

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

**Interview #65 – Executive Summary**

*Interviewed by: Barbara Nielsen  
Initial interview date: January 19, 2007  
Copyright 2007 USIP & ADST*

These three Government of Southern Sudan officials gave the SPLM high marks thus far for making the transition called for in the CPA from rebel group to governing party, particularly in the South. One mentioned the progress in providing needed services to the people and the appreciation for peace which is visible in the South. Moreover, in their view, contrary to the observation on the part of outsiders, there are no internal divisions within the SPLM. At the same time, they strongly criticize the National Congress Party, whose main objective, according to them, is to create instability by arming local militias as well as to create obstacles and cause delays in implementing the CPA so that the SPLM will fail in its efforts to provide security and a better life for the inhabitants of the South.

They lay blame squarely on the NCP for the failure of some key commissions to make progress in their work, notably the North-South Boundary Commission and the Assessment and Evaluation Commission. In their view, the NCP is deliberately trying to provoke a reaction from the SPLM that can be used to demonstrate that the SPLM “are the ones who do not want peace and are destroying the CPA.” In addition, in the case of Abyei, they believe the Khartoum government prefers to retain all of the oil wealth of the province, rather than to have to share it with the people of the South. The Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) representatives criticize the Khartoum government for not acting in good faith with respect to sharing oil revenue.

These interviewees had nothing but praise for U.S. policy and the sanctions in place; they would like to see the U.S. convince the Europeans to adopt similar sanctions, to create pressure on Khartoum to implement the CPA. In addition, in order to ensure implementation of the CPA, they suggest the U.S. use diplomacy to encourage greater involvement by the Europeans and African countries, as well as the UN Security Council. While acknowledging the importance of Darfur, these officials regret the fact that a concentration on Darfur keeps the international community from focusing on the need to “rekindle and reenergize” the CPA. They do not find fault with the U.S. in this regard, however.

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

**Interview # 65**

*Interviewed by: Barbara Nielsen and Dan Whitman  
Initial interview date: January 19, 2007  
Copyright 2007 USIP & ADST*

*Q: Since all of you are from the SPLM, I thought we could start looking at some aspects of the SPLM's role in the national coalition government and in setting up the government of the South. What kind of report card would you give to the new Government of South Sudan this far? Some things that were stipulated in the CPA included establishing state governments in the South. Those state governments were going to be seventy per cent composed of SPLM-affiliated parties, ten percent NCP, and then twenty per cent other parties. In addition, it was necessary to convert your SPLM movement to more of a political party. Let's start off with that as a broad framework. Ezeqiel, would you like to address that first?*

A: Yes, definitely I would say the SPLM, when we actually signed this agreement with the National Congress Party, we were just emerging from a war which took us 22 years, and immediately we went into actually forming governments. We were expected actually to participate in many governments: the Government of National Unity, the Government of Southern Sudan and the state government in southern Blue Nile, we're involved in that, also and the Nuba Mountains of Southern Kordofan.

I could say I can actually give us an "A" because as a rebel you don't have a system, you are actually physically fighting for your own survival. And immediately when you sign an agreement you assume huge responsibilities and you are actually trying your best to actually fit things in. Then you manage to do that and also losing a leader who has been leading for the last 22 years, you can see the challenges that we were facing. But we managed actually to put our house together and you move on to provide services to our people, because they are expecting a lot from us, peace dividends. Everybody in Southern Sudan is expecting from us and from the Government of National Unity that if we have peace then we have to actually see it, we have to feel it. We have to have clean water. Our children can go to school now because for the last 22 years they've never been to school. And it is a difficult challenge to the SPLM, because we are the ruling party in the South.

So we have to respond to those needs and we've been actually doing that. Within a year we managed to provide services and now, we just celebrated the second anniversary of the CPA and you can see things are actually changing, even in Juba, if you managed to be in Juba, you can really see changes. People are actually feeling the meaning of peace and I would actually say that we have done a tremendous job.

But of course we have challenges. Security is a concern. We have been trying to provide security to our people, but the National Congress Party, of course, its main intention is to create instability so that the South cannot be stable and the SPLM will be seen like they're not doing enough to provide security to its system. So this one has been a challenge to us. But basically I would say we've done a good job so far.

*Q: Let me just make sure I clarify what you're saying, that the National Congress Party, for its own reasons, apparently, is not interested in seeing the success of the CPA. Is that a fair interpretation of what you're saying?*

A: Yes.

*Q: your view? Let me ask each of you, David Thotat, what would you comment, in so far as the political achievements of the SPLM?*

A: Well definitely I can say we've done a lot, the SPLM, as a party. We signed the peace agreement with the NCP. The SPLM did its part by making sure that the Government of Southern Sudan in the South is operating and provides services to people, because one of the problems that actually made us go into war with this government is that they denied the rights of the people, they denied freedom; there was no justice. So the SPLM as a party wants equality, wants that justice, wants freedom. Now the signing of the CPA brought these things that were lacking. So the South, you can really see a peace there. You can see people are happy, are enjoying the CPA, despite the fact that there are challenges, of course, that are being put there by the NCP, we are still moving forward and I think that we are doing a great job. The SPLM as a party is doing a wonderful job.

*Q: What are some of those challenges the NCP is putting to the SPLM?*

A: We have the issue of the "other armed groups," the militias. These militias are created by the NCP in order to cause insecurity in the South and in the peace agreement they would have been really demobilized in March of 2006, but now they're still there. They still exist. So it is a challenge that brought insecurity.

*Q: And, Mr. Deng Deng, now maybe you could elaborate a little bit on the trade and investment sector, in so far as the CPA has addressed that and the results thus far?*

A: Basically the trade and investment issue is crucial for the development of the people in Southern Sudan and it is addressed in the CPA. However, the difficulties or the hurdles that the Government of Southern Sudan is facing in terms of their development are already there. For example, deliberate delay of implementation of items within the CPA itself, NCP controlling the resources, making it difficult for the Government of Southern Sudan to realize economic development. As my partner, David Thotat, just mentioned, the insecurity situation in southern Sudan, arming the militias, that's one of them and not only arming the militias but actually turning some of the southern Sudanese themselves

into the so-called LRA, when the “LRA” are actually Sudanese being bought and fighting their own people. The policy of the NCP, basically, is “Let the Southern Sudanese fight among themselves; let them kill each other,” without them showing their faces. Deliberate delay and obstacles for the NGO’s to operate in order to deliver development, deliver basic services to the people of the South. So basically their strategy is to create a situation whereby a southern Sudanese can say to himself or herself, “I am not going back to Southern Sudan simply because there are no basic services, basic needs to survive. There are no schools, hospitals. There is no water to drink. Our children cannot survive there. There are no jobs.” Basically there are mines all over the place. Mines have not been cleared. So it makes it difficult for them, for the southern Sudanese to return.

So therefore the environment for investment is not there. It makes it difficult for foreign investors to move into Southern Sudan and invest when the environment is not conducive for investment. First of all, the risk is very high and some companies that want to invest obviously will consider the risk factor and the price for delivering services will be high. And that makes it very difficult. The sanctions are one of the things that prohibits U.S. corporations to invest in Sudan, but of course Southern Sudan and the other “three areas” are exempt.

The NCP deliberately creates that environment of difficulty such that the foreign corporations cannot go in there, the NGO’S cannot deliver help and goods and services to the people. So, therefore, that is the challenge that the Government of Southern Sudan is facing, and we need our international friends and partners to help us in implementation of the CPA, which is a very, very important and complicated document.

*Q: You mentioned several things to follow up on. The sanctions that are presently in place, as you point out, exempt the South, but do you think that the U.S. Government should change its policy on sanctions vis-à-vis Sudan?*

A: First of all, the sanctions are in place. However, the sanctions on other items in Southern Sudan and the “three areas” are exempt. The U.S. changing its policy on the sanctions shouldn’t really happen right now, because since Southern Sudan and the “three areas” are exempt, we’ll have the opportunity to have foreign corporations investing in Southern Sudan and the “three areas.” But, for example, if sanctions are lifted on oil, that puts us in the situation whereby the NCP is actually getting most of the revenue. As has been mentioned before, out of ten billion dollars we’re only getting one billion dollars. One billion dollars is nothing compared to the revenue that’s coming from oil. So lifting the sanctions on oil really does not help Southern Sudan.

Coming back to the strategy, the U.S. strategy is excellent. However, we would like the United States Government to actually convince the Europeans if they can adopt similar sanctions, which is not easy to do, obviously. We know that. But if they adopt similar sanctions, because what we are looking for here, we are looking at a rogue nation and what we are saying, we want human rights and freedom. We want to change the world

for the better. So we want a community of civilized nations coming together and then there will be pressure on the NCP to implement the CPA. Nobody wants to go to war.

It is not an easy task to convince the Europeans to come on board but we can work on it because without the American people actually the CPA would not have come into existence. It's America that is always carrying the torch of democracy, freedom all over the world. President Bush did mention last time that the United States cannot be the police of the world but when problems arose, the United States was there, to be in there and solve the problems of the world. So this is one that hopefully the U.S. will spend some time on with the Europeans.

*Q: I think we want to devote a little time to what the response from the international parties should be as one looks at what's going on currently in Sudan. But before that I want to clarify another thing that you mentioned on the military front, about the militias that are operating in Southern Sudan. You said they're being armed by the NCP and that there's a presence of the Lord's Resistance Army. Could you repeat some of that and just clarify it a little bit?*

A: Yes, to go back to the issue of the LRA, the LRA are massacring our people in Southern Sudan. There have been efforts to bring peace. The NCP is recruiting our own people, Southern Sudanese people, pretending to be LRA.

*Q: Oh, pretending to be LRA.*

A: There are some people who have even been caught in Juba. They are actually Sudanese. They're being paid. So this is the strategy of the NCP not to show a face in this crisis but actually to involve other parties and that is something equivalent to the Janjaweed, armed militias, by the NCP, exact same thing.

*Q: The CPA has established a number of key commissions. We are interested to know about each, but one of the most important ones, the North-South Boundary Commission apparently has been unable to do its work. I would ask regarding that one first, whether the solution is more involvement from international, outside parties, from those who helped broker the accords to begin with? How would you explain what's going on with the North-South Boundary Commission?*

A: The Commission is having difficulties in terms of forming or delivering their duties. Number one is actually lack of commitment from the National Congress Party. We started with the Abyei Boundary Commission. We've agreed that what they're actually going to present to us, when we get some findings, we will not go back and do it again. But when they actually presented it, the National Congress Party refused the report. And also the Assessment and Evaluation Commission, the National Petroleum Commission, the North-South *ad hoc* Committee, all of these commissions, they are not actually operational, because basically finances is lacking, commitment from the National Congress Party is lacking. The ways and means of looking or actually the interpretation of their rules and duties, for example, they wanted to actually see this National Petroleum

Commission become a department within the ministry of energy and mining. But we are saying, “No, it is actually an independent commission, which will actually even oversee the activities of the national ministry of energy and mining.” So that was a lot of difficulty.

The same with the North-South Boundary Commission, because they know definitely if they are going to demarcate the boundaries, then we are going to actually know exactly our boundaries. It is also affecting the oil production, because if an area is not falling under the northern part of the country, then definitely we will share the oil. It’s a tactical delay of not seeing the North-South Boundary Commission actually starting to do their work.

So there is nothing moving. We have our people, they are ready. We appointed our members but the National Congress Party, they’ll appoints some people, withdraw them the next day. Commitment certainly is lacking. So nothing is moving.

*Q; So the problem for the commissions is not lack of technical expertise. You’ve appointed your members and presumably the National Congress Party appointed its members but they don’t allow them to meet and carry forward the mission of the commissions?*

A: Yes.

*Q; What needs to be done to remedy that problem?*

A: Number one, the Assessment and Evaluation Commission, they definitely need to come out openly. When you assess and evaluate, then you definitely need to put on the table what is happening and the ways and means of actually attacking that problem. So if the commissions are not functioning, then you actually write a report publicly, so that they know that something is actually not moving, even if it means that you have to call a conference for all the IGAD countries, the Friends of IGAD, who can come together and see what we can do. Is it the National Congress Party which is actually doing this, is it the SPLM and why are you doing this? And then they will justify the reason why they are doing it. And if seriously they are committed, then definitely they will go back to work.

*Q: You’re suggesting that, for example, the Assessment and Evaluation Committee, which is really the one that has an overarching view on full implementation would be the one to ride herd on the different aspects of the CPA. If that commission isn’t functioning then most of them will not be functioning properly, either, so are you saying that the remedy is for the IGAD partners to play an important role? There was to be a secretariat established for the Assessment and Evaluation Committee and that was going to be under the leadership of General Sumbeiywo, but I don’t know if that has come to pass. Do you know where that stands at this point?*

A: Yes, the IGAD countries were proposing that they need to have a secretariat to help the Assessment and Evaluation Commission, and Sumbeiywo is supposed to lead that body. But definitely, Sumbeiywo, they have their own ways, the Kenyans, they have their own ways of looking at the CPA. When we met the minister of foreign affairs, I went to Kenya, they were telling us that you cannot be a player and an implementer at the same time. So basically they are saying that Lazaro (Sumbeiywo) was actually the one playing a role and then if he is going to head the implementation body, like an IGAD secretariat, then he is not going to look good. So basically I think they are trying to find somebody who can eventually head that body, but Lazaro is not actually going to do so, and I don't know how far they have actually gone with establishment of this secretariat. I don't really know for sure.

*Q: Would you all agree that's an important thing to do, at this point?*

A: Oh, yes.

*Q: Khartoum is particularly reticent, I guess, to accept the findings of the Abyei Boundary Commission. I would ask you to articulate their reasoning, perhaps, or the reasoning that you think is involved in the government's refusing to accept that Commission's report though, as you pointed out, they had agreed to before hand.*

A: Going back, they had agreed before hand on the Abyei boundary and actually their position, basically it goes back to their objective. Their objective is to provoke, if I can use the word, the SPLM and Southern Sudan in particular, to make a mistake such that they will be pointed out as, "See, that's, they are the ones who actually do not want peace and they are destroying the CPA." And they of course will use the media to the whole world. It's deliberate provocation on their part. They know the facts, the findings of the Abyei Boundary Commission. They don't want to accept it for the simple fact they want to see how far they can go to provoke the Government of Southern Sudan to make a mistake. And that is the whole thing behind it.

So the question going back to the AEC, the Assessment and Evaluation Commission, they will assess the situation and then do a report and see what the NCP did or didn't do, what the SPLM did or didn't do and basically put the report on the table. So now we come to the question, "Who did what, who didn't do what, what should we do?" So in this particular situation, how can the wrongdoer be forced to stop doing wrong and do right, effectively? So the whole point is the level of provocation. They know what the facts are. They just want to continue doing this, continue delaying tactics, the rhetoric, to provoke us, to provoke the Government of Southern Sudan, to provoke the SPLM, in order to make a mistake within the CPA, to point out to the world, "See, we are for peace; they are not."

I want to just add something to that. Number one, actually, leading into resources, because Abyei is very rich in oil. So if they are going to accept this, then definitely the administration will be set up. The people of Abyei will get two per cent and the people of northern Bahr el Ghazal will get two per cent, Southern Kordofan will get two per cent

and the Government of Southern Sudan will also benefit from this. So it is more of a resource issue. Now they are taking a hundred per cent of it and they don't want to share this cake, because Abyei actually is floating on oil. So it is about oil. This is number one.

Number two, yes, they're trying actually to provoke us, so that we'll go to war, because definitely we will not accept this behavior for a long time, if nobody's actually intervening.

Third one is for them to enjoy the administration of the area, because basically now it is Bashir who is the administrator of Abyei. If an administrator is not appointed, then definitely he is the one administering the area.

*Q: And is there a means to "hold his feet to the fire," though, to have him change his course, alter his motivations? You understand how he's thinking; how can the international community react?*

A: Definitely, in order for Bashir and the NCP to change their minds on some of these things the international community is very much needed, which means keeping these sanctions that the U.S. Government has on Sudan is another good thing, making sure that they are given a lot of pressure to implement the CPA. The international community needs to act. Otherwise the CPA will not be implemented, because one of the problems with the NCP is that whenever they are having influence on something and maybe the ruling is not in their favor they would not in any way want to accept. That is why they are not accepting the Abyei Boundary Commission report, because they know they have influence in the area. The area is very rich, has a lot of resources, so they don't want to share any resources with anybody. So they need to be pressured.

*Q: Of course we're talking about oil and part of the agreement requires wealth sharing. As I understand it, it would be the total proceeds of oil extraction that is equitably shared with the Government of South Sudan. Is that operating as it should be? Can you bring us up to date on that aspect and what's happening presently with the transparency of the wealth sharing?*

A: The wealth sharing, the current situation is indicative already of what is happening in the South, in terms of wealth sharing. Again, this is one of the problems that the Government of Southern Sudan is facing, in the wealth sharing part, that it's not being transparent and when it comes to the technical issues the Government of Southern Sudan does not have the correct data, not just correct but accurate data.

For example, how many barrels of oil is being produced a day? That is not known, is not accurate to the Government of Southern Sudan. So I think the involvement of technical expertise from abroad will help, indeed, to create that transparent situation and then let the world know, in the international media, what exactly is happening. Because what we're trying to do, obviously, is to implement the CPA and both parties do not want to go back to war. So if we can expose what the NCP is doing, keeping the records, expose it



to the world, the people of Sudan would know that the NCP is not doing business in good faith.

Also, through democratic activities in Sudan to let the people know what the NCP is doing. So now going back to implementation of the CPA, again, involving the international community is extremely important but also, at the same time, using the people of Sudan to be involved in the CPA itself. The NCP has the resources, is reaping the benefits of the Sudanese people and using it against them.

So all the successive governments in Sudan have not changed. The NCP wants to remain in power at all costs. They will do anything to remain in power. The CPA was signed because they were at the edge of the cliff. Why? The war in Darfur and the war in Southern Sudan. In the war in Southern Sudan, the SPLA was getting stronger and now we have war in Darfur. They are losing the country. They are going to be out of power. So we better sign that CPA. And that's what happened. So that tells me that the issue of the marginalized forces, the SPLM, Southern Sudanese, we are marginalized, the whole of Sudan is marginalized, the whole Sudan, yes, the whole Sudan is marginalized at the expense of the NCP. So the government is using the Sudanese people to achieve a political mindset and they are, the people are innocent.

*Q: Are you saying that all the Sudanese people?*

A: The majority.

*Q: Not just the Southern Sudanese?*

A: Not just the Southern Sudanese, the majority of the Sudanese people.

*Q: And the marginalizers, in this case, are chiefly the members of the government and the NCP?*

A: That's right. NCP, former National Islamic Front, the NIF. That won't change. They just changed the name. They are still in power. So what needs to be done, through democratic education, democratic transformation, is using the marginalized forces, in the United States, abroad, Canada and other countries and inside Sudan to come together because when they grasp the idea that, "We need to change Sudan. The power is in our hands democratically" the NCP will be out. Sudan will be transformed. There's no force used. There is no war. The people themselves will change Sudan.

*Q: And are you referring to the elections coming up in 2008?*

A: I'm referring to elections coming up. So going back to the oil revenue, again it's that deliberate factor, because if the Government of Southern Sudan gets the revenue, gets the money, gets the revenue flowing, obviously we will develop. They don't want us to develop. And that is the problem in Sudan, the war for resources, the marginalization.

*Q: You mentioned Darfur, of course that attracts our attention via the media. To what degree do you feel that the conflict in Darfur has distracted too much the attention of the world away from the implementation of the CPA? Is that a fact?*

A: That is definitely a fact. The Darfur issue is on the map. In the *Washington Post* a full page ad on Darfur. So, nobody's saying Darfur is not important. Of course, Darfur is important. People are being killed; they are fellow Sudanese. And we went to war, almost three million people died in Southern Sudan. So we sympathize with the Darfurians. Nobody is saying Darfur is not important. Of course it is important. But the concentration on Darfur, Darfur has overshadowed that the CPA and the war in Southern Sudan, 22 years of war, has disappeared. So we need to go back to the international community and the friends of Sudan to rekindle, reenergize the CPA. We need to bring the CPA back on the map, because the CPA will solve Darfur, will solve other problems in the Sudan.

*Q: Mr. Thotat, you're the representative to Congress here in the U.S., right?*

A: Part of my job is keeping up the coordination and the communication with our friends in the Congress.

*Q: And how do you find they react when you go to talk to them about the need of not forgetting the CPA?*

A: In fact the Administration, the whole Administration of the U.S. Government does care about the CPA, because they know that without their contribution we may not have the CPA. But because of the contribution given by the U.S. government, then we have the CPA. They really do care about it.

Another issue is Darfur, because the problem in Darfur is happening in the same country, Sudan. So the same problem is that the U.S. Government helps the people of the South to realize their peace, you also reach out to the Darfur people, because the killing and mistreatment that are given to the people in Darfur causes insecurity and causes the problem. So the U.S. Government is also very, very worried about the situation in Darfur. And in fact I can say that although the U.S. Government is now, you can see in the news media about the problem in Darfur, I'm not saying they are leaving behind the issue of the CPA. I know that without them we might not have the CPA. And something that helps us, they want to make sure that it is succeeding. So I can see the interest that the CPA needs internally, because that is the solution to the problem of the whole of Sudan. That is why it is a *Comprehensive Peace Agreement*.

*Q: So are you satisfied with the response of the U.S. Government, when you speak with them?*

A: Yes, I think the U.S. Government is really working very hard, so that Sudan can have peace and the CPA should go as it was.

*Q: When we were talking before, you were explaining some of your objectives here as head of the mission of your country and I'd like to ask you to expound on that, explain what your primary objectives are.*

A: Number one, the mission here is definitely going to maintain good relations with the U.S. Government and the people of the United States, because we have historical linkages with the U.S. Basically the U.S. government has been actually with us from the start, when we were struggling. So basically we'd like to make sure that we maintain that.

Number two, now that southern Sudan is exempted from the sanctions, trade and investment is a key to our actual objectives here. Our mission here wants companies to do more investment in southern Sudan, so that the people of the South can actually realize or have peace dividends, they can enjoy peace. By enjoying peace they have to actually see some changes, schools, roads and all this. So we have to have companies from the U.S., because the true ally that we have now is the U.S and other countries in Africa, in every country. So we need companies to go from here and do investment.

*Q: What would be the best sectors, do you think, for trade and investment with the U.S?*

A: Number one, agriculture. We have fertile land, where you can grow your own organic food. So definitely agriculture is going to be key to us here.

Definitely we will also encourage business people; opening a restaurant in Juba will be very good hospitality. We would be happy to have Hilton in Juba; we can have Hilton Juba or Sheraton Juba or Marriott. So definitely we will be welcoming whoever is interested in exploring business opportunities in Juba. So we will actually invite all sectors.

*Q: Some have criticized the SPLM, going back to the governance issues, for being somewhat disorganized and that there are some internal divisions that would need to be resolved for the SPLM to be more effective. I'm curious what your reaction would be to that, are there some shortcomings from the SPLM side that you could be remedying in the next year, on the leadership front or on any other front?*

A: To be honest with you, we don't have any internal divisions within us. Of course, the National Congress Party, after the death of Doctor John, they were actually portraying the SPLM as a disorganized political party. After the death of Doctor John, first they were thinking that Doctor John was the one holding the SPLM together. Of course, he was but he had leaders around him. So when you say leadership, it doesn't mean just one leader. We have a leadership which is actually basically empowered to take decisions and empowered Doctor John to execute them. So basically His Excellency, the President of the Government of Southern Sudan, Salva Kiir, who succeeded Doctor John after his death, we are all fully behind him. But the National Congress Party was using this idea of "Garang's boys," "Salva's boys," because they were thinking that there were some people who used to be close to John, our dead leader and now who are actually close to Salva, they will not be working together. But there is nothing like that. And we are even

telling the world if there are “Garang’s boys,” their first-born is Salva, because he has been with him from the start, until his death, as his deputy. So he has been actually the only son of ours whom the rest can follow. So basically there is no internal division.

Yes, of course, the SPLM, we cannot actually say we are perfect. We are trying to do what we can and we are successful in actually trying to deliver services. Of course we are not yet there, but we are actually definitely, you can witness that, when it comes to reconstruction in Yei.. We have open markets now. Goods are cheaper in Juba. Before there were seventeen cars in the whole of Juba but now it’s more than, I was told 100,000 cars in Juba now, privately owned; companies are actually having their own cars also.. Juba is actually definitely a city of opportunities. And by the way, for your information it is more expensive than Washington, D.C., second only to Tokyo.

*Q: That’s not going to encourage trade and investment!*

A: So definitely if you want to get rich quicker, you’d better be in Juba!

So definitely there is no division at all, to make it short, we don’t have any division. All the people are trying to capitalize, after the death of Doctor John and of course we are trying our best to make sure that the first priority of the SPLM is to work for the people and they will be the ones to benefit from this peace.

*Q: You all knew John Garang I’m sure and probably heard him speak about his vision for Sudan, for a unified Sudan. To what extent does the current leadership share that vision and what is the vision for the unified Sudan at this point?*

A: The vision of Doctor John is still alive. He’s the one who negotiated the CPA. His vision is there in the CPA. And this CPA gives the people of Sudan the freedom to choose and to have a choice on their own. That is why the SPLM, under the leadership of Doctor John, fought for the freedom of the people. All these things are rooted in the CPA. It gives the right to the people to decide if they want to live together, as the people of Sudan in a united Sudan or if there is anything that cannot be resolved, then it also gives the right to the people to decide, especially the people of the South, to decide whether they can be a separate state. Doctor John was fighting for freedom, so that people could make their own choices. So this choice is there, in the CPA.

*Q: When you listen to your constituents in the South evaluating their lives now and projecting what life would be like as one Sudan, do you anticipate that people will vote to remain one Sudan? Or when the referendum takes place in 2011 do you think they’ll decide they’d like an independent state, where they would have the freedom that you’ve mentioned?*

A: That is why the SPLM was a party to telling the National Congress Party to make this CPA attractive to the people. If the things that were lacking were given to the people of the South then they would be happy to live in a united Sudan. But if the South is not being developed, if this insecurity is still there and caused by the NCP, if the life of the

people is not normal, as a result of the NCP, then the choice of the people is there. It's very clear. People will decide what is best for them. So you can see that there are a lot of things lacking as a result of the CPA, especially when it comes to the issue of development. We are now working with foreign companies to go to the South to help with development. But because of the insecurity that is there, it gives the wrong signal. So if things will be the way that they are now, then the CPA will fail, or will not be implemented, or the people of the South will not be happy at the things that are taking place now.

So the choice is in the CPA. They will decide whether they want to be in a bad situation or they want to have a good life on their own.

*Q: Will it be a simple decision, and will the election be fair and carried out freely, do you think?*

A: The election during the referendum, is that what you are asking?

*Q: Yes, the referendum.*

A: Of course, if the NCP is honest and wanted to implement the CPA, then the election of the referendum would be left to the people of the South to decide. So the people of the South will be given freedom to choose and that is actually what will be done, an internationally supervised referendum.

Just to add that we are not deviating from the vision of, basically, John Garang. The current leadership is still committed to the vision of the New Sudan, transforming the whole country into a democratic system. We have to have democracy in this country and respect for human rights and then freedom of everybody. So we have to transform this country into a better country than the way it is, or even the way it was. So we are still committed to that vision of Doctor John.

But we are actually in agreement, also, definitely the Southern Sudanese people, they have a right to actually determine their future, if they want to continue with this united Sudan. And that's why we actually say, "Yes, we are committed to a united, democratic, transformed Sudan." And the SPLM is working on that, but the National Congress Party also has to actually make this agreement, or the CPA, attractive, so the people of southern Sudan will say, "Yes, things are changing. It is not like the old Sudan. Actually the vision of Doctor John is working. Things are working." And then at the end people will actually realize that it is better to be together, because we are all equal and are definitely benefiting from our country together. So definitely they will vote for unity.

But if things are not changing and if the CPA is not made attractive, then definitely if you are going to actually go to Southern Sudan now and ask them, "Do you want unity or secession?" definitely 99 per cent of them will go for secession to form their own independent state. Some of them would say a hundred per cent. I'm just trying to be a realist.

*Q: So the work is really cut out for those, like yourself, who are supporters of the CPA and want to see it succeed?*

A: I would like to add a comment on the issue of unity in Sudan. The CPA document states very clearly that Southern Sudan may opt for secession, they will choose in 2011. It's their choice. And as Doctor John very clearly articulated in his diagrams, the modalities of peace, that you have two circles and you can have one Sudan or you can have two Sudans but it will disintegrate if you have one strong central government and the rest of Sudan is marginalized you will have wars and that is very evident in the history of Sudan, all the wars that took place.

But if you bring the two circles together in these modalities you will form that shaded area which he calls the area of commonality. That will bring all the Sudanese together. Of course we all want peace in Sudan but at the end when the referendum comes it will depend on the choice of the people. So now it seems that the NCP is convinced that, they are saying to themselves, "By the way, these people, Southern Sudanese, they are definitely going for an independent nation state. Let's not even waste our time with this unity."

So now the question is, if they're doing that, it becomes not attractive to the people of southern Sudan. The Southern Sudanese, through history, have suffered a lot and are very, very skeptical of people in the North. For example I myself, 47 years old, grew up in the war, my father was assassinated in the war. Now I am part of it still, fighting for freedom. So it tells a lot. People have lost many loved ones. They are completely convinced, the majority of Southern Sudanese, that the only way out is, "We are waiting for referendum and I'm going to throw my vote down for secession."

But we are giving peace a chance and as the people are convinced that Sudan is not being democratically transformed, then they will choose to vote for secession. Of course, I'm not going to speak for how you're going to vote, but I will vote my conscience. But that is the facts, are already there. Doctor John made it very clear; let's not even hide it. But he fought for peace because he thinks that Sudan can be as one country but if it doesn't work then the people should democratically vote their conscience, what they want to do, determine their own destiny.

*Q: In order to secede, some determination will have to be made on the boundaries and we come back to these key commissions that haven't completed their work. So if the referendum occurs and yet the boundary hasn't been determined, what will that lead to?*

A: That could lead to a chaotic situation, if the boundary commissions have not done their work and here it comes to a referendum. We think it would be a disaster. And that involvement of the international community, the United Nations forces, should be there. And Doctor John, he thought about this very, very carefully. Monitors, UN forces to be present in Sudan, in an event there's an outbreak of war, so that the situation can be contained. So it is extremely important, so now we go back to the situation, okay, the

commissions within the CPA are not getting their work done because sometimes you have members, let's say, for example, of the Abyei commission or the petroleum commission not show up for the meetings, so therefore the meeting is not going to take place. So no work is getting done and time is going on. It looks like the NCP is planning to wait for the general elections and then the referendum, so that it is going to be so difficult for the Government of Southern Sudan to figure out what to do. They're going to be in a mess. But they want to bring that war back by not getting involved, by not being seen that they actually derail the peace, but intelligently doing that, making it very difficult, provocation.

So it is crucial to solve these commissions within the CPA, the Abyei Boundary Commission and the petroleum commission, all the other commissions. So the involvement of the international community, in an effective way, engagement, is extremely important. America is doing all the work. We need to get other countries involved in this, a community of nations.

*Q: Are there African countries ...?*

A: African countries, the IGAD. IGAD is very strong. You have Norway, who can get the Germans on board. Get the French on board. Of course the United Nations Security Council, we have problems there, as shown with Darfur.

*Q: You say the United States has been very active in the negotiation and implementation of the CPA. We'd like to get some reflection of your analysis of how have we done? We from the international community, from the very beginning of the negotiations up to January 2005 and beyond.*

A: Basically before the agreement was signed, the CPA. January 9<sup>th</sup>, looking at the past, the United States has done a lot, as has the American people. The Christian community has played a big role, the churches, the missions, going to Sudan and witnessing what is happening in Sudan. And the American people talking to their congressmen, letting their congressmen know what is happening in Sudan, that the president of the United States needs to get involved in Sudan. So actually that experience has carried a big load from the very beginning, involving the starting of the private talks and getting the IGAD and actually facilitating the signing of the CPA.

A lesson learned from the past is that the United States had actually taken the whole load by itself to involve the international community. So I think the way forward is to work harder to engage the other countries in order to implement the CPA, because it seems like all problems that are happening in the world, that the United States is always in the forefront, always. That is a fact you can name in all the problems that happen in the world. So I think the way forward is to bring in the Europeans, in spite of the problems happening all over the world, bring in some of the African countries legitimately and work in the United Nations Security Council to move this thing forward, because it's a very complicated document but we are also faced with a partner that is playing tactical

games not to get the CPA implemented. And of course nobody wants war. So how do we get the NCP actually to be an honest partner in this agreement?

*Q: Others?*

A: The United States has done a lot. First, through USAID, the U.S. Agency for International Development, we have been getting some of the service when it comes to the humanitarian side of the problem. So the U.S. Government has been actively helping our people.

We understand their position on the Darfur issue has always been clear: the fact that the UN peacekeeping forces should go to Darfur, the U.S. Government is one of the countries that are advocating for that.

Then the third one is sanctions that are imposed on Sudan by the U.S. Government. This is one of the important things that give a signal to the NCP that you are not free, you are not clean, because if there are no sanctions they will think that they are clean and they would continue the killing.

So these things have actually been done by the U.S. Government. There are a lot of other things.

Going back to the international community, these sanctions also depend on the international community, the European countries, because it's a global economy. So the NCP said, "Well, okay, if the United States places sanctions on us we can still do business with the rest of the world." So if the rest of the world, the rest of the countries, come together the doors will actually close on them gradually and eventually the changes will happen.

*Q: Is China doing that?*

A: China is not doing that. China of course is our problem in the United Nations Security Council. That's our problem, dealing with the Chinese.

*Q: I guess, to put a fine point on that, their interests are in their developing petroleum facilities.*

A: Yes, the Chinese.

*Q: They don't want to do anything to prejudice their standing with the government, presumably.*

A: Correct. Also, China, they, of course, with the question of oil, their population one billion plus, they're competing with the United States and not only Sudan. They go into Angola, they go into all countries in Africa. Their interest is very clear. They are not



going to vote, let's say, to place sanctions on Sudan, because that actually diminishes their capacity to get oil for their country.

*Q: You have countries that are not part of the effort. Let's say China, as an example. What would your argument be to that country that it's in their interest to work with you in this direction? How would you persuade a country that is not on board with your program to do so?*

A: An effective strategy would be to form a coalition and make the argument that, "You are supporting, you do not want to support our stand, which means you are supporting the death and destruction of people in Sudan, just for oil." And get the international community to publicize it so the world can see just what China is doing.

But then again we run into the difficulty if China doesn't really care what the international community is saying, so then what do we do? It becomes very tricky, indeed. But if we can actually rally a majority of nations around putting sanctions on Sudan then I think we can actually succeed. Engaging the Chinese is very important and rolling up the whole thing in the political arena internationally, so people could actually know, in Northern Africa, in Europe, in Latin America, in the Middle East, what China is actually doing in Sudan. So in that way international pressure can probably have some impact.

*Q: Well let me thank you, gentlemen. It has been wonderful to meet you and to hear what you're doing here with the Government of Southern Sudan. This is a new mission and we wish you a lot of success in your foreign affairs. And we also, of course, hope for success with the CPA as it goes forward. We'd like to see a prosperous and unified Sudan.*

A: Thank you for your time.