in the negotiation, but it's a very important element of the way things are in the South. Now, the last report I saw said things are going reasonably well in Eastern Equatoria. The South is, in terms of tribes, as much of a mosaic as the Sudan as a whole, whereas the SPLA is primarily a Dinka group and the Dinka are the largest and the most dynamic tribal group in the South. However, they are only one group and they historically have had their problems with the Nuer and the Equatorians and so forth. Again, that was evident in 1999 and you could see the Government's ability to in effect manipulate that tribal situation.

Now, the other way I got involved, certainly while Johnston was the Special Envoy and the Clinton Administration was still in office, was to attend a number of sessions of the so-called "IGAD Partners Forum" in Rome or in Oslo. As a result, I got to know some of the people, like Hilde Johnson of Norway. It was around that time that we began to see that Norway could play a very useful role. On the one hand, they were eager to take part. On the other hand, as one of them pointed out to me, they are a developed country. They've got a lot of money from oil, but they're not EU, they're not in the European Union and that gives them a kind of independence different from that of, say a country like the Netherlands, which would have to go back and work within the EU consensus. Now, that said, the Brits are also part of the EU. They were the other member of the Triad. Norway played a very useful role. They brought real diplomatic capabilities and a willingness to work very hard. They developed relationships, particularly between Hilde Johnson and John Garang. They provided another valid and capable diplomatic voice to our own and that we found very useful. In fact, Norwegian Ambassador Vraalsen (in Washington at that time and later as the UN Special Humanitarian Representative in Sudan) has remained very active in Sudanese matters. He was the Coordinator for the humanitarian affairs at one point under the UN and now I think he chairs one of the important follow up committees. Around that time, the U.S. delegation included John Prendergast, who has remained very much involved with Sudan. Back then he was in the

Government. He was on the NSC staff. He brought a lot of energy and he also had some strong views. He was among the Clintonites who were very skeptical of the North and I think that affected his attitude. That said, he worked hard to move the negotiations forward and now, of course, he's an important public voice on these issues.

There was a host of issues that we had to deal with, particularly in the IGAD Partners Forum. The Egyptians wanted to find a way to get in. We frankly wanted to keep Norway, Britain, and the U.S. together with Sumbeiywo. We had no trouble with IGAD playing its role, but that worked as long as you had a person like Sumbeiywo, who was a military officer. He brought an African sensitivity to what we were doing, but, in contrast to his predecessor, he actually could get something done.

I think that the IGAD countries -- Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Uganda -- took their roles seriously and, parenthetically, they played a similar role for Somalia. Kenya was uniquely able to come up with someone who had credibility with everybody, who was the kind of person you could respect and so, in a sense, that took care of the African side of the equation. We also felt that way about him. As a result, he could play an extremely useful role between the parties of the negotiations. He was patient. He could be tough when he had to. He could put ideas out when he had to and all the rest. There are times in a situation like this when we don't want to be in the lead, when we do want an African out there and what you don't want is an African who has no standing. It's got to be someone who really has some substance. I think Sumbeiywo was critically important to this whole process and because his predecessor wasn't as good as he was. It's clear that it wasn't just that there was a Kenyan out there who could front for us. It was that there was a Kenyan who could pick up the African diplomatic task that somebody had to do. Given the trouble between Ethiopia and Eritrea and the problems in Somalia, it really was only a Kenyan, I think, who could do that and the Sudanese went along with this -- both sides, the North and the South.

Q: Yes, I was thinking about the IGAD organization. It's name would not suggest that it was primarily to resolve conflict situations, but it must have been initially for development?

A: Yes, indeed there were two D's, it was for Drought and Development. It emerged out of the 1980's drought when the countries of East Africa realized that they just had to come together and cooperate. In fact, this was the underlying notion behind the Greater Horn of Africa Initiative, which was to try to anticipate both natural disasters and conflicts and try to find a way to help these countries resolve these problems. Neither IGAD nor the GHAI were howling successes. At one point one of the D's was dropped and it was just IGAD with one D. It provided a forum for these countries to deal with each other. Now, clearly in something like the Eritrean war just overwhelmed IGAD. There was no way IGAD could deal with it given the personalities involved. But in the Sudanese context, the Sudanese, again both sides, said, "Yes, this is a good sort of chapeau underneath which to work." Then the IGAD countries themselves figured, "Fine, if the IGAD label helps you, fine." They were willing to take on that role. Then, because Sudan was relatively successful, they were willing to try Somalia, so that by now it has evolved into something more than a development sort of coordinating group. The IGAD Partners Forum was a device to bring the donors to look at what was going on. The IGAD Partners Forum looks at Somalia as well and whatever else that needs to be done, but it provided a device to coordinate donor response to the Sudan issue and, in effect, to brief the French and the Dutch and the other people who weren't directly involved. As a practical matter, it provided a means by which you kept them informed and involved as donors, but also kept them at arm's length in terms of getting involved. For most of them, that was fine. I think the Dutch and the Italians occasionally wanted to get in a little more than that.

What happened, I guess you could say, during that period when I was relatively involved, was that we began to breathe a little life into the IGAD process. We kept the whole thing from collapsing altogether and we established what ultimately evolved into the negotiating process whereby IGAD, under the person of Sumbeiywo, actually managed

the negotiations. The U.S., Norway and Britain played the major behind-the-scenes diplomatic role, which meant that at any given moment we were dealing bilaterally with the parties together with Sumbeiywo. I mean there were any number of combinations going on.

Q: What kinds of things did we contribute, expertise or financial support?

A: Well, yes. Some of it was intellectual ideas: "Try this. Do that." Some of it was at a critical point in the Nuba Mountains talks, for example, to have people who could actually go there and be military observers or whatever. The other thing was back in Washington. As long as there was a feeling that there was a serious negotiation underway and that we were playing a useful role, there was much less pressure from the Hill to "do something about Sudan," in contrast to the earlier period, when people were screaming for sanctions and even more than that. As the negotiations moved on and seemed to take on a life of their own, there was much less, say, for example, pressure to do something about slavery in the Sudan. One of the things that characterized the Sudan was that here was a strong domestic constituency that was very sympathetic to the South. There was the African American community. There was the evangelical community. People like Bill Frist actually went to the South and did medical work. Senator Brownback and Congressman Tancredo went out there and they would say, "It's terrible what we've seen." There's a sympathy there for the South, but there's also a kind of unwillingness to go all the way toward independence, and that means a negotiation with the North.

Q: An unwillingness on the part of the supporters in the Congress?

A: Yes, that's right, or more broadly even in the U.S. Government. One of the things I did when I was in Addis was I had a conversation with Prime Minister Meles and I asked him, "What do you feel about the South?" Ethiopia was one of the so-called front line states. He said, "Independence for the South would be disastrous for the rest of us in the region." That was not part of the negotiation per se, but, because of who I was, I had this

meeting and I could legitimately pick up this issue and whatever he said we reported. It's part of the broad framework. Again, I was not a central person in this, but I was part of the group that included a lot of different people that were involved. Anyway, I was saying, I think in this period in the late '90s we managed to keep the thing alive. We found that you'd have a meeting, the meeting wouldn't be too successful, but you'd agree to meet again in three months or six months or whatever it was, then we'd get together in Oslo and strategize or whatever the right word would be.

One of the things that happened, that at least to me seemed important, though not everybody agrees, was in the year 2000. The CSIS, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, had an exercise where they took a look at the Sudan issue. Now, I was one of those who took part in that. In fact, in a way, the successor of that is the so-called USIP Sudan Peace Forum. But the CSIS group was a group of people, some in government, some outside the government, some formerly in government, that had in common, one way or another, that we knew something about Sudan. We'd either been there or studied it or what have you. I think there may have been a couple of Sudanese involved as well. We were not comfortable with the way things were going. There was something to what Foreign Minister Ismail said about us being more isolated than them. There was a sense that nothing was being accomplished. The war was going on. It was a stalemate. Neither side seemed to be able to win. Our interests in the region were not getting anywhere, and I remember one of the conclusions reached early on was that the most important first step was to stop the fighting. Anyway, this group met over an extended period of time and it resulted in a sort of a blueprint that CSIS put out. Now, some people think that that CSIS blueprint was almost like a briefing memo for the Bush Administration, because when it was being done no one knew who was going to be the next President. I'm not sure it was quite that simple, but the fact was a lot of the ideas were taken on by the Bush Administration. The Bush Administration in effect decided early on to give the Sudan question fairly high priority and to really make a serious effort to having these negotiations succeed, and that's what happened. Now my time with AID ended in May of 2002 and so that really was the end of my direct involvement with the

various people. But the really important talks took place during the first term of the Bush Administration.

Q: You mentioned the importance of the Norwegians and kinds of assistance they were providing. What role did the UK play?

A: The UK was among those that were very much involved. The man that they had playing a key role was a man who in fact was the Ambassador in Sudan, and the British treat Sudan as a Middle Eastern country. Right this minute I don't know what specific thing they may have done. These discussions usually led to a general agreement on what to do next. There were just a lot of informal conversations. I must admit I can't remember everything. I know that we would have meetings. I remember in Oslo we had an all-day IGAD Partners Forum and Hilde Johnson said, "All right, let's the three of us get together and talk a little more," and John Prendergast, who was terribly intense, was afraid that we might let the Northerners off the hook. It's hard to remember the exact sequence of how the different ideas became established. I think a lot of that was done after I was no longer involved, when they got down increasingly to specifics. Of course at one point Senator Danforth became the Special Envoy. I didn't get too involved with him. I think by then I was beginning to move out of the picture.

Q: Was it important that Congress pass the Sudan Peace Act in 2002?

A: Well, it kept the pressure on, of course. You could argue how effective that has been. I mean, one of the arguments that takes place is that one group passionately feels that, without pressure, nothing is going to happen in Sudan. The other group feels that you need a somewhat more balanced policy. There are some people who think that John Garang pulled the wool over our eyes, that he was a dictator as bad as any of the others, and corrupt. and all the rest. To talk about the Southerners like they are some sort of angels is just annoying. Some people see this as very much black and white. There are Arabs and Africans. One is good and one is bad. Some people say, "You know, we have broad interests in the region and in Sudan, and we'd better be careful how far we go with

this.” On the other hand, what the North has done to the South is just outrageous. It’s terrible. The Canadians were running one of the oil companies there and some of these people put tremendous pressure for the Canadians to get out. And so, they’re out and what’s changed? Nothing. Nothing’s changed. In fact, if anything, you don’t have their effort, to the extent that they could try, to keep the Sudanese honest. There are Chinese and Malaysians and Indians and people like that that could care less about human rights and so on. These people that put the pressure on, feel it was a moral victory: “The Canadians have no right being complicit in the development of Sudanese oil because the Government is evil and therefore you shouldn’t have a thing to do with it.” Of course, in more broad terms, 9/11 has changed everything. The Sudanese started to cooperate in meaningful ways on something we have attached a lot of importance to. Anyway, now you have the Agreement, and the Agreement has its own terms and its own problems. Whether you like it or not, when you come to Southern Sudan, it’s probably the least developed part of Africa. It’s a huge region with no roads or anything. People who haven’t been to school have to run this government. There are also all the complaints about how the West and East (of Sudan) weren’t involved while the negotiation was going on.

I think what people lose sight of was that there were two broad objectives. One was to stop the fighting, because as long as the fighting went on there were just terrible human costs, not only the battles, but the destruction that took place where people lived or tried to live. Displaced persons, refugees, famine. The other was to establish a mechanism that would give the South a chance to achieve its legitimate future aspirations whatever they may be and to give the North a chance to play their cards right to prevent the country from splitting apart, and in the process to give the South some chance to get at the wealth that it deserved, that it wasn’t getting otherwise. In that sense, I think the CPA or the negotiation could be deemed a success. But there’s no question that it also created an arrangement of other issues that now the international community and the Sudanese have to deal with.

Q: Would there have been some way for us to play our role differently in the negotiation stage that might have prevented some of the problems with the CPA?

A: I think in a theoretical sense the answer is “yes.” I mean, many of us, including the people who were negotiating it, realized that this was not satisfactory. People like Sadeq al-Mahdi and some of the other Southern politicians were saying, ” You know, the Southerners are not the only people that have a problem with this Government. You should take that into account.” But I think that there was a feeling that this negotiation was pretty tough and it was about all we could manage. I think there was a fear that if it were expanded, it would just fall of its own weight. It would be just too difficult and you can debate whether that was a good thing to do or not. Nobody at that point figured that John Garang was going to get killed or die because there was a sense that he had a stature and a vision of the so-called New Sudan, that once you had this Agreement, then you put him as a Vice President. That adds a certain dimension to Northern politics that he uniquely was capable of doing. Without John Garang, some of these assumptions are cast in doubt.

Q: What made him a figure of such an important stature as a national leader?

A: Well, first of all he really did have a certain charisma. He had a certain standing. Certainly in the South, but also in the North; he had been in the army. He knew some of these guys, and he articulated a vision that at one and the same time would move the South forward, but was not necessarily destructive of the Sudan as a country. He called it “New Sudan.” Basically, what he said was that, in Sudan’s history as an independent state, Southern Sudan had not just been ruled by the North, but it has been ruled by a relatively small minority, and the Sudan, including the North, includes a lot of other people, like the Darfurians and the people in the East. They all have their bill of particulars against the Government and so, if we can achieve an agreement that effectively transforms the politics of the whole country, then Sudan will transform itself from this ostensibly Arab country to a truly cosmopolitan country where everybody is represented. That was his vision and he represented something more than just the

Southerners who wanted independence. Indeed, he probably was in the minority. Most everybody thinks that the vast majority of the South wants independence. Not everybody agrees that that's going to be good for everybody, though. I can tell you that the North traditionally has had nothing but contempt for the South, even the people who are friendly. It's more than racism. Its contempt for people you see as beneath you.

Q: John Garang's vision really was unique.

A: I'm sure there are a few other people that share his vision, who have been with the SPLA and who have stuck with them through all of these difficult years. When you say "what is it about him?," there aren't that many people around in an environment like that that have that vision. Ironically, the other one with a vision is Hassan Turabi. His vision involves converting everybody to Islam. Turabi is the other big thinker in Sudan.

Q: Has he been marginalized at this point? As a result of the agreements?

A: I think he's been politically marginalized, not by the Agreement, but by the fact that President Bashir basically found a way to hem him in. It's hard to know whether he's been marginalized intellectually. There you get into things that go beyond Sudan. On the one hand, he had tremendous stature in the world of Islam as a thinker, but on the other hand, to the extent that his thinking led to terrorism and some of the excesses, I just wonder whether the kind of position he had 10 years ago is still true.

Q: What was the role of the UN, the EU and the African Union as players along with the IGAD partners?

A: Institutionally the African Union has not been very much involved. Institutionally, the UN is. The UN mission is to make sure that the Agreement is implemented. The European Union has not been too important politically. Individual European countries have been, and the EU will clearly be an important source of aid. Politically, of the three you mentioned, the UN is the most significant. Garang was very much the focal point of

everybody's attention on the South. It was sort of whatever he agreed to that's the way you kind of figured you could go and because of who he was. There was a working assumption that he could deliver the goods. In fact, it wasn't that simple. We know now that there were some real strains on this and, shortly before he died in late 2004, there was something of a standoff between him and Salva Kiir. At the time of the negotiations, there was a working assumption that Garang was the key and that he would be around to take the lead afterwards.

Another issue is the Darfur War because, if there were no Darfur War, the political standing of the North probably would be a lot better than it is. Basically, they finally extricated themselves from the South and immediately put their foot in the bucket in Darfur, and they've been at it ever since. That's had a kind of a negative effect on the North. The North's attitude is, "We get no respect. We reach agreement. We make tough choices, and now this is the thanks we get."

The other thing is there was a hope that Garang could play a role in helping resolve Darfur. Maybe Salva Kiir can, but he just doesn't have the same personality, the same standing and so forth, and the same desire to get involved in some thing like John Garang did. Another thing that has happened is in the South itself. Clearly, it's a tremendous task for the Southerners to do all the things that they are expected to do. Just take something like discipline in their army. It doesn't have the training. It's essentially a guerrilla force. It will be a long time.

In the North, they may be too clever by half. They've found a way to virtually neutralize whatever political standing the South was going to have. For example, on the one hand, they have made sure that the North kept the Ministry of Oil, Ministry of Finance, and other key ministries. On the other hand, wherever there was a Southern minister, there was a Northern deputy who probably was more powerful. I just can't help but believe that the North figures that they can either manipulate the South or manipulate the situation. All that said, I think that, in their own way, they're faithfully implementing the Agreement. There was a big flap over oil payments, and then it turned out that the North

had paid the oil. There's a lot of misunderstanding, misinformation, rumors and so forth going on in the South. I think as often as not the Southerners are excessively suspicious, not that they have no reasons to be suspicious, but I don't know how many times we've gotten reporting from our Consulate in Juba where the Southerner they're talking to is convinced that the North has done something wrong and the comment is that there is no evidence that backs the case. I mean it's not surprising that they're suspicious of the North.

Q: Were they doing monitoring to be able to verify the facts?

A: Oh, that's another thing. It's going to take forever to get all the right monitors and all the aid programs going. Given the nature of things, they never move as fast as you want. Inevitably there is going to be corruption, there are going to be other problems, but they're not necessarily fatal, it's just that it's going to take a while. The real issue is whether the Northerners really get too cute and whether the Southerners lose faith. At times, it gets kind of tenuous, but I don't think it's broken yet.

Q: What would be the South's leverage over the North?

A: Well, ultimately the oil fields are in the South. If there was independence, they might have to work something out. There's no question that the North has more power than the South, but the South actually has more wealth than the North. The North is mainly a desert, not counting where the river is.

Q: Apparently there are some boundaries around Abyei.

A: Abyei is a real difficult problem.

Q: What is the status of the implementation of that Agreement?

A: As far as I can see, it's stalled. Do you ever see the international crisis group reports? They have just come out with one on Sudan and basically they say, on Abyei," Let's get going." What you have are two tribes, the Dinka and the Masalit, and each one thinks it deserves virtually all of Abyei. They've got themselves into a pickle because nobody has figured out how to do both. The North is supporting the Masalit because a lot of the soldiers are from there and, therefore, President Beshir's political base is there. They haven't figured out yet how to square the circle and so as far as I know there has been no real progress in resolving that problem.

Now, let me just say one thing in terms of the negotiation. I don't know that, in the broad context of the CPA, they could have figured out how to deal with Abyei. They came up with this notion of having a Boundary Commission look at it. The Boundary Commission came up with an answer that the North was unwilling to accept. We had the same problem in Ethiopia and Eritrea. You have the same problem between Cameroon and Nigeria. It's fine to say that a group should do this and then, whatever they decide that's what they'll do, except it doesn't always work out that well. By the same token, I don't know that an effort has been made yet to really lean on everybody and resolve this.

Q: The North formally rejected the Commission report. Have they thought again about accepting it?

A: They've made it clear that they can't accept it. Whether they formally crossed the last line, burned all their bridges, I don't know. I think there's some room for negotiation, but I would have to check. Right this minute I can't remember where everything stands.

Q: Then, there was conflict in Darfur. How does this effect Khartoum's implementation of the CPA?

A: I don't think Darfur, this is my personal opinion, I don't think Darfur ipso facto prevents the North from implementing the CPA. I don't see them having anything to do

with each other. I think, politically, it is a diversion. It may be that, if you're busy all day working on Darfur, you can't deal with these other things. My guess is that the real problem of Darfur is that it gets in the way of us having the kind of active role we wanted, and because the North is increasingly, I think, a little leery of where we're coming out because we've taken such a strong position. We feel we have to because of what's going on there, and not only the objective desire, but the public pressure to do something about that. So, strictly speaking I don't think Darfur should be, but as a matter of de facto politics is, a constraint on easily implementing it, because there are all these other political elements so that affects the situation. I think that what's going to hold back the CPA more than Darfur is just the limits, particularly in the South, in terms of manpower and infrastructure and things like that. I mean, look at the simplest AID program. It takes forever for them to hire the staff and do the studies and get the materials and actually build the little thing they're building. The idea of a radical transformation of the South strains credulity that it's going to be done that fast.

Q: Is it because the South is so infrastructurally weak?

A: Yes.

Q: It doesn't have trained people with experience in doing this kind of thing?

A: Yes. Yes, I mean, even compared to their neighbors, it is the least developed part of Africa. There's been a war going on there for 20 years, and in colonial times it was virtually untouched, and that's the way it is. Not to mention just the geography of the place. It's largely a swamp. If you ever looked on the map, the White Nile just meanders. That's their water. Take something like the canal that the Egyptians want to build to regularize the flow of the Nile, and the South is petrified of what the implications are in terms of environment, in terms of the animals, in terms of the ability of the pastoralists to move around. That's one relatively small issue.

Q: Well, I think you've made some really good comments on the part that you played in the negotiations and then in their aftermath. I think you've covered the territory very well and I thank you.

End of interview