

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

**Interview # 60 - Executive Summary**

*Interviewed by: Sam Westgate*  
*Initial Interview Date: February 20, 2007*  
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The interviewee is a prominent Southern Sudanese who was active behind the scenes while the CPA was being negotiated. He is now in an official national position, in which he can evaluate the situation in the North as well as in the South of Sudan.

The informant found that the U.S. government was central to moving the CPA peace process to its conclusion. He also gives credit to Norway and to a lesser extent the UK and Italy. Among the regional states, he noted that the peace efforts of Kenya, Eritrea, Uganda, and Djibouti to be effective in rank order of importance.

Personalities were also strong factors in negotiating a successful agreement. John Garang, according to the informant, was a southern Sudanese unifier with strong personal connections with the leaders of countries neighboring Sudan. Bashir and Ali Osman Taha were strong personalities as well, who commanded respect from the North and whose commitments would be honored.

The informant found that the Congressional passage of the Sudan Peace Act to have been a milestone in moving the deadlocked talks to a more serious phase. He regretted, however, that in the end the act did not provide for sanctions against oil companies who did business in Sudan.

Implementation of the CPA has been difficult because of a number of factors. The informant cites poor infrastructure, particularly in telecommunications, in the South as retarding forward movement. There also have been serious personnel issues in staffing both the government of Southern Sudan and CPA implementation. There are too many positions in both the government and on CPA commissions staffed by the same people. Too many southern officials wear too many hats. There is also too little flexibility in the agreement in the setting of benchmarks and deadlines.

The interviewee found a direct link between the success of the CPA and the problems of Darfur. The success that the South had in obtaining autonomy and rights led Darfurians to question why they had been left out of the political process, particularly when it came to sharing oil revenues, a national resource. "And as a result, they thought that the only way to get your rights in this country is to pick up arms and fight."

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*Q: Can you describe the role you played in the negotiations of the Sudan CPA?*

A: I was not a direct member of the negotiating team, but I was in the background, e-mailing, writing and giving suggestions to those who were in the field.

*Q: So you had a support role. And how long did you have this support role, starting at about what year?*

A: I started supporting the SPLA/SPLM as early as 1985.

*Q: So you come from the Sudanese South?*

A: Yes, I do, and the leader of the movement, the late Dr. John Garang was my personal friend. In fact, my coming to the United States was with his assistance. He was a graduate of Iowa State University and my admission to Iowa State University was done through him, after I came from the movement. Even when he was studying in the United States, his wife and children, were under my care in Juba, when I was commander of the combat training center of the First Infantry Division.

*Q: Leading up to the CPA, whom would you describe as the most important Sudanese parties involved?*

A: The parties that were involved were mainly the SPLM, the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement, and the National Congress Party. These were the partners to the agreement. This was the pioneer partnership.

*Q: These were the principal parties and were there other parties that you felt played a constructive role?*

A: I believe the pioneers in this case were the IGAD countries.

*Q: What about from within Sudan?*

A: From Sudan, yes, these are the major parties. The rest, the other parties, were just

lukewarm, from behind. The SPLM was a member of the National Democratic Alliance, which was called the NDA, by then headquartered in Eritrea. And they were also lukewarm parties to the agreement, because there was an alliance with the SPLM.

*Q: And were there any groups within Sudan that acted as spoilers in terms of the lead-up to the CPA? People who were not simply lukewarm but were attempting to undermine any future agreement?*

A: I believe within Sudan there were parties who were very ambivalent about it. I would say the Umma Party was not happy. I believe those other parties, which were southern parties, were very happy and they were working, like the Union of Sudan African Parties, the Sudan African National Union; these Southern parties were very active in enhancing the peace agreement. But we have the National Islamic Front under Turabi; they were very ambivalent about the agreement. The Umma was very much ambivalent. Even though they did not come out with a lot of sabotage, they gave derogatory press releases about the agreement. I believe some were saying that this was an agreement between dictators, that Omar Bashir was a dictator and John Garang was a dictator. So in the beginning there was a lot of hostility, except the southern Sudanese parties were very much helping and they were encouraging for a peace agreement to be reached.

*Q: You mentioned IGAD. What do you think IGAD's role was, in terms of bringing the CPA to a positive conclusion?*

A: I think IGAD has a history of about thirteen years in which they were searching for a way to bring harmony and peace in the entire Horn of Africa. IGAD was led by people who were very interested in getting peace, because the war in Sudan itself affected their countries. These are Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea. Somalia was in disarray by then. And Djibouti. I think they worked hard to see a success. They tried their best, with emphasis mainly on Kenya. Kenya took it to heart to bridge the differences and worked hard to bring the parties together.

*Q: And how about some of the other international organizations, such as the UN, the EU and AU, or OAS? How did you feel? In your experience, did these organizations play a constructive role leading to an agreement?*

A: I think, not to be biased, I believe the power that brought the CPA into existence lies in the United States. People like me and all the Southern Sudanese who were settled here and in Canada, we worked hard with the Congress of the United States to establish what they called the Sudan Peace Act. And based on the Sudan Peace Act, the government of the United States put a lot more pressure on both parties that made them come around, to sit at the table together and come to this peace agreement. So the cornerstone which should be added to the history of this peace agreement is the Sudan Peace Act, passed unanimously, bipartisan, in the United States Congress. And that gave the administration the power and the initiative to bring the Sudanese who were in the warring parties to come together. And then they used the regional resources of IGAD to put more pressure. And I believe the rest, when they saw success coming, they came in, whether they were

the UN, the African Union and the rest, when the course was set by the Sudan Peace Act in the United States Congress.

*Q: So how would you weigh, let us say, the Sudan Peace Act and the U.S. involvement in 2002 and Congressional involvement, how would you weigh that against IGAD? Which was more important, in terms of moving matters along?*

A: I would weigh the United States a lot higher, because the United States followed through with resources and power, the think tanks, the advisors. I would rate Congress and the United States administration higher than IGAD.

*Q: How about some of the non-state actors, both local and international? I am talking about NGOs and religious groups. What role do you think they had in leading up to the CPA?*

A: The NGOs were very important, because they fed us with fresh information about what was going on in the war zone. They also gave us strength and they worked alongside Southern Sudanese and friends of Southern Sudan in general and friends of Sudan that wanted the bloodshed to stop. The NGOs are part of the so-called lobby in Congress, in the Administration, anywhere, and they worked hard. And do not forget the students, professors, intelligentsia, peace institutes all over the world and particularly in the United States. They worked hard to make information available to the public and that is what made Congress react and do something.

*Q: I want to return to the regional states, the IGAD states surrounding Sudan. Can you break out a little bit their various roles in this process, from your observation?*

A: I believe there are two states that were very influential on the movement. That is Kenya and Eritrea. From the background I believe also Uganda was very powerful, because the leadership of Uganda were friends with the leadership of the SPLM. So these three countries had a very big influence on the movement itself, so that they could come up with some form of reconciliation.

*Q: Kenya hosted, of course, the most important talks. Would you describe Kenya as an honest broker in their efforts?*

A: I believe so. If we come and rate the countries of IGAD we would put Kenya on top.

*Q: And how about Eritrea?*

A: Eritrea would be definitely number two.

*Q: And Uganda?*

A: The third.

*Q: Djibouti?*

A: Djibouti, very important but also would be the fourth in that line.

*Q: And even though they were not part of the IGAD group, Egypt obviously followed this with interest. Where does Egypt fit in?*

A: I think Egypt was very hostile to a lot of things that we said. When the memorandum of understanding was first published, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of July 2002, Egypt was outright anti-self-determination for southern Sudan. And Egypt has never changed its mind about that issue up to now. Egypt would be lukewarm, displaying that they want to help but at the same time they think otherwise. The way I know it, Egypt thinks that self-determination of the South is division of an Arab country. And as a result they are very hostile to self-determination for the South. And this is the opinion of most Arabs, the Arab League organization.

*Q: Now if we could turn to the major powers. You have mentioned the U.S. What other major players, of the international, non-African group, were involved in the process? I am thinking specifically of the United Kingdom and Norway and what their roles were.*

A: Yes, the other partners of IGAD are the United States, United Kingdom, Italy and Norway. Norway has never left Sudan for a long time. From the first phase of war, Norwegians have, whether it was Norwegian People's Aid, Norwegian Church Aid, they have been all over the South. They have always been along there as a major country with major NGOs operating in Sudan. So I do not see how Norway would not be number two, after the United States, if you are counting these partners.

*Q: And the United Kingdom, what do you think their role was? What was their attitude towards the negotiations?*

A: The United Kingdom made this mess. They made this mess from day one. There are people in the United Kingdom who see the situation in the South as a normal situation whereby there is a lot of misunderstanding. I do not see that, in my own opinion, I would term them, maybe the third, followed by Italy. So I would rank the United States number one, Norway number two, then come the UK and Italy.

*Q: Were you able to observe the negotiating process, in terms of what seemed to be major turning points or are you in a position to describe any of the twists and turns that occurred?*

A: I think the major turning point, on the part of the SPLM, came around, you know, when the current president of the Government of Southern Sudan led the first negotiations, especially the memorandum of understanding. We came up with the principle of self-determination for Southern Sudan. Then they had a couple of follow-up negotiations, then the Nakuru draft. The Nakuru draft was tabled by IGAD. IGAD was a neutral party, and they came up with an excellent draft. That draft was at the time when it

was presented to the Northerners, the Northern team, they walked out. At that point, some people would have said, "Okay, the Northerners have walked out on peace and this is a draft presented by a neutral body. Let us go back to enforcement of the Sudan Peace Act and then continue with a ridiculous war, whereby then the help of the United States would be guaranteed for the SPLA/SPLM." But the walkout, when the partners from the North walked out, that was where Dr. John Garang stepped in.

*Q: And that was what approximate year, now?*

A: That was when they started the security arrangement, the protocol on the security arrangement. That was the turning point because we either had to rely on the Sudan Peace Act

*Q: This was during 2005?*

A: No, this was 2004.

*Q: So that was the critical stage?*

A: That was the critical stage to either break it or let us go. And when John came in and pushed Salva Kiir and his group out, then he and the Vice President by then, Osman Ali Taha, sat down together and they brought in certain things from the Nakuru draft. The Nakuru draft was dry, which so many partners loved. It was nice for us because it divided the North and South according to the 1956 borders: all the SPLA troops would remain in the South and immediately the Northern troops go to the North. It was exciting. And I think the Northerners were saying, "There is no chance given for unity. We must give unity a chance." And that was where they came up with the structure of a Government of National Unity, this painstaking process of dividing how many people would be in parliament and all of those things and quotas and quotas and quotas and JIU, Joint Integrated Units. All of these things came after that situation. And I think that was the turning point.

*Q: Were there other challenges, in terms of meeting, let us say, the objectives of the North versus the objectives of the South? Were there other issues than this particular issue of the borders?*

A: There were so many other challenges. The most important challenge was the role of religion. Sharia Islam was the most controversial. And when the Northerners came up and said, "Okay, we are only going to allow the Southern region to do whatever they want," we also went forward and asked about the situation in Khartoum, because this is the capital and it has to be secular, and this brought a lot of resistance. It almost broke the negotiations, also. The immediate aspect was a very controversial issue, Islamic Sharia law--were it to be applied to non-Muslims when they are in Khartoum, as the capital of the country.

*Q: How about the role of personalities, in terms of the negotiations? Was that a factor?*

A: It is a factor, because John Garang was out attending talks of the movement, he delivered his knowledge about the situation, the fact he has so many leadership roles in the movement for a long time, so many friends who are presidents of neighboring countries: Kagame in Rwanda, Museveni of Uganda, these were his personal friends. I also think that Bashir and Ali had control over the rest of the Sudan. They were significantly powerful enough to convince the rest who were under their authority and those who were not that they mean business. So personality was significantly important in coming to this peace agreement.

*Q: In hindsight, if you could change some of the policies or practices of the U.S., in terms of the negotiation, what might have been different? What should have been different? Do you feel the U.S., from your observation, was always an honest broker? Was it as engaged as it should have been all throughout the process?*

A: The only time I was a little bit unhappy with the United States is when we drafted the Sudan Peace Act, the first one and we indicated that in the act, in the bill, oil companies that do business with Sudan or get involved were to be prohibited from the use of capital markets. This delayed the coming out of the Sudan Peace Act, because the President of the United States threatened to veto it, and then it would not go through. So there are some interests involved in that field that really many people don't realize, that we who were on the other side, we lobbied seriously that it be passed as it was. But in order to get a watered down version. we had to agree to remove that clause. So I wish the United States did the Sudan Peace Act as we proposed it the first time.

*Q: Including sanctions against the oil companies?*

A: The oil companies and the capital markets and by then we had a lot of interest in companies who were involved. I was particularly involved in the Talisman Oil Company, from Canada. I went and addressed their stockholders in 2002. And later on they had to address the public, but the oil they are drilling in Sudan has caused a lot of havoc for us, because they have given the government of Sudan authority to have resources. And they went and bought a lot of helicopter gunships from the former Soviet countries. And as a result their activities and their retaliation and killing of our people had become more lethal. The movement of people who were in the oil rich areas, they were being moved by force and they were shot at by planes. And this was only because the oil company was operating in Sudan. They were giving them enough foreign currency to be able to fight the war.

*Q: Do you feel the involvement of the U.S., how shall I say, was always timely, or could the U.S. have been better engaged at a much earlier time?*

A: I think things went very bad, with the incidents of the U.S. going into, so many things happened, and I have been following them very well. We were not very happy with the situation in Bosnia and Serbia. We thought that we had the spotlight but all of a sudden when that situation came up, all interest was diverted to that. This thing could have been

resolved earlier.

*Q: But you think the Bosnian War was the distraction of U.S. attention?*

A: Yes, and that shows that the United States put us on a lower priority than Europe. That happened. We think but for the intervention in Serbia and bombing Serbia, we would have had a lot more opportunity to end this war quicker at the time. Also we believe that the situation in Sudan would have been more under control, quicker, with a lot more effective results had the United States not gone into Iraq. We have always been the black sheep. We are always down there. And we were lucky that we got the spotlight during this peace agreement.

*Q: And did you find that that was true of other international involvement, that they became distracted by other events? The U.S. is only one player, of course.*

A: That is true. I believe, I have not really studied the situation well, and I believe that was the same situation in South Africa. I was an activist on campuses in the United States when we wanted divestment from South Africa. The United States administration by then was very slow responding and when they responded they were responding in a lukewarm way to preserve their partners. This is one of the things I see. I am a student of politics, in a way.

*Q: If we could turn now to implementation of the CPA, in looking at the CPA, what are the major problems of implementation?*

A: The land is a very vast land. Sudan is a very vast country. It has no development. Actually the British, when they left, they left nothing in the South. Since the British left, there has not been anything new. The only things there have been were destroyed by war. I was involved in destroying many bridges, in the first phase of the war. There is nothing available in the Sudan for implementation. Power sharing has been implemented. That means we have equivalent representation in the Government of National Unity. At the same time a Government of Southern Sudan has been established, with its parliament and ministries have been established, although they are not yet fully staffed.

But all those things are with no economic viability. The fact is that the roads are not there. The mines have not been removed in some places. Schools have not been built. We have gone almost two years and we have not done a lot of things. The reason is, in the United States if you want to build, there are so many local companies and international companies that can bid and build. In the case of Southern Sudan, you have to go and look for the bidders.

And also there is some instability, especially around Juba, because of the Lord's Resistance Army. Occasionally people are ambushed and things like that. There is a sense of insecurity in some areas.

I believe there is a lot more that could be done. And I believe the United States could do



some of these things. Things like building roads. If they do not want companies to deal with Sudan, why not let some companies go to the South and build? Why can 't Army Corps of Engineers help us build a few schools, bridges, offices? That is a shame because the taxpayers' money has been spent on this. There is a lot at stake in helping the South, so that peace prevails. The local people in the South now, they have not yet even smelled the dividends of peace. The airports, they should have been expanded, so those who have the feeling that they want to help us, they can land and drop food, books, things like that, so that we pick up development quickly.

So I think the United States could have done a little bit more and I am saying this again, the act, what is happening in Congress now, with the Democrats questioning Administration policy on Darfur, they are undermining the CPA, rather than just helping the CPA, because they are going to cause to concentrate public attention again on the issue of Darfur. But the CPA is the only way Darfur can be resolved. When they go and concentrate on Darfur, connecting everything with Darfur, if peace has not been achieved in Darfur, then definitely they are not going to renew their efforts to help the South. Those who are pledged, they are not being encouraged to bring anything to the South.

In the end, when the South collapses and there is no peace between North and South, what is the situation in Darfur? They will go to war. But if the South is consolidated we are the agents of change. We are working hard to stop the Jinjaweed and the SAF, the Sudan Armed Forces, politically, so that they do not continue fighting. So if the South is not consolidated and powerful, then their weakness will cause a rift between North and South. The agreement fails and they have failed before, and then they will be left in the lurch, the Darfurians and the Northerners will be fighting. The situation in the East may erupt again; we may go back to war.

*Q: You have identified political problems with the CPA, on the issue of consolidation. Do you find that to be more important than infrastructure issues or is infrastructure the key to changing the situation?*

A: I think the average southern Sudanese, whether he is in a camp or he is still in a refugee camp or in exile or in southern Sudan, they want to see dividends of peace. That means if we build roads and provide jobs, this is more helpful.

*Q: The agreement itself, some critics have said, is too complex. Do you find it to be too complex?*

A: It is. I am one of those critics. It is too complex because you cannot sit down dictating everything. And you do not have resources. And when you do not do them, then the expectation is too high. That is what the implementation booklet shows: on such and such a date, the troops must be in such and such a place. Are the mines removed, can these people be transported from one place to another? The commission should be this and they do not know who are going to be the commissioners. When is the commission meeting going to take place? So the idea of committing and writing them is also a problem. There is no flexibility and it is raising the expectations of people, who expect this to be there on

such and such a date and then they find that there is nothing there. And then they say, "Oh, the implementation is not taking place." This is one of the things of rising expectations and it is not the fact that we are victims, but everything has been written down and we are not following up and the resources are not there, the establishment of the commissions, the personnel are not there.

And you can see, on the side of the SPLM, they are just recycling the same people. They are recycling, this one is a minister and he is on a commission here. He is not doing the commission job and he is not doing the ministerial job. Also, there are so many Southerners everywhere that can fill up those places. And the Northerners complain about that. They say, "You know what, the SPLM is blaming us for the delays. But on such and such a date we were supposed to do this and none of them was there. On such and such a date we sent a wire to them, we made a relation for doing this and none was there." So we are digging our own grave over this, because of the complexity.

I have stayed in the United States here and I know that even during Reconstruction and even during the civil rights movement, laws have been written but not implemented, because writing is easier than implementation.

*Q: Is it a failure of telecommunications, simply a problem of contacting particular individuals who are not in either Juba or in Khartoum? Is this a telecommunications issue?*

A: Well, telecommunications is a part of it, but I do not think it should be a part of it. Communication between Juba and the rest of the world is very difficult. If you are in Khartoum, you want to call somebody, it will never go through. This is a serious issue. Recently I heard that the Government of Southern Sudan had made some agreement with Uganda, so that they get a code from them so that they can ease the situation. And also the provinces, the states, they are completely shut out.

*Q: We come back to infrastructure again.*

A: Again, yes.

*Q: I could ask about border issues and oil revenue sharing. What is your view? There are protocols of course for both. What is the progress on settling border issues?*

A: That is the biggest failure, I think, and it has a lot of implications. Not settling the Abyei Protocol has been the heart of controversy in this peace agreement. The Abyei Protocol. Abyei is in a strategic place whereby it is rich in oil. And the commission which was put to do the thing, the NCP and the parties involved, the Messeriya of the Abyei area, have rejected the commission's decision. And now, because if it is rejected, then there is no way you can establish the Abyei Protocol. There is no way you would know whether this oil wealth [belongs to] South or North. And the Southerners see that as a way whereby the North is trying to rip off the South, because it is prolonging them taking oil which does not belong to them. And it is a very controversial issue, and it is a very

worrisome situation.

The borders, also, between North and South have not been demarcated. And this has implications for the administration, upcoming administration, upcoming census, because you must belong to a certain county, and it must be known whether that county is North or South. Of all those things this is what I see as the most dangerous delay, that is, a question of confrontation may arise from this border issue .

*Q: Were there any problems of implementation that, shall we say, have arisen from current circumstances that the CPA could not have foreseen? In other words, what has changed since the CPA was signed that the CPA could not envision?*

A: I think if the CPA were graded, we would give it an "A," because the most crucial issue now is security arrangements and the security arrangement to some extent has been implemented, except for the SAF forces which are in Upper Nile. Upper Nile has oil and also this gives Southerners a lot of suspicion that that is why the SAF army has been moved from Bahr el Ghazal, from Equatoria and they have not moved away from Upper Nile. Upper Nile also has very, very typical types of militias, although the agreement says that within a year they must decide either to join the government of Sudan troops or join the SPLA. Some in Upper Nile have not joined any party and they caused the only serious violation since 2002, on November 29<sup>th</sup>, when the fighting took place in Upper Nile, in Malakal.

*Q: And are they ethnic...?*

A: Nuers, they are Nuers. These Nuers, they seem to have, many Southerners, or intelligence agencies of the Government of Southern Sudan do indicate that they have close relationships with previous army officers of the SAF. And as a result they think the SAF, if it is not among the leadership, at least there are some elements that would like to destabilize the South, using these militias, including the Lord's Resistance Army. So we know that all the troops in the South must be moved by the end of June. You are left now with four months. So by the end of June only the Joint Integrated Units would remain with the SPLA in the South. So we are waiting anxiously to see if they implement it, and they move their troops back to the northern border.

*Q: What are the most important lessons that one can learn from negotiating the CPA and the problems of implementation?*

A: Well, one bad thing that happened. When you asked me my role in the negotiation, those that did the negotiation, they are not in the front line in the implementation, both in the North and in the South. Unfortunately Garang died but except for Ali, and Ali is relegated to the third or the second vice president, with others running the NCP with this fellow Nafie and Majzoub and all those guys, they are more scheming to make use of the coming elections. And as a result, the strength of implementation has been diluted, and it has been diluted by preoccupation with Darfur. All the necessary resources that are available, the meetings they make day and night, are all on Darfur, rather than on the

CPA. So they have put it to the back burner. That is the thing I see, that the Darfur issue has been an unfortunate situation. It came at the wrong time.

If there were not a war in the West, more likely the resources would be available. I know the government of Sudan. If they want to place security on the front burner, then they put all the money they have into Darfur. Their planes that are bombing areas there should have been carrying raw materials to build in the South, but now they are all diverted to the security issue. So the Northerners who support to help hand in hand with the Southerners so that they rebuild the South, they have been handicapped.

We are really handicapped because the countries that want to help us, especially the United States, have made everything conditional on the situation in Darfur. So Darfur has taken the spotlight. The CPA is on the back burner.

*Q: To what extent, then, since you have mentioned Darfur, do the CPA process and its initial success lead to the problems in Darfur?*

A: This is what I think. When the July 2002 memorandum of understanding came out and the South was guaranteed self-determination, I think this aroused the intellectuals and the activists in Darfur. And this became a turning point that Northern Sudan was going to accept conditions for peace with the South. And then when they heard we were talking about wealth and all those things, if one can go back to their press releases, they were very much against the fact that oil is a national resource, it is not a regional resource. Why has the South been given fifty per cent of that oil?

As a result, they thought that the only way to get your rights in this country is to pick up arms and fight. And that induced them to fight, there is no question about that. The success that the South has made, even though it fought for fifty years, induced other parties to pick up arms and see that this country requires everybody to pick up a weapon to fight so that they get their rights.

*Q: You have mentioned the infrastructure development that is needed in the South. How about in the North, let alone Darfur?*

A: I would say that in the North, most of the people, one third of the population of Sudan is in Khartoum now and the surrounding area. From day one, from independence, the philosophy of development was uneven in Sudan. Northerners had no reason to fight, even though John Garang opened up their eyes that some of you are marginalized, you Easterners are marginalized. But they had major cities, the Easterners of Sudan, Atbara, Shendi and they are thriving.

*Q: Do you have a prediction for the elections of next year, as well as the guaranteed referendum of 2011? Do you have any feeling about where the country is going politically?*

A: I do have a feeling that we still have four years for the referendum to take place, but I

do not think four years is most important to me now. What takes place this year, when the census takes place, if it is not disrupted, if it is not sabotaged--if the census takes place, it will determine constituencies, the districts and things like that. And it is very crucial. The CPA says elections must take place towards the end of 2008. If that happens, an election takes place and it is well organized and fair, then it will bring very serious consequences in Sudan. I do not know whether the NCP will win a victory as the majority party in the North. I believe the SPLM will be the majority party in the South. There are indications that it is registering a large number of Northerners now, but I do not believe that the Northerners will pour down into the SPLM and forget the National Congress Party, which has ruled for seventeen years. The other parties, like the Umma Party and the Democratic Unionist Party, all these will be major players in the elections.

The underside of that is that we really do not know who is influencing the elections, because usually Northern elections and Southern elections are influenced seriously by the Egyptians, in many cases. So there will be allegiance to Egyptian theories and things like that. And in the end we will have a very mixed situation, whereby nobody gets the majority; there will be cooperation of so many parties. The only thing we would need to be respected here is the CPA being a part of the constitution of Sudan and that any party which becomes a majority of any coalition that is formed thereafter will respect the CPA. That means they will establish a government that respects the principles and applies to the letter all that has been stipulated in the CPA, to march us towards 2011.

*Q: My last question involves 2011. As you see things now, one, do you think the referendum will take place and, two, what will happen?*

A: I believe, with the assistance of the international community, IGAD and the rest of the world and the position of southern Sudan having its own SPLA, there is no point of return. That means I do not think that is in the interests of the National Congress Party to go back on its word and say, as happened with the Addis Ababa agreement, that this document is not the Koran or the Bible and that it can be violated. They have no chance of that. So the best way for them to survive is to have a good relationship with the SPLM, with the Southerners in particular, so that they reach certainty whereby they will not be eliminated in any other form by the other parties of the North.

I believe that the other parties of the North are still powerful, because you never know the aspirations of the people when you have seized power by force. The Government of Sudan, before the signing of the peace agreement, has been in power for that long time. But even last year I was one of the people saying that both South and North should have an election. There is no reason why elections should not have taken place in the North, because there has been no war in the North. If they were very serious and confident in their ability to attract and get the votes, they should have called an election last year. Even with us in the South, we had cessation of hostilities in October 2002 and by 2005 we have had the opportunity to allow elections to take place.

But all parties give in and start manipulating people and picking people they like to be in the national congress and also in the parliament of Southern Sudan. So there is a lot of

fear going into these coming elections, from all parties. They have a vested interest which is at stake.

*Q: And so, thank you very much for your time.*

A: Thank you for having me.