ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR POST-2011 POLITICAL PARTY ASSISTANCE

24 DECEMBER 2010

ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR POST-2011 POLITICAL PARTY ASSISTANCE

Management Systems International
Corporate Offices
600 Water Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

Contract No DFD-1–00–05–00251–00, Task Order No. 2

Services under Program and Program Offices for Results Tracking (SUPPORT)

CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

Acronym	Description
AWEPA	Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa
CEPPS	Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DFID	Department for International Development
DPA	Darfur Peace Agreement
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
ESPA	Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement
GOSS	Government of Southern Sudan
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
ICF	Islamic Charter Front
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
International IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IRI	International Republican Institute
MSI	Management Systems International
NCP	National Congress Party
NDI	National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NIF	National Islamic Front
NISS	National Intelligence Security Service
NPPC	National Press Publications Council
PPAC	Political Parties Affairs Council
SANU	Sudan African National Union
SCP	Sudanese Communist Party
SDG	Sudanese pound(s)
SLA	State Legislative Assembly(ies)
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLA/M	Sudan People's Liberation Army and Movement
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPLM-DC	Sudan People's Liberation Movement for Democratic Change
SSDF	Southern Sudan Defense Force
SSLA	Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly
SSU	Sudanese Socialist Union
SuNDE	Sudanese Network for Democracy and Elections
SUPPORT	Services Under Program and Program Offices for Results Tracking
UDF	United Democratic Front
UDSF	United Salvation Democratic Front
UDSF-M	United Democratic Salvation Front—Mainstream
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNP	Umma National Party
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

Acronym	Description
USAP	Union of Sudanese African Parties
USIP	United States Institute of Peace

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Two decades of open conflict between armed military and political factions in the south of Sudan and the central government in Khartoum ended in 2005 with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), but the underlying cause of the conflict—the tension over the unequal economic development and differing ethno-religious values between the "center" in Khartoum and the "periphery" constituting the remainder of the country—remains unresolved.

The United States' commitment to the success of the CPA and stability in Sudan is reflected in the on-the-ground presence of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Sudan, which includes support for democracy and governance. USAID's support for Sudanese political parties began in 2004, guided by USAID's FY 2004–2007 democracy and governance strategy that established as a primary goal the transformation of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) from a military organization into a civilian political party. The strengthening of other political parties, first in the South and more recently in the North, became the core activity of USAID's program, implemented by the International Republican Institute (IRI), to advance political pluralism.

Despite successes, political pluralism has not taken root in Sudan. The National Congress Party (NCP) led by President Omar al Bashir maintains an authoritarian state in Sudan. In the semi-autonomous region of southern Sudan, SPLM holds as tight a hold on the reins of political power as the NCP does in the North, although in a more democratic environment. The April 2010 elections allowed both ruling parties to strengthen their near monopolies in their respective areas at the expense of weaker parties.

Strengths and Needs of Sudanese Political Parties

Sudan's limited political competition—embodied in government-enforced restrictions on political activity, two dominant ruling political parties, and infrequent and unfair elections—deprive political parties of the feedback mechanisms that allow citizens to provide input and direction through their votes, their funds, and their talents. Starved of feedback, political parties become stagnant and insular, unprepared or even fully unable to adjust.

With the exception of the NCP, political parties in Sudan are weak. Since assuming power through a military-led coup in 1989, the forces of the NCP have merged the resources of the party and the authority of the state. Sidelined, but far from ruined, the opposition political parties active in Khartoum—the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), the Umma National Party, and the younger Popular Congress Party (PCP)—have a history of governing, retaining talented leaders, and maintaining sophisticated operations, despite their exclusion from political authority for 20 years.

Southern political parties have no such reservoir of capacity and present little challenge to SPLM's rule in southern Sudan. Southern political parties correctly identify their need for material assistance and capacity building. They are less likely to see their need for more sound financial planning or citizen-oriented platforms.

All political parties active in the South suffer from weak leadership structures. Even the SPLM acknowledges that its responsibilities test its capacity as a party and as the government. Its transformation from a military movement to a highly functioning political party is incomplete, despite significant progress toward this original goal of U.S. assistance to political parties in Sudan. The need of southern political parties, including the SPLM, is quite simply to develop the ability to distinguish themselves in the eyes of the voters by articulating solutions to the issues of common

concern and then ensuring that their members, candidates, and elected officials work to deliver. In other words, political parties need to deliver real solutions to the problems real people care about.

To accomplish this, political parties must adopt best practices for their internal organization, open themselves to a broader constituency (beyond the politics of tribe and village), and professionalize their abilities, while also encouraging greater accountability both to their own members for operations of the party and to citizens for their ability to improve public policy, mitigate conflict, and deliver services. In this way, political party development can support the positive resolution of the underlying issues of disproportionate development that triggered and continue to fuel conflict in Sudan.

Recommendations

The assessment team makes the following recommendations for USAID's support for political party development in the immediate period and to guide potential future support to political parties and governance in the post-CPA period:

1) Scientific public opinion research is needed to help political actors understand the priorities and the diverse needs of Sudanese citizens. The need for this information is immediate, and such research should take place, at least in southern Sudan, before the end of 2011.

2) In the time before the expiration of current assistance at the end of 2011, current implementing partners(s) should explore bolder approaches to working with political parties and elected officials in northern Sudan, such as entering discussions with political parties (including the NCP and regional parties, on an individual basis) or investigating possible work with the National Assembly and its elected members in Khartoum and/or in their constituencies, along the lines of its work with the SSLA.[1]

3) Political party assistance for northern Sudan and southern Sudan should be designed as two separate programs, regardless of the question of the secession, because the capabilities and operating environment of the political parties in the North and the South are radically different.

4) In order for more intensive and effective work with Khartoum-based parties to take place, the work must be done outside of Sudan, because restrictive government oversight of programming is unlikely to end at any point in the foreseeable future.

5) USAID must establish objective criteria for selecting which, if any, political parties to engage—although those criteria should differ between northern Sudan, southern Sudan and the border areas, and potentially Darfur and eastern Sudan. These objective criteria should accommodate foreseeable contingencies, such as changes in leadership, party splintering, forced divisions of parties in the case of succession, and the taking up of arms.

6) The goal for future political party assistance programming in southern Sudan should be to equip the SPLM with best practices on balancing its roles as the dominant political party and the government. Therefore, a complementary goal should be to prepare the minor southern political parties for a role in the opposition as a check on the SPLM.

7) In the North and the South, political party assistance must diversify from its sole reliance on trainings because they have limited impact in generating behavioral changes and reforming structures without practical reinforcement.

---

[1] There is no unanimity among assessment team members on this recommendation.

8) Implementing partners for political party programming should focus more on practical applications in real world settings that combine skills. The goal or "deliverable" from such programming should require many intermediary steps of lesser obvious value to the party but which, by their nature, stimulate intra-party dialogues and force decision-making about the utilization of scarce party resources such as money and visibility.

9) Avoid working to develop the capacity of the Political Parties Affairs Council (PPAC); it will likely disappear in the next two years as attention on the elections recedes and Government of Sudan priorities move elsewhere.

10) A stronger relationship between elected members of the SSLA and their constituents will advance goals in both political party development and governance. Programming should support improving how elected officials relate to individual citizens, interest groups, and other elected and unelected leaders in their home districts including, but not limited to, the utilization of Constituency Development Funds.

11) Despite a weak baseline of capacity, civil society organizations should be cultivated as watchdogs, advocates, and sources of ideas to develop these external contributors to better political party and government performance.

12) The elected governments and political party organizations at the state level in southern Sudan should balance the concentration of power in Juba.

13) USAID programming should support the reestablishment of fundamental structures of governance after the CPA terminates mid-year 2011 and use the opportunity to address balances of power between the legislative and executive branches, redress any systemic bias working against diverse political party representation in government, and support the establishment of regular, periodic elections in Sudan and in a possibly independent southern Sudan to ensure basic accountability and incentivize better performance by political parties.

I. PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

Background

Two decades of open conflict between armed military and political factions in the south of Sudan and the central government in Khartoum ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005. However, the CPA itself will soon be expiring in July 2011, with several of its key provisions yet to be fulfilled in the remaining time—namely the referendum on the independence of southern Sudan, the Abyei referendum, the popular consultations in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, the demarcation of the border between the North and the South, and agreement on the future distribution of oil revenues. Several past milestones—such as the national census and the April 2010 elections—were completed but still questioned.

Stability in Sudan, even during this relatively peaceful moment in the county's fifty-year history, remains an unmet goal. In addition to the North-South conflict, violent conflict in eastern Sudan and the situation in the states of Darfur further exhibit the tension over wealth, development, and liberties between the "center" based in Khartoum and the "periphery" constituting the remainder of the country and especially the further regions where non-Arab and non-Muslim populations live.

Currently, a host of separate peace agreements signed by the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and non-state actors in southern Sudan, Darfur, and eastern Sudan have delivered a respite, but tensions remain and violence continues at different levels, such as the ongoing South-South conflicts.

The United States involved itself heavily in the negotiation of the CPA and remains committed to its success. Sudan sits at the nexus of U.S. interests in denying space to terrorists, ending genocide and ethnic strife, and establishing regional stability in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. Sudan also possesses large oil reserves, troublesomely located in the North-South border areas.

Seen as one of the few clear successes of President George W. Bush's diplomacy, the implementation of the CPA continues to receive high-level attention from the current administration of President Barack Obama. In October 2009, the Department of State unveiled a new comprehensive strategy for Sudan spelling out incentives and sanctions. Most recently, President Obama personally participated in high-level talks between the governments of Sudan and southern Sudan held under the auspices of the United Nations in September 2010.

The United States' commitment to the success of the CPA and stability in Sudan is reflected in the on-the-ground presence of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Sudan. USAID's current programs in Sudan totaled more than one billion dollars in fiscal year 2009 for emergency food assistance, conflict mitigation, and development. Geographically, USAID's efforts concentrate on the so-called peripheral areas of southern Sudan, the Three Areas, Darfur, and eastern Sudan with approximately less than two percent of aid dollars being dedicated to the core North.

Along with the projects for meeting immediate and short-term humanitarian needs for food, health, and clean water, USAID invests in longer term infrastructure improvements, such as much needed road-building, and education as well economic development. USAID's support for democracy and governance in Sudan is largely, but not exclusively, confined to southern Sudan. Current and recent USAID projects in this area support civic education and engagement, media development, capacity-building of government structures, election observation, and political party development. USAID's support for Sudanese political parties began in 2004 and was guided by USAID's FY 2004–2007

democracy and governance strategy that established the transformation of the SPLM from a military organization to a civilian political party as a goal.

Although USAID has tasked the International Republican Institute (IRI) through a cooperative agreement with the Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening (CEPPS) for strengthening Sudanese political parties continually since 2004, the objectives and activities have shifted significantly since the conception of the program in the pre-CPA period. Naturally, as electoral events approached—namely the April 2010 elections and the referendum scheduled for January 2011—programming focused on the electoral opportunities and legal responsibilities of political parties and the parties' candidates in those events. However, two non-linear programmatic additions to IRI's work with political parties initiated significant new goals for USAID's engagement with political parties. First, IRI began working with the political party representatives appointed to seats in the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly (SSLA) and continues to work with the SSLA and, more recently, with the state legislative assemblies (SLAs) now that they are composed of elected members. Second, taking advantage of a window of opportunity before the national elections, IRI began working in Khartoum with the political parties of northern Sudan with the permission of the government.

USAID's current cooperative agreement with IRI for political party strengthening concludes before the end of 2011, as do all other current democracy and governance projects.

Scope of the Assessment
Management Systems International Services Under Program and Program Offices for Results Tracking (MSI-SUPPORT) Program was tasked by USAID/Sudan to carry out an assessment of the needs and strategic direction for post-2011 political party assistance in Sudan. Three consultants, Mr. Jeffrey Vanness (Team Leader), Mr. Monim Elgak, and Mr. Aly Verjee, were contracted to undertake the evaluation from August 20—September 17, 2010.

According to the Scope of Work (Annex 1), "[t]he purpose of this assessment is to explore prospects for USAID/Sudan political party assistance following the 2011 Abyei and southern Sudan self-determination referenda. The assessment will map out and identify developmental needs of political parties, determine the impact of a post-referenda environment on those needs, appraise demand and openings for political party assistance both in South and North Sudan, and delineate the types of potential technical assistance specific to each post-referenda context."

Specifically, the assessment is to examine three distinct geographical areas—southern Sudan, northern Sudan (primarily Khartoum), and the Three Areas (South Kordofan, Blue Nile, and Abyei)—and make recommendations on specific objectives and activities for potential future USAID-sponsored political party strengthening programs in each place according to their needs, cognizant of the prevailing constraints for such work.

Beyond the areas identified in the Scope of Work, during initial meetings in Juba, USAID asked the assessment team to also consider two auxiliary questions. First, what was the potential for working with political parties to improve governance in Sudan and working with elected government officials to improve the performance of political parties? Second, what was the feasibility and potential utility of conducting scientific, quantitative public opinion research (polling) to further political party development in Sudan? The assessment team agreed to the relevance of these questions.

At this meeting, USAID also clarified that the "post-referendum" timeframe for the purposes of this assessment would be the three-to-five years after the expiration of USAID's current projects, or from 2012 through 2015 or 2017. Additionally, USAID invited the assessment team to make recommendations for the immediate period under the work of the current implementing partners,

that is, utilizing a unique window of opportunity, if the team found such recommendations consistent with the goals of the assessment in providing strategic direction for potential programming in the future period.

Methodology and Data Limitations

The assessment team divided its time between Juba, Khartoum, and Malakal. Vanness and Verjee conducted field work in Khartoum (as Elgak is unable to freely travel to the North without fear of detention—itself an indicator of the closed political environment in the North). Vanness and Elgak conducted interviews in and around Juba and in Malakal in Upper Nile state. The assessment team was discouraged from visiting the Three Areas because an earlier assessment team studying civic participation had recently spent extensive time there; Upper Nile state was selected as an imperfect substitute for the Three Areas because it is also on the border of northern and southern Sudan and contains a similar mix of ties to each region.

The research undertaken for this assessment was primarily qualitative in nature. Primary source data were collected through semi-structured interviews with key informants and through unstructured, opportunistic informal conversations with approximately two dozen Sudanese citizens in southern Sudan and through direct observation. (The interview protocols are found in Annex 3.)

The team interviewed more than 50 individuals from 33 organizations, including 10 political parties. The U.S. government's views were represented by USAID staff based in Juba, Khartoum, and Washington; the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum; and the Special Envoy for Sudan's staff. Other views from the international community were given by the implementing partners of USAID and other donors. Interviews and discussions with Sudanese experts and practitioners comprised the majority of the team's schedule. These include academics, leaders of civil society organizations, and journalists.

The greatest amount of time in southern Sudan was spent with senior and mid-level members of political parties, including women members and youth leaders. In addition to speaking with elected officials serving in the SSLA, the team was able to speak with and hear from a number of candidates who unsuccessfully vied for seats in the National Assembly, the SSLA, and state legislative and executive branch

The assessment team was able to meet with leaders of all the active political parties in southern Sudan except for the Southern Sudanese Democratic Front (DF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement for Democratic Change (SPLM-DC). Additionally, the team met with mid-level and junior members of the same parties and also SPLM-DC.[2]

The assessment team also spoke with a number of Sudanese citizens, primarily in Juba, who were selected via convenience sampling between formal meetings. Topics discussed ranged from what they would consider the biggest problems facing Sudan to whether they could name any political parties. Their views provided a valuable reference point for interviews with political leaders, and the assessment team is grateful for the willing participation of so many Sudanese citizens.

The assessment team reviewed a number of written documents, including the relevant laws of Sudan, the semi-annual project reports of IRI to USAID, the reports of international and domestic election observation organizations, Sudanese political party websites, U.S. government strategy papers, and

---

[2] A list of persons consulted during this assessment are catalogued in Annex 2.

other reports prepared primarily by international actors. The assessment team continued to collect and review written documents throughout its work.[3]

Disappointingly, the team was unable to meet with more than one non-ruling party during its field work in Khartoum because of late decisions by U.S. embassy officials; although invited, other key representatives of political parties in the North were unable to travel to Juba for meetings due to the Eid holiday and other scheduling conflicts. A number of meetings with leaders within the northern sector of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) did take place, but the assessment team does not feel that it sufficiently gathered the firsthand views of political parties active in northern Sudan and the Three Areas for their perspectives to be reliably represented in this assessment.

As mentioned above, the assessment team conducted work in and around Juba, in Khartoum, and in Upper Nile State. Travel to the Three Areas was discouraged despite the team's interest and its integral relevance to this assessment. Nevertheless, the team did seek out other opportunities to speak with representatives of the border regions of Abyei and the Nuba Mountains area, as well as Darfur.

A Word of Caution
The purpose of this assessment is to look into Sudan's post-CPA future to inform future USAID democracy and governance program design. The assumption of linear progress along the CPA roadmap belies the very relevant possibility of renewed violence between the North and the South. The remaining milestones of the CPA—with attention focused most intensely on the referendum on whether southern Sudan remains part of a unified Sudan or becomes an independent country—may prove to be the most volatile. Whether the referendum is held as scheduled, postponed, or cancelled, whether its outcome favors unity or separation, and whether this official outcome is accepted as valid or challenged make little difference to the underlying questions: will the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and the government of Sudan allow southern Sudan to separate peacefully from the rest of the country, and what effect will this have on the aspirations of the other peripheral areas on the North-South border, in Darfur, and in eastern Sudan?

According to the United States Institute of Peace's (USIP) report "Scenarios for Sudan's Future, Revisited," the different scenarios conceived by USIP and the Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael "both emphasized that Sudan's future is unlikely to be free of violence and conflict" with peace being the least likely outcome.[4] Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made the same point more forcefully on September 8, 2010, when she described Sudan as a "ticking time bomb" about to explode over the unresolved North-South issues.[5]

The assessment team agrees that the most likely scenarios all include some level of violence, ranging from the continuation of sporadic violence with occasional peaks of significant conflict on the low end to the resumption of open, armed conflict—at least between the North and the South, and quite possibly between Khartoum and the peripheral areas of the North—on the high end. As undesirable as this outcome would be, the possibility must be faced.

Since its inception, USAID/Sudan's democracy and governance operations in southern Sudan have taken place in the midst of conflict. However, the assessment team acknowledges that, in the event

---

[3] A list of documents consulted during this assessment are catalogued in Annex 3.

[4] Jon Temin and Jaïr van der Lun; "Scenarios for Sudan's Future, Revisited"; *United States Institute of Peace Peace Brief;* July 28, 2010.

[5] Hillary Clinton; "Remarks on United States Foreign Policy"; U.S. Department of State; September 8, 2010; available at http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/09/146917.htm.

of renewed open warfare, democracy and governance assistance will assume a lower priority and further acknowledges that within the democracy and governance portfolio, political party strengthening will assume a very low priority for limited funds.

II. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW[6]

Like most countries, Sudan's political history stretches back farther than the contemporary observer sees; current events crop the image into a simpler form. For Sudan, the current authoritarian state existing since 1989 obscures a political history which, although not continuously democratic, is at least pluralistic and was prone to sudden changes in fortunes that one would not assume from the static nature of the current regime.

Origin of Political Parties and Transitions of Power (1956–1989)
In southern Sudan, the first political parties formed over the period from the 1940's to the time of independence, but would have only limited participation in the Khartoum government for most of independent Sudan's history. The Umma National Party emerged in 1945 to promote the independence of Sudan from Britain and Egypt. The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which won the 1953 legislative elections as the National Unionist Party and formed independent Sudan's first government, took its name from its position favoring union with Egypt. Both these early political parties possess deeper roots in different Islamic sects.

Stability in independent Sudan was as elusive as it is today. Sudan's history is marked by brief periods of chaotic and ineffective parliamentary rule followed by long eras of authoritarian, military government. The first Sudanese civil war began in 1955, the year before independence was achieved, and was sparked by southerners' fear of increased marginalization under a Khartoum-based, Arab government. A coup in 1958 produced a military government that ruled until it was brought down by riots and strikes in 1964. Elections in 1965 led to a coalition government formed by the Umma and the National Unionist Party (the future DUP), but that government and its successor proved unstable and ineffective. Another military-led coup in 1969 installed Col. Gaafar Nimeiri as head of government. His rule survived unsuccessful coup attempts by the Sudanese Communist Party in 1971 and the Umma National Party in 1976 before he began a process of reconciliation with those parties in 1977. Nimeiri's Sudanese Socialist Union (SSU) government's 16-year tenure saw the end of the first civil war with the signing of the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972 and the start of the second Sudanese civil war, again between the North and the South, 11 years later in 1983.

It was also during Nimeiri's rule that the National Islamic Front (NIF), the precursor to the National Congress Party, entered government when its leader Hassan al Turabi was named Attorney General. Under Nimeiri, *sharia* law was introduced into the Sudanese legal system. Just as Nimeiri came to power in a coup, so was his rule ended by yet another military-led coup in 1985. Elections in 1986 allowed the Umma Party, along with the DUP and the NIF and four southern political parties, to form a coalition government. (Elections were not held in most parts of southern Sudan, and whether the southern political parties participating in the government had any popular base is in doubt.) But that government failed to make progress in replacing *sharia* law, ending the civil war, and addressing critical economic issues, and thus the coalition fell apart over factionalism, corruption, and personal political rivalries.

NCP Rule Before the CPA (1989–2005)

---

[6] Information included in this section was provided by one team member who is considered an expert on Sudanese Political Parties.

In 1989, Sudan's brief experience with a democratically elected government ended with a military coup led by Colonel Omar Bashir. Bashir aligned himself with the NIF, whose leader, Hassan al-Turabi, later became the Speaker of the National Assembly in 1996 and secretary-general of the ruling party in 1998. Under Bashir the NIF transformed itself into a more formal political party, the NCP, in time for the 1996 elections; however, these elections were boycotted by all the other major parties and were not held in most areas of southern Sudan due to the ongoing conflict.

The NIF/NCP advanced the vision of an Arab-dominated Islamic state. *Sharia* law was reintroduced, and the disproportionate concentration of wealth in Khartoum at the expense of the development of other areas of the country accelerated. Bashir's rule further antagonized the periphery in southern Sudan, Darfur, and eastern Sudan, fueling conflicts in those areas and exacerbating humanitarian crises that drew worldwide attention. In response to the NIF's assumption of power, all other major political parties formed a loose alliance, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The NDA incorporated trade unions, civil society, and leading individuals, and for the 15 years between President Bashir's assumption of power and the signing of the CPA, the NDA was the focus of civilian opposition in Sudan. However, the NDA was largely a creature of northern Sudan despite the participation of the SPLM.

In contrast to the NCP's military government advancing the Islamic state, the NDA called for a return to democracy. Even though many of its constituent members had less-than-ideal records on the matter, the NDA was the vehicle of the usurped democratically elected government of 1986. In 1999, a power struggle between Hassan al-Turabi and President Bashir led to Turabi's ouster from the NCP and subsequent imprisonment. Turabi went on to form the Popular Congress Party (PCP). The PCP signed a separate peace agreement with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in 2000.

Although opposition figures were harassed, imprisoned, and exiled during this period, the opposition in the North persisted and remained viable. The original Umma party and DUP that pre-dated independence remained intact not just as organizations, but as active voices expressing views opposed to the ruling NCP's government policies. Turabi's ability to form a new political party after he and his core supporter split from the NCP also reveals both an amount of political space and the sophistication to utilize it.

Politics Under the CPA and Other Peace Agreements (2005-present)
The NDA became largely inactive following the signing of the CPA and the creation of a government of national unity in 2005. The CPA fixed participation of the NCP at 52 percent of the seats in the National Assembly, 28 percent for the SPLM, 14 percent for other northern political parties, and 6 percent for southern political parties. The Umma party did not participate in the assembly or at the executive level, and the SPLM left the executive temporarily in 2007.

Neither in the North nor at the national level is there any broad-based opposition to the NCP government akin to the NDA. The current Juba Forces Alliance was not intended to function as an opposition alliance when it was formed in September 2009. The formation of the alliance came as result of a conference convened by the SPLM, and invitations to join were extended to major parties including the NCP. The NCP refused to participate and described the conference as a gathering of opposition, despite the participation of some parties that were junior partners in the national unity government. With exception of the NCP, major political forces, national figures, and civil rights and democracy associations agreed on and issued the Juba Declaration for National Dialogue and Consensus Building. The alliance was not formed as an electoral coalition; however, some parties of the alliance individually boycotted the April 2010 election in the North. Many observers draw parallels between the Juba Forces Alliance and the beginning of the NDA during the 1990s. The same major parties in Sudan founded the two alliances. The Juba Declaration articulates a broader

political agenda with focus on peace and a democratic Sudan. It is not yet clear whether the Juba Alliance will continue after the referendum of southern Sudan because of its lack of representation and standing in formal politics.

In January 2005, the NCP and the SPLM signed the CPA. Although the CPA is the most commonly referenced peace agreement, its collection of agreements is still only a partial accounting of the peace pacts struck in this period. Other peace deals approximately concurrent with the CPA are the Cairo Agreement signed between the NDA and NCP on June 2005, the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) signed between SPLA/M's Minni Arko Minawi faction and the NCP in May 2006, and the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement (ESPA) signed between Eastern Front and the NCP in October 2006.

Regarding these various peace agreements, two facts relevant to this assessment stand out. First, although the Government of Sudan is the signatory to the CPA, it is essentially seen as an agreement between the NCP and the SPLA/M due to the exclusion of other northern political parties from the negotiations. Second, regardless of the individual effectiveness and achievements of these agreements in terms of their implementation, they demonstrate the fragmented nature of Sudan's political processes and the lack of capacity of the main political forces to organize and rally behind overall strategic objectives toward peace, democratization, and development.   As for the CPA itself, it is a document that affects the North as much as it does the South.

The CPA establishes the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) governing the region autonomously and provides for elections in all of Sudan, held in April 2010 after delay, to replace the appointed political party representatives serving in the National Assembly, SSLA, and state executive and legislative offices with popularly elected officeholders. It also provided for a national census, the demarcation of the North-South border, and the sharing of oil revenues from southern fields. The final events under the CPA are (a) the "popular consultations" on the implementation of the CPA in the states of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile (which, despite historical ties, are not part of southern Sudan as defined in 1956); (b) the referendum in Abyei that will determine whether the area belongs with the North or the South; and (c) the southern Sudan referendum to determine whether that area remains part of a united Sudan or separates into an independent country.

Aside from the obvious relevance as a legal and technical framework, the CPA is also a political document and one of compromise. Although the Government of Sudan is a party to the agreement, it is commonly viewed that the NCP is the signatory without the involvement or the necessary agreement of other political actors. The CPA also created a Vice Presidency of Sudan to be held by the President of the Government of Southern Sudan and allocated seats in the National Assembly to the SPLM, in a way binding it to the NCP; the SPLM joined the NCP-led government of national unity (only withdrawing temporarily in 2007).

Finally, the CPA mandates that the government of Sudan and GOSS both work to make unity "attractive." (This prohibition on voicing support for separation is passed down to political parties through the Political Parties Act.) As the date for the southern Sudan referendum approaches, it is not just the question of whether unity has been made attractive to the southern Sudanese, but that is on the table. Indeed the southern Sudan referendum scheduled to take place January 2011 represents a landmark not only for Sudan's unity or dissolution: conducting the referendum will mean the exhaustion of the existing political processes, including the Interim Constitution, which expires six months after the referendum, launching a new era of political uncertainty within which the political forces must engage and shape the emerging political environment.

III. CONTEMPORARY POLITICS IN SUDAN[7]

The April 2010 legislative and executive elections marked a milestone in the implementation of the CPA, but were not a positive turning point in Sudanese politics. Even if the flagrant campaign violations by the NCP in North and the SPLM in the South and the fundamental flaws in the conduct of the election noted by domestic and international election observers are ignored, the results of the election cannot be. The elections advanced the consolidation of power by NCP in the North and by SPLM in the South, as both gained seats in the national and state legislatures and executive offices. As such, the results of what the international community hailed as the first multi-party, democratic elections in a quarter century did not advance political pluralism. In the North, boycotts of the election by major parties smoothed the way for NCP gains. In the South, six of the eight political parties granted seats in the first SSLA by the CPA were eliminated from the elected body.

Further poisoning the democratic spirit of the elections, many stakeholders in the North and the South not only believe that the elections were rigged, but that the NCP and the SPLM colluded by engineering postponements and jiggering their conduct for their mutual benefit. The international community is seen as blessing the result of elections that did not meet international standards as a means of legitimizing the rule of President Bashir; these views are as common in Sudanese civil society as they are among political parties.

The major political forces that boycotted the April elections, including the SPLM in the North, believe that the elections did not represent a real opportunity for democratic transition, but instead were designed and conducted to legitimize NCP domination in a manner similar to what was done before the CPA in the 1996 and 2000 elections. Despite two decades of exclusion from participation in power by NCP, political stakeholders take the view that they have been continuously engaged with the struggle for democratic transition: they have continued their engagement in political processes and the defense of political rights, whether from outside the country during the NDA experience, from the underground inside the country, or through political coalitions after the CPA, such as the Juba Alliance of September 2009.

Political Space in Northern Sudan
The authoritarian NCP government has limited the political space in northern Sudan over the last 20 years. A series of laws limit avenues for political expression. (See Annex 5 for a more detailed look at the legal framework in place.) The presence of the National Intelligence Security Service (NISS) is felt. Media outlets cannot exercise free expression, and self-censorship is as large an issue as overt government pressure.

The expanded majority of the NCP in the National Assembly is likely to enable the party to undermine the several peace agreements that it has signed over the last five years—namely the CPA, Cairo Agreement, DPA, and ESPA. From the moment these agreements were signed, the NCP began to undermine them through weak and insincere implementation and by upholding laws and practices that were fundamentally inconsistent with the spirit and letter of the agreements and the Interim Constitution. On the executive side, the April 2010 election has also enabled the NCP to expand its complete manipulation of the state apparatus and reproduce the one single-party state of the NCP that was put in place in the 1989 military coup, with its all repressive attitudes.

---

[7] Information included in this section was provided by one team member who is considered an expert on Sudanese Political Parties.

Not only is the political center, but also the broader political North—which includes the Three Areas, Darfur, eastern Sudan—is impacted by the post-election environment.

The likely consequences of the consolidation of the NCP's power include repression of pluralism and basic freedoms, the continued dissemination of a culture of racism, the strengthening and rebuilding of political Islam and the expansion of fundamentalist ideas, and enhanced opportunities to legalize violence, political repression, and the violation of human rights—particularly those of women.

The implications of the April 2010 elections and the exhaustion of the CPA period (and of the Interim Constitution of 2005 a few months after the southern Sudan referendum) are likely to replicate the exclusion of the major political forces in the North, putting them back to their position in the pre-CPA era. The current atmosphere of political polarization, with the NCP and its small allied parties on one side and all other major political forces on the other, is increasing this sense of exclusion. Other factors contributing to a polarized and exclusionary political environment in the North are the current political atmosphere indicating that independence of southern Sudan is highly likely, the continuation of the political and security crisis in Darfur, and the political uncertainty surrounding the popular consultations and their outcomes in the two areas.

Political Space in Southern Sudan
Southern Sudan is as much a one-party state as northern Sudan, if not more so. However, their environments diverge greatly. Khartoum's reach does not extend far into southern Sudan. In Juba, political meetings and discussions can take place freely and publicly. The assessment team encountered no hesitation from fear when setting up meetings or engaging with political parties in Juba, although the same cannot be said for conversations taking place in Malakal in the border state of Upper Nile. In addition, southern Sudan benefits from a relatively free press. Numerous newspapers and radio stations operate without strict restrictions on their editorial content. However, the production of a large proportion of radio programming occurs outside the country's borders.

A sizable civil society community works throughout southern Sudan. Much of the focus of civil society organizations is concentrated in humanitarian fields. Southern Sudanese civil society is heavily indebted to the international community, although the church and related religious organizations provide a well-established, demonstrated local capacity. Since the creation of the GOSS, many informants reported that the capacity of civil society had decreased as capable civil society leaders assumed government positions with the GOSS and at the state level.

Decades of armed conflict have left their mark on the South, and South–South violence remains a real problem. Lawlessness in rural areas has not been effectively checked by existing community and tribal leadership in the absence of a functioning police force or courts system; the presence of SPLA veterans and the proliferation of small arms have not helped the situation. The SPLA commanders who now comprise a large portion of the political leadership in the states and counties do not always have a full appreciation of the roles and responsibilities of civilian government.

Political Space in the Two Areas[8]
The main motivation for many in the Southern Kordofan and the Blue Nile areas to join the armed struggle along with those from southern Sudan was to fight for the ideology of the "New Sudan," based on the analysis that the problems of Sudan are rooted in ethnic and religious oppression,

---

[8] The Abyei area is not included in this section because the April 2010 elections did not have direct implications on the political landscape of Abyei, compared with other regions of Sudan. Nevertheless, the Abyei Area continues to represent a serious threat to the full implementation of the CPA. Only a couple of months remain in the Interim period and the two parties, SPLM and NCP, have failed to implement several resolutions on Abyei, including an on time referenda. In addition to the NCP and SPLM as major political actors in the areas, the politicized and/ or militarized ethic relationship between the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka is considered a major factor contributing to the very polarized political atmosphere in Abyei.

racism, and economic and political marginalization. Political leadership in these two states had recruited and mobilized their citizens on this basis and had fought heavily against the central government in Khartoum for more than two decades as part of liberation struggle of the SPLA/M. After a hard fought war, the two states managed to achieve special status under the CPA through a special protocol and the recognition of its essential component, the popular consultation process. According to the Popular Consultation Act, the elected parliaments of the two state legislatures are responsible for conducting a popular consultation to gauge the level of satisfaction of the citizens with the CPA and the way they envisage their relationship with central government is Khartoum.

The post-election environment has weakened the capacity of the Two Areas to achieve their political interests as envisaged in the special protocol through the popular consultation. Three major factors are contributing to this new reality: (a) the failure of democratic forces and major political parties to achieve transformation of the center during the elections to enable the Two Areas to have a conducive environment for negotiating around the outcomes of the popular consultation; (b) the re-empowerment of the NCP through the expansion and legitimating of its political power in the center and complete monopoly of the state institutions that are intended to negotiate any new political and constitutional arrangement with the Two Areas; and (c) the new political momentum in the South with high potential for southern Sudanese independence.

The intersection of these three factors has made those who fought for liberation in the Two Areas less interested in the outcomes of the popular consultation (which are delayed in South Kordofan because of the delay in SLA elections in that state). Political stakeholders from these border areas believe that the new power realities in the center will enable the NCP to manipulate the special arrangements and the particular political content of the popular consultations, resulting in the assimilation of the South Kordofan and Blue Nile into the structure of the NCP's post-election state.

At the same time, despite the apparent evolving political deadlock in the two areas, political stakeholders have managed to strongly connect the concerns of their areas with the mainstream concerns of the major political forces in Sudan. Furthermore, the Two Areas have relatively strong civic engagement experiences, both during the war and after the CPA, which can easily be mobilized and engaged with any emerging political process. South Kordofan and Blue Nile currently enjoy strong political leaderships in terms of capacity, seniority within the SPLM, and their connections with other major political forces in Sudan. These two states have been organized under the SPLM's southern sector but sit on the Khartoum side of the North-South border.

Political Space in Eastern Sudan
Eastern Sudan is one of the most marginalized regions in Sudan. Since independence, the people of eastern Sudan have struggled against successive governments in Khartoum for greater political autonomy and development. Founded during 1950s, the Beja Congress pursues a regional agenda for the East and found natural allies in Darfur, Nuba Mountains and, to some degree, in southern Sudan. The Beja Congress has continued to push for regionalization as a means to solve conflict and 'marginalization' and to address the historic grievances of the people of the East.

In 1995 the Beja Congress joined the armed struggle as part of the NDA alliance against the government in Khartoum in response to repression imposed by NCP. Having the Beja Congress as part of the NDA's activities transformed eastern Sudan into a major war zone, with the Congress working closely with SPLA against the NCP. After the signing of the CPA between the NCP and SPLA/M, the Beja Congress—along with its regional like-minded forces, Rashaida Free Lions—formed the Eastern Front to represent the demands of people of eastern Sudan. The formation of the Eastern Front came about as a result of the assessment that the CPA had ignored the structural imbalances in the other regions of Sudan, and that the East now had to address its concerns directly to the regime in Khartoum. In 2006 the Eastern Front signed a peace agreement (ESPA) with the

NCP in Asmara, Eritrea—although many observers believe that the ESPA is basically a deal between Asmara and Khartoum rather than between the Eastern Front and NCP. The relationship between Eritrea and Sudan has become smoother since the CPA was signed, as both countries had previously supported the other's political opponents. Many observers believe that the relative stability in the East is attributable to the lack of actual conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia (in spite of mutual animosity) and that any renewal of the fighting between them could once again turn the East into a war-zone.

Reflecting a broader history of the NCP dishonoring agreements, the Eastern Front has started complaining about the lack of genuine commitment to implementation from the NCP. The implementation process for the three major components of the ESPA—power sharing, wealth sharing, and security arrangements—are all lagging behind the planned timeline. Many of eastern Sudan's political stakeholders believe that the NCP has successfully managed to deploy its "divide and rule" tactics in the East by excluding and creating political fragmentation among members of the Eastern Front and therefore weakening capacity to engage in the implementation. Many members of the Eastern Front, which has now fragmented into three parties, feel that the ESPA did not promote the rights of Beja people, and that NCP has manipulated their prospects of asserting those rights. Moreover, political and civic activists from the region believe that the fundamental principles behind the founding of the Beja Congress are being undermined by the NCP and the ESPA—particularly the demand for regional autonomy. Many are of the view that there is a need to continue in coalition with democratic forces and 'marginalized' groups in order to achieve the region's interests, rather than being assimilated into the NCP through engagement with the ESPA.

Political Parties Active in Sudan[9]
In all, 84 political parties are currently registered with the Government of Sudan through the Political Parties Affairs Council (PPAC); seventy-two of these fielded candidates during the April 2010 elections for national, regional, and state legislative and executive offices. However, the real number of organized, influential political parties is much lower, since only 15 to 20 political parties can be described as significant in at least three states.

Many political parties are not functional. Many were created or cultivated by the ruling NCP after the coup of 1989 in an attempt to create an image of a multi-party landscape. In addition to the NCP and the SPLM, four other political parties in the North have long-standing legitimacy among various segments of Sudanese society. These four parties—the DUP, the Umma National Party (Umma), the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) and the PCP—were the most commonly named by informants in discussions with the assessment team regarding the politics of the North.

In the South, the CPA legitimized six political parties by granting them seats in the original, appointed SSLA (alongside the SPLM and NCP). The recognition given by the CPA, however, does not equate to popular appeal. According to NDI's focus group reports from southern Sudan, the only political parties most participants could name were the SPLM and/or the NCP.[10] The assessment team's interviews with average, non-political southern Sudanese citizens confirmed this finding.

According to the Political Parties Act of 2007, a new political party must demonstrate that it has at least 500 supporters drawn from at least three different states. Existing political parties that had been recognized under the provisions of the Political Parties and Organizations Act of 2001 were

---

[9] See Annex 6 for an expanded discussion of political parties active in Sudan.
[10] Traci Cook and Dan Vexler; *Imaging the Election: A Look at What Citizens Know and Expect of Sudan's 2010 Vote;* National Democratic Institute for International Affairs; September 30, 2009; pp. 19–20.

grandfathered in. The Political Parties Act set up PPAC to oversee the registration of political parties and related matters.

Political parties must demonstrate basic organization by adopting a party constitution and a logo and by holding party conventions. The Political Parties Act also names the legitimate sources of party income. No excessively burdensome or limiting restrictions are placed on political parties except that their manifestos cannot contradict the CPA or the Interim Constitution of Sudan; this, according to PPAC's interpretation of the law, prohibits southern political parties from incorporating a call for the independence of southern Sudan into their identities.

There is no legal distinction between political parties operating at the national, regional, or local levels, but the different histories, levels of capacity, and areas of operation have given rise to various terms for speaking about sets of political parties. The Umma and DUP are referred to as the "old," "sectarian," or "first-generation" parties, in contrast to the SCP, PCP, and others which are collectively described as "new," "ideological," or "second-generation." There is a distinction between "real" parties and those that exist only "on paper." Registered political parties are legally distinguishable from unregistered political parties and political movements.

Functionally, there are national political parties which are active in the North and the South, with the NCP and SPLM falling into this category. This assessment follows this nomenclature by identifying NCP and SPLM as national political parties and the others by their area of activity.

National Political Parties
Only two political parties in Sudan operate in all areas of the country—the North, South, East, and Darfur. The National Congress Party (NCP) under the leadership of President Omar Bashir maintains autocratic rule over Sudan, but the party's influence is weakest in the South. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) dominates political life in southern Sudan, but also attracts sizeable support in Khartoum, Darfur, eastern Sudan, and the Three Areas.

Political Parties Active in the North
The significant political parties active in northern Sudan are all closely tied to the history of Sudan. The Umma, the DUP, and the SCP all formed before the independence of Sudan, and the Umma and DUP have led the government at different times. The PCP was formed and is still led by Hassan al-Turabi, one of the more dynamic figures in modern Sudanese history.

Although these and other political parties have become emaciated under NCP rule (if judged by their performance in the April 2010 elections), they maintain a strong reservoir of capacity. The Umma and DUP retain a large number of members who served in government when those parties were in power. Their leaders, as well as those of SCP, are practiced politicians who have spent their adult lives active in politics. They retain knowledge on the workings of government, skills for reaching voters during elections and in the period between them, and the experience in operating and navigating with different levels of political space. In other words, they have political "know-how" and they are survivors.

In contrast to countries where the political opposition is systematically shattered, Sudan's political leaders have avoided existential threats not just under the NCP, but through a history of military coups and long periods out of power. They possess and have deployed contingency plans for going underground and for leaving (and returning to) the country. They know how to survive under pressure. The skill set of political parties in northern Sudan also includes coalition building. These political parties have a documented history of cooperating for mutual gain both when in power and when out of power. The Umma, DUP, SCP, and various groups led by Turabi have shared power in government and taken junior partner status when optimal or necessary. They have all lent support to

and dropped out of government coalitions based on their political calculus at the time. Out of power, northern political forces (not limited to the four significant parties) have joined the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) before the CPA and now the Juba Forces Alliance. Yet, despite their latent potential, these political parties are fundamentally weak. Having been out of power for so long has cost them access to financial resources and internal party unity. With the true results of the April 2010 elections obscured and parties boycotting the contest, the level of public following generated by each party remains a mystery.

It should also not be forgotten that these political parties may provide a political alternative to the NCP, but not necessarily an ideological one. The NCP did not start the Second Sudanese Civil War. The fundamental grievance of disproportionate wealth accumulation at the center of the state at the expense of the peripheral areas began before independence and continued when the Umma, DUP, and other forces were the decision-makers. Although the NCP is associated with the Islamization of Sudan, the beginning of this process was put in place long before. The current leaders of the Umma, DUP, PCP, and—to a lesser extent, the SCP—are tied to the policies of the past.

There are also another sixty-odd registered political parties that are too small to mention, the majority of which are very local parties (parties contained to a small, isolated area). Some of these resulted from the splintering of established parties and have adopted similar names and/or claim to be the "true" heir to the party's heritage. For example, Federal Umma won seats in the National Assembly in 2010, but other splinter parties may be one-man operations. Regional parties are discussed separately below. It was commonly alleged to the assessment team that many of these political parties were set up by NCP to sow confusion.

Political Parties Active in the South
Most of the political parties active in southern Sudan claim to be active on the national stage, but aside from having an office or a few representatives or members in Khartoum, none of them attract any significant level of following outside of the 10 states of the South. Generally speaking, their members in the South do have a strong identification with the party of their choice. However, the leadership in these political parties has frequently shown less loyalty to the party than the rank-and-file; the history of southern political parties is populated with party splinters, factional fighting, and party switchers (not unlike the North) for the sake of influence, power, and prestige.

Southern politics is dominated by the issue of self-determination, and despite the nuances they illuminate between themselves, the political parties vying for the voters of the southern Sudanese do not offer any variety on the issue that is discernable to the voters.

In describing the common features of the southern political parties, the word "weak" is often used. Among the general population, they are unknown: the assessment team's interviews with an opportunistic sample of Sudanese citizens in Juba confirmed the finding of focus groups held by NDI in other areas that the only political parties most southerners can identify are SPLM and NCP.

The April elections were not kind to political parties in the South. The constitution of southern Sudan allotted each political party active at the time of adoption four of the seats other than those that went to the national political parties. None of those political parties retained their seats in the voting. (Four seats were won by a SPLM-DC, a new political party breaking away from SPLM, and six were won by former-SPLM independent candidates.) After the election, many of the parties sought appointed positions in the GOSS, applying in the name of political diversity.

The resources and organization of southern political parties pale in comparison to that of the four significant political parties of the North. Repeatedly the assessment team heard that these younger political parties were not as "sophisticated" as their northern counterparts.

Southern political parties do benefit from loyal members at the lowest levels as well as passionate and informed members at the middle levels, although the numbers in those cadres is small. The leaders of the southern parties do not lack in confidence; they remain certain that there is a role for their parties in southern Sudan. Many of them are also optimistically confident (or overconfident in the evaluation of the assessment team) that once independence for southern Sudan is achieved, the SPLM, having fulfilled its mandate, will spontaneously dissolve.

Others in academia, civil society, and the international community envision a less promising future for the political parties of southern Sudan. One Sudanese professor politely stated that, "other parties don't have a bright future," whereas another long-time Sudan expert put it more bluntly, saying that "other political parties in the South can't make a dent."

Regional Political Parties and Political Movements
Regionalization is an emerging trend in contemporary Sudanese politics. Parties in the East, Darfur, and the Nuba Mountains represent regional constituencies that increasingly do not identify with the politics of Khartoum. Even NCP representatives shared with the assessment team that regional parties in the Two Areas, Blue Nile, and Southern Kordofan are attracting supporters and have a future. Further regionalization of Sudanese politics can be anticipated, especially if the South secedes.

Regional political parties are smaller and may or may not be registered as political parties with PPAC. In fact, the legal requirement that a party have support in three states is an impediment for some. The Beja Congress/Eastern Front in eastern Sudan and several parties active in the Nuba Mountains do have official standing.

These smaller political parties have not benefited from the same programming as have the more established parties, and they are not particularly more or less internally democratic than other parties. One international civil society and security expert advocated for sustained, long-term assistance to these fledgling parties as the only hope for producing a meaningful alternative to the current authoritarian state.

Non-Party Political Actors
The period surrounding the April elections created a new type of political space that was inhabited by new political stakeholders who were not necessarily competing for political posts. Independent civil society groups and media outlets have also entered the political space, advocating and lobbying for democratic change, similar to the activism of students and labor unions in the 1960s–1970s. The main political agenda of these groups was to voice the concerns of the voiceless Sudanese people across the country on Sudan peace, justice and human rights.

For the first time, elections brought to the fore several groups representing civil rights and democracy activists such as an independent elections coalition, the youth movement Girifna ("We Are Fed Up"), a womens' rights coalition, Sudan Democracy First Group, Ebony TV, Dabanga radio, Sudaneseonline Forum, Ajrass *Alhurria* and the *Juba Post,* democratic journalists and civil society, and SuNDE, SuGDE, and the Tamam network for civic education. These groups have even been recognized by significant parties for their innovative methods of mobilizing and fostering conversations and public talks, their use of the internet and cell phones in communication, symbolic demonstrations, civic actions, and lobbying of the international community.

Many observers and political actors consider these emerging civil rights and democracy activist associations as adding value to the political landscape in Sudan. For some observers, these groups represent the beginning of a new social movement and thus they believe it is important to keep open the spaces for their engagement with political parties to achieve democratic change. The April

election experience demonstrated the importance of political movements that are not formal parties. Civil rights and democracy activist associations, coming from both civil society and media background, are a new and important feature of the Sudanese political landscape.

IV. ASSISTANCE TO POLITICAL PARTIES

International efforts to foster the development of political parties in Sudan pre-date the CPA and have been supported by multiple sources including the U.S. government, the United Nations, and the British Department for International Development (DFID). International IDEA made the earliest sustained effort to work with political parties, starting in Khartoum in 2004, and remains active today. USAID appears to have been the earliest and largest contributor toward these endeavors in southern Sudan but its efforts through the International Republican Institute (IRI) have until recently focused primarily on the SPLM and other southern Sudanese political parties.

U.S. Government-Sponsored Assistance
The U.S. Department of State provided early material assistance to the SPLM to bolster the development of the political counterpart emerging from the SPLA. The U.S. government's unilateral assistance to SPLM remains on the minds of the leaders of several southern political parties today; those parties feel the appropriate remedy is for the U.S. to provide corresponding material and financial assistance to them lest it be confirmed that the U.S. favors the SPLM. Some of these same leaders also cite IRI's more advanced and intensive work with SPLM as further proof of this bias.

Sudanese stakeholders do not—nor should they be expected to—differentiate between the initiatives of the U.S. Department of State and of USAID when evaluating the goals of the U.S. government. The existence of guidelines for USAID political party assistance programs and their implementing partners requiring "a good faith effort to assist all democratic parties with equitable levels of assistance" and prohibiting "commodity support valued over $50,000 to any individual party"[11] does not comfort political parties who witnessed direct assistance to the SPLM from the United States government earlier and who continue to perceive a bias in U.S. diplomats for the SPLM. USAID began its political party assistance program for southern Sudan in 2004 and selected IRI to conduct the work under an agreement with the Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening (CEPPS), with another partner in the consortium, NDI, being assigned to increase civic participation.

From 2004 onwards, IRI has been tasked with assisting the development of civilian political party structures. Their three program objectives are to (1) improve the organizational development of political parties, (2) increase political parties level of preparation to participate in elections, and (3) improve the effectiveness of political party participation in governance.

This has primarily taken the form of a large-scale training program. IRI has produced an extensive offering in the fundamentals of political party development, including party organization (party constitutions, internal elections), communications (internal communications, message development), platform development, and political party finance (fundraising, budgeting). As the CPA-mandated elections approached, IRI's topics naturally gravitated toward training party poll agents and helping political parties understand election laws, select candidates, and develop campaign strategies and messages. Currently, IRI's work focuses on preparing political parties for their roles and responsibilities during the southern Sudan referendum, such as preparing a handbook on the

---

[11] U.S. Agency for International Development; *USAID Political Party Assistance Policy;* September 2003.

referendum process and holding training seminars in the southern states for political parties on which activities are and are not allowed regarding the referendum.

IRI offered southern Sudanese political parties both multi-party training sessions and single party trainings. Southern political parties credit IRI with being able to cater to their requests for repeated trainings for different groups, more in-depth exploration of topics, and special topics deemed important to the party in question. IRI's events took place in both Juba and locations in all 10 states. In 2007, IRI began to work with the SSLA, specifically at the level of committees and caucuses. At this time, the members of the SSLA were appointed by the eight political parties represented. IRI resumed its work with the SSLA in May 2010 when the newly elected legislature, with members only from SPLM, NCP, SPLM-DC, and independent candidates, first sat.

In 2009, IRI began its work with the political parties in northern Sudan. This opportunistic programming encouraged by USAID was predicated on the April 2010 elections. Under an agreement with PPAC, IRI was authorized to assist political parties in preparing for the upcoming elections through multi-party trainings. PPAC required that IRI work with all 84 registered political parties on an equal basis and that training topics be closely related to the elections. In practice, PPAC issued invitations to all political parties active in a state to send a small number of representatives (usually no more than three, according to IRI) to a seminar held by IRI. IRI felt this required format severely limited the effectiveness of their work and its impact and continues to do so in post-election programming in the North. IRI was able to complete a single round of trainings for party poll agents in each state before the election.

Universally, southern political parties speak highly of IRI's assistance. They found the topics of the trainings relevant to their needs and the quality of presentations high. Similar praise was heard from party leaders and mid-level members outside of Juba, including participants at the training event that the assessment team observed. The strongest criticism voiced by a minority concerned their perception of IRI's and the U.S. government's favoritism toward SPLM.

From its inception, IRI's work with SPLM has differed according to plan. Logistically, the size and omnipresence of the party make single party trainings more practical. SPLM's sophistication as a political party, the resources they have at hand, and their additional role as the ruling party mean that the party does have different needs, which IRI has worked to accommodate in the same way that it has responded to the individualized needs of the smaller parties. Sessions on topics of common concern, such as party poll agent training or on understanding the referendum law, have not differed between SPLM and the other parties.

Several interviewees were able to cite tangible application of IRI workshops to party fundraising and strategic planning, but even IRI admits that most parties have difficulty in applying the lessons of workshops to real-world situations. To a degree, the assessment team detected that some southern political party leaders began to speak of IRI's training regimen less and less as something which they themselves are benefitting from, but as something they value as a commodity to distribute to party activists without having to expend their own resources or creativity, akin to privatizing a public good. IRI confirmed that some political parties and some individuals within parties have familiarized the routine and will turn to IRI for "easy answers." In response, IRI has been shifting the burden for planning more and more on the parties to stimulate internal communications.

In northern Sudan, IRI's limited role has prevented it from developing the same collaborative relationship with political parties that it enjoys in southern Sudan. Based on past difficulties with the regime that IRI personnel have faced in Khartoum, IRI had no presence in the capital until the pre-election period. PPAC's mandate that IRI include all political parties in its training has effectively undermined their value because the number of participants from each party is limited to one or two,

parties with no viability consume resources, and topics cannot be discussed in any depth. Additionally, IRI's work in the North has been limited to Khartoum except for one party poll agent training in each state.

IRI acknowledges the minimal value of these training for political parties in the North and expresses frustration that PPAC's requirements prevent meaningful engagement from taking place. The single representative of a northern opposition party with whom the assessment team spoke summarized her views on these trainings by IRI (and also by IDEA) by exclaiming, "It's entertainment!" She did not discount the value of international assistance itself, but was highly critical of the manner by which it was delivered and the expense it entailed with such little effect. IRI and USAID are currently negotiating with PPAC to do similar event-driven programming around the upcoming referenda.

More dynamic are IRI plans for upcoming work with the SSLA. In agreement with the GOSS Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, IRI will supplement the United Nations Development Program's orientation for SSLA members with supplementary trainings. In September, IRI brought the female members of the SSLA together with female members of the SLAs in a program with international experts; IRI intends to continue this women's caucus-oriented work. IRI also plans to select a committee for targeted mentoring.

Also of interest is IRI's intention to work on SSLA members' relations with their individual constituencies, including plans to prepare members for town-hall meetings co-organized with NDI and their network of civil society organizations. Although IRI is USAID's primary implementing partner for political party work, other USAID-funded projects can and do connect with political party development. NDI, which globally has vast experience in political party development, is working in Sudan on civil society development. Further collaborations between IRI and NDI are possible.

NDI's focus group research in southern Sudan provides unique information on how citizens view their political parties and their government and make political decisions. NDI shares findings from its semi-annual focus groups with senior GOSS officials, state governors, and SSLA members, some of whom exhibited different levels of understanding to the assessment team—from sincere appreciation and the ability to cite interesting details to confusion over what they were capturing. Although NDI posts the finished reports on their website, it does not make an effort to distribute the information to a broader public, such as through media outreach. NDI's two attempts to conduct focus groups in northern Sudan (other than in the Three Areas), in 2006 and 2007, triggered severe harassment of NDI's local research partners by the government.

The work of NDI and the Carter Center with domestic election observers (including activities funded by the UNDP) builds capacity in civil society organizations with a civic function, as opposed to the more humanitarian and development oriented groups, as well as documents the Sudanese perspective on political party and candidate behavior during campaigns.

USAID also works with multiple partners to increase the capacity of the central and local governments. Currently, this work appears to have minimal interaction with elected officeholders, but coordination between the executive and legislative branch is an overlooked programmatic goal. IRI, other international groups, and members of the SPLM leadership in the SSLA expressed concern over the gap in expertise between the ministries and the legislature, which hampers the elected officials' ability to review proposed legislation and to conduct adequate oversight.

Two independent U.S. organizations funded directly by Congress have also sponsored programming in Sudan. The United States Institute for Peace (USIP) has initiated a small number of projects in Sudan focusing on conflict resolution. These do not appear to have direct bearing on political party

development, but they have involved local decision-makers in key areas of the North-South border; USIP's partnership with local organizations, such as the Center for Peace and Development Studies at the University of Juba, also develops capacity in civic-oriented entities.

The National Endowment for Democracy's (NED) grants to Sudanese organizations does bear directly on democracy and governance. In the past year, the NED has made more than a dozen small grants to Sudanese institutions; most of these have been for civic education projects related to the elections, but at least one was designated toward the organization of debates between political candidates.

Other International Donor Assistance
International IDEA is the only organization other than IRI specifically working on political party development. Sponsored by DFID, International IDEA began its work in 2004 with the six major political parties in the North: NCP, SPLM, Umma, DUP, PCP, and the Communists. Because it pre-dates the creation of PPAC, International IDEA's work falls under the oversight of the Ministry of International Cooperation. IDEA reports the same "attention" from the Ministry of International Cooperation—approval of agendas, topics, meeting times, and training locations—as IRI has faced in Khartoum. However, the Ministry of International Cooperation has not challenged International IDEA's selective inclusion of political parties. (Its current work involves a different set of smaller parties.) International IDEA's workshops cover basic topics similar to those covered by IRI.

The UNDP is currently conducting its own political parties assessment to explore opportunities for potential future programming in this area. At this time, there is no indication of the nature of the work they may be considering in the future.

DFID is sponsoring two organizations working in part with SSLA committees as sector-oriented governance work. Adam Smith International is working in the security sector with the relevant ministries, the SSLA committee on security, and the SSLA. PACT International is doing similar work with the SSLA's committee on peace and civil society organizations.

A host of other donor agencies and implementing partners have been working with the SSLA and/or the government. Of these, the Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa (AWEPA) has the most visible role with the SSLA; others include the Canadian Parliamentary Centre, the Forum of Federations, the UNDP and the German aid agency Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ).

Worryingly, minimal coordination is taking place and several implementing partners are unfamiliar with the related work being done by others within Sudan. The gap between those working in Juba and those working in Khartoum is wide. As the head of one implementing organization put it, he knows people at other organizations as social contacts but not as work contacts.

Assistance from the Government of Sudan
Two often-overlooked sources of assistance to political parties are the Governments of Sudan and Southern Sudan. The Political Parties Act names the government as one possible source of legal funding for political parties. The Khartoum government did not choose to provide any funding to any political party prior to the April 2010 elections, but GOSS did for southern parties—albeit through a process which some of the minor parties found biased and late in coming.

The prospect of government funding for political parties was repeatedly, but nonchalantly raised in meetings with the leadership of many parties in the South. (The one northern opposition party member with whom the assessment team met with said the party might have refused government funds had they been offered.) As more than one party independently explained it, everyone knows

that the NCP and SPLM each use government resources to fuel their political campaigns, so direct government funding of other parties is merely giving them their fair share. Others assured the assessment team that the Umma and DUP also capitalized on their times as the ruling party to supplement the party coffers. Troublingly, those expressing these ideas seem untroubled by this practice.

The member of PPAC with whom the assessment team and USAID met stated his belief that the government (through PPAC) should provide funds to political parties in the future; however, that future decision remains in the hands of the Government of Sudan and GOSS.

V. NEEDS OF SUDANESE POLITICAL PARTIES

All political parties have needs, and the needs of political parties in southern Sudan are neither unique nor surprising. They derive from a familiar situation where normal political party development has been stunted by an oppressive political environment, and these political parties are still functionally in an incipient state regardless of their age. Sudan's limited political competition—embodied in government-enforced restrictions on political activity, the dominance of two ruling political parties, and infrequent and unfair elections—deprives political parties of feedback mechanisms that allow citizens to provide input and direction through their votes, their funds, and their talents. Starved of feedback, political parties become stagnant and insular and are unprepared or even fully unable to adjust.

For political parties in the North, this stagnation stems from the oppression of the NCP and government. In southern Sudan, however, the civil war (and South-South conflicts), the transitions under the CPA, and now the approaching referendum have obscured the original, unresolved cause of the conflict: disproportionate underdevelopment in the South.

Representatives of every political party the assessment team met with—NCP, SPLM, Umma, UDF, UDSF, UDSF-M, SANU, SCP, USAP, and SPLM-DC—named some variation of self-determination as the preeminent issue with which their political party was concerned. Given the magnitude of the issue, this was neither unexpected nor inappropriate, but several political parties refused to even identify any secondary issues.

At first the assessment team noticed how infrequently the issue of self-determination was identified by the average Sudanese citizens interviewed, but when political party leaders were asked how they thought the average Sudanese man or woman on the street would answer that question, the assessment team was deeply impressed that their answers matched those of citizens: poverty, roads, education, health care, water, etc. The same politicians who steadfastly argued for the primacy of the self-determination issue as the exclusive party platform would readily admit that they, as candidates, spoke to voters during the April campaigns about how they would build schools, pave roads, and create jobs. As clear as these issues are to individual politicians and candidates, their parties are currently incapable of articulating them.

The need of southern political parties, including the SPLM, is quite simply to develop the ability to distinguish themselves in the eyes of the voters by articulating solutions to the issues of common concern and ensuring that their members, candidates, and elected officials work to deliver upon them. To put it simply, political parties need to deliver real solutions to the problems real people care about. To accomplish this, political parties must adopt best practices for their internal organization, open themselves to a broader constituency (beyond the politics of tribe and village), and professionalize their abilities while also encouraging greater accountability both to their own

members for operations of the party and to the citizens for their ability to improve public policy, mitigate conflict, and deliver services.

Self-Identified Needs of Political Parties
Each political party in the South vocalized similar needs.[12] Unquestionably, the single most common entreaty from southern political parties was for financial and material support. Party representatives detailed their need for office space, vehicles, computers, and other office equipment such as photocopiers and fax machines in roughly that order of priority. When asked what else they might do with additional financial support, hiring staff at the headquarters was a frequent hypothetical expenditure.

Political parties in the South are indeed seriously deficient in physical infrastructure. Most parties claim to have functioning party offices in all 10 states, but not all even have offices in Juba. When visiting a party office, one may or may not see a computer. Printers were rare, and photocopiers even more so. It appeared as if office space primarily served as meeting space. Parties are still able to produce professional documents for internal and external consumption, as evidenced by many samples of work plans and campaign materials, through the efforts and resources of individual members.

Parties want public financing and seem to view such financing as an entitlement. Their arguments are grounded in their readings of the Political Parties Act and the fact that GOSS did provide some campaign funds for the April 2010 elections. They also see the SPLM (and NCP) employing government resources for political purposes and using their position as the government to expropriate resources for the party.

To visit an SPLM office, whether in Juba or in a distant state, is to visit a hive of activity and a center of decision-making. The SPLM is the only party active in the South that is able to retain a meaningful number of full-time staff with specialized job functions. Even the party's office in Malakal (which was allegedly expropriated after they took over the government from NCP in the April elections) is equipped with computers, printers, private offices, and cabinets of well-kept records. Phones are constantly ringing at SPLM offices.

It would be cynical to say that the other parties want nice offices and computers and staff only because they see that the SPLM has them, but when asked about the specific tasks they would carry out with offices, staff, and equipment, details were sparse beyond assurances that vehicles would see heavy use. Despite their strong interest in acquiring material assets, parties were unable to explain why these were not a priority in party budgets at either the national or state level and could not make the connection between fundraising and expenditures.

Party leaders were not reluctant to discuss party finances, but seemed very unfamiliar with such figures. To the extent they existed, party budgets seemed to consist of uncollected members' dues and anticipated government windfalls on the revenue side with the expenditure side even more vague. Candidates were usually able to specify a figure for their campaign spending in April. Self-reported costs of a campaign ranged from 3,000 SDG (1,245 USD) to more than 200,000 SDG (83,034 USD), bearing in mind that candidates may have been running for a state legislator seat all the way up the National Assembly. Expenses for those on party lists or women's lists were considerable lower. The self-reported approximate average cost of the campaign for a seat in the SSLA by non-SPLM candidates seems to fall in the range of 70,000–100,000 SDG (29,062–41,517 USD). Although civil society figures and academics independently named similar sums as a

---

[12] The assessment team was not able to meet with more than one party, other than the NCP, in Khartoum so assuming their needs without their input would be disingenuous

reasonable amount to spend, the assessment team seriously questions the validity of this amount given the lack of resources in southern Sudan and the scale of the campaigns in April as documented by election observers and witnessed by some members of the assessment team. Almost every candidate could say how little he or she received from their party; no one could explain why financial resources so quickly and so abundantly mobilized by a party member for his or her campaign could not be found when the party needs a computer. For campaigns, travel and then printing are mentioned as the biggest expenses.

The second most common request emerging from interviews and visits with from southern political parties was for "training and capacity building"—sometimes clarified as simply more of what is already being done by IRI and sometimes with the suggestion that the political party is primed for advanced topics. When specifically mentioned, the market demand is for more "capacity building" on familiar topics of "message development," "platform development," fundraising, and "internal democracy." The assessment team noted the lack of originality in these requests and believe that some leaders were simply echoing what they know as the established model (not only IRI, but the development community in South in particular). However, that is not to say that these requests were insincere; mid-level party activists were also as likely to ask for more trainings (and less likely to use the term "capacity-building").

Several political leaders and civil society leaders felt that study tours to other countries such as Kenya, South Africa, Botswana, and Uganda would be beneficial. Many people spoke from their own past personal experience. Other African countries were always the proposed destinations: geography being the key determinant, no one suggested a destination based on similar experiences with conflict or transitioning from autonomy to independence, like Kosovo or Timor Leste for examples.

Non-Self-Identified Needs of Political Parties
The assessment team identified a number of other deficiencies in political party capacity through its analysis of discussions with party members, including the noticeable omission of basic topics not raised by political parties in the South. Other observations on political party needs came from Sudanese and international civil society organizations.

As indicated above, political parties are severely deficient in their ability to develop realistic financial plans, follow them, and cultivate the necessary sources of revenue in a sustainable (as opposed to *ad hoc)* manner. They are unable to inspire their members to contribute financially to the future of the party. One cash-starved state party leader eagerly listed three fundraising opportunities his local party was considering (crediting an IRI training for spurring the party to practice self-help) even though all would have been illegal, in that parties cannot receive funds from profit-making enterprises under the Political Parties Act. The lack of sustainable fundraising—and a clear understanding of its purpose and value to party-building—leaves the party at the mercy of those who do have access to funds but not necessarily the most benign of intentions.

"Internal party democracy" is a commonly used phrase. Party democracy is predicated on clear lines of authority and transparent decision-making—ideally, clear lines of *limited* authority and transparent *participatory* decision-making. Southern Sudanese political parties enjoy dispatching their cadres to lectures on party democracy, but decisions are essentially made by only the top-level leaders; public pronouncements sometimes come as a surprise to members. Despite the insistence of party leadership that the process is democratic, at the middle levels, party members remain confused about candidate selection during the April 2010 elections; even many candidates were unsure of how they came to be so. This was especially true of people on the woman's list. As for party members who hold future aspirations to office, they were even more in the dark about how to pursue the backing of their parties. Arguably, more transparent decision-making would stem the hemorrhaging of

defectors to other parties and the generation of confusingly similarly named new parties by splinter groups.

In tandem with making decision-making more transparent, parties must also make this process more participatory by engaging their state organizations on a more meaningful basis. In some ways, the fortunate core versus neglected periphery model which fuelled Sudan's civil wars is replicated here. Different parties confirmed that the standard operating procedure was for the state leaders to travel to Juba and return with news, trainings, or directives and then to summon county-level party leaders to the state capital to repeat the process.

In Malakal, when UDF, SANU, and SPLM representatives were asked who was the most senior party leader who had visited in the half year since the elections, the question yielded a string of cancelled, postponed, and promised future trips. Hopefully, the creation of geographic constituencies for SSLA members will make legislators more accountable to local populations and more sensitive to local conditions and needs. In one promising move, the SPLM has directed its SSLA officeholders to return to their constituencies (as opposed to staying in Juba or leaving the country) following adjournment of the legislature in order to raise public awareness on the referendum. If SSLA members return to their districts to mobilize for the southern Sudanese referendum, they are likely to hear a litany of concerns from citizens with respect to issues such as roads, the availability of heath care, and the quality of schools. This returns to the central need of political parties: the need to deliver real solutions to the problems real people care about.

Once there was a vision of a "New Sudan"—secular, multi-ethnic, inclusive, federated, and free. Now all political parties in the South can discuss with the authority of the party behind them is their position on self-determination, and even that is inorganically constrained by the CPA's requirement that political parties not speak out against the unity of Sudan. Political parties in Sudan have failed to articulate a vision that both represents the party and distinguishes it from the others. The UDF believes its uncompromising stand for independence distinguishes it from the SPLM, which *officially* stops at favoring self-determination sans preference and which has been "working to make unity attractive" (although its southern members have honored this more as an exception than as the rule). But southerner after southerner says they support SPLM because it is the one group that can deliver independence. The SPLM itself cannot say this, since it is bound by the CPA even more so than the other parties (or at least unwilling to give the NCP the opening to say SPLM is working against the CPA) and it is also not a vision that is shared by the SPLM's northern sector.

SANU reversed its nuanced position on a federated Sudan, and now its grassroots cannot recall which was the old position and which was the new.

The good news for political parties is that they do not have to differentiate themselves from all other political parties, since those are virtually unknown among the population, but must only differentiate themselves from SPLM.

The current referendum-centric political discourse is a missed opportunity for any entrepreneurial political party. First, it fails because the positions of the political parties are not substantially different and cannot be used by voters to differentiate between political parties. Second, it fails because it is time-bound; either the referendum will be held on January 9 or it won't, and either southern Sudan will be independent on July 9 or it won't. There has been no preparation for governance beyond that date. Third, it fails because it does not match the prioritized concerns of the citizens or even of party members.

Southern Sudanese political parties need to understand that there are gains to be had by being proactive in idea development—vision then platform then message—as a way to recruit and retain members and to attract the public.

Unmeasured Needs
Alongside the definite needs of the SPLM and southern Sudanese political parties, the assessment team found a few grey areas.

First, political parties did not raise the need for assistance in a few seemingly obvious areas. These include the role of political parties in conflict resolution, coalition-building and other cooperation between political parties, and how to utilize resources in the diaspora and returning Sudanese. Given the uncertain demand for such visible matters, the assessment team cannot categorize these as priorities under a political party strengthening program.

Second, much can be said in favor of improving internal communication, but the assessment team found intra-party communications very reliable. Mid-level party members and leaders at the state level gave answers on the identity and functioning of the party in question very much in line with the senior leadership. Members were also consistent when discussing weaknesses and identifying anomalies and admitting contradictions. The assessment team was impressed with the stories of why party members joined and how their stories corresponded with the reasons given earlier by party leaders for why people should join them. The limited experience of the assessment team indicated that the party rank-and-file have acted rationally in joining their parties; even if that rationality takes a romantic form (or as one UDF member in Malakal said so eloquently, "Being part of a political party is a love story. When you love her, you stay no matter what.") there is a common understanding between the member and the party.

Finally, the role of women in political parties poses a paradox for the assessment team. Although women were unmistakably underrepresented in the leadership and all lower levels of political parties, the female mid-level representatives of political parties with whom the assessment team spoke reflected very positively on their parties by sharing facts, views, and opinions as insightful as those offered by experts. But one area where these women fell short in their answers to the assessment team was on the role of the woman's wing of their parties. Despite each claiming to be an active member of the woman's wing, basic details like the number of women involved, names of leaders, or even recent activities eluded them. Yet the information they were able to provide on party views, candidate selection, and campaign practicalities was abundant. Given that some highly capable women in political parties—many already having run as candidates—invest so little in the woman's wings yet seem fully on par within the party suggests that strengthening the women's wings of the political parties is not a need; rather increasing women's representation in parties can be done through the mainstream.

Needs for Better Governance
Producing stronger and better performing legislatures in southern Sudan hinges upon improving the relationships between what should be complementary forces but that are currently out of balance: the relationship between government and the opposition, between the legislative and the executive, between the legislators and their staff, and between the legislators and their constituents.

The Role of the Opposition

Only in September 2010 did the SPLM-DC seek to be recognized as the opposition in the SSLA elected in April 2010. (The NCP formed the official opposition in the first SSLA.) Given the near total monopoly on legislative seats by the SPLM in the SSLA and SLAs and the common agreement among the political class on the issue of self-determination that stands at the top of the agenda, exactly what the opposition will embody remain to be seen.

In cases such as southern Sudan, an opposition—even if far short on seats—provides an important reference point for the citizens to gauge the government. It demonstrates that, despite the current popularity or dominance of the ruling party, alternatives exist. Citizens have choice; they do not have to agree with the government.

Although northern political parties were able to voice differences with the NCP regime and with the governments which preceded it, when it was advantageous, those same parties joined the government. Southern Sudan did not inherit a positive role model.

The job of the opposition is to critique government policies and the effects of their implementation; their existence alone should force the government to think more carefully about its plans. In the long run, governments should benefit from an active opposition.

In southern Sudan, the depth of opposition is shallow. The SPLM has firm control on all but a handful of seats: the four won by the SPLM-DC and the one filled by NCP. Nevertheless, the SPLM-DC has assumed the role. Even looking past their small numbers, the challenges for the opposition are great.

Given that one of the most serious criticisms of SPLM as a political party (cited by other political parties, civil society, and the international community) is their blurring of the lines between party and government in terms of ownership of resources and in terms of policy-making, the opposition must make it clear they too have an official role in the parliament and a different role outside the parliament as a political party.

The need for a functioning opposition in the SSLA was acknowledged by the head of the SPLM's parliamentary caucus. How the ruling SPLM treats the opposition SPLM-DC and the rights and resources granted to them in the parliament will be a strong signal.

The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs has prepared a well-formed concept paper for skills-building within the opposition and independent members of both the SSLA and the SLAs. The Ministry staff had not circulated the concept proposal before the SPLM-DC's official move, but it does not have the resources itself to implement it.

Legislative / Executive Relations

Policy-making in GOSS is currently carried out in the Office of the President of GOSS and in his Cabinet. Neither the appointed nor the current elected SSLA has contributed substantively to the process, despite their clearly defined role as the law-making body. Proposed laws come before the SSLA once approved in the Cabinet; to date, legislation has not originated from individual members or rarely in the committees of jurisdiction.

According to all three international groups working with committees of the SSLA, the SPLM members are quite capable of questioning the party line, but they have a more difficult time in bringing themselves to oppose it. Many Sudanese civil society experts explained that the SPLM has a long history of internal dissent; perhaps the strongest current example is between the differing views on southern independence held by the southern and northern sectors of the party.

But dissent evaporates when it must be officially registered. The lack of oversight over the government by SSLA is as much about the lack of capacity as it is about the avoidance of SPLM deputies questioning the decisions of their SPLM colleagues in the government. SPLM's SSLA members generally rank lower in the party hierarchy than their counterparts in the ministries. Moreover, many of the intra-SPLM relationships trace their roots back to the SPLA and the civil war. Oftentimes SPLM legislators feel unable or unwilling to question their superior colleagues.

The end result is that the SSLA "rubber stamps" the government's legislative initiatives, policy-making is controlled mainly by appointed officials, and legislators fail in their conduct of oversight of policy impact, spending, and proper implementation.

Key needs, from the perspective of improving the performance of the SSLA, are encouraging ministers to work with legislators in committee before laws are drafted, the capacity to conduct meaningful budgetary impact analysis before the SSLA considers legislation, and stronger oversight of the ministries by the corresponding committees.

The Role of Legislative Staff
Opinions expressed by legislators, civil society, and international experts differ on the importance they place on strengthening the capacity of legislative staff.

SSLA members have no allowance for personal staff (although they have been encouraged to hire a representative in their constituency to maintain relations). Committee chairman are allowed an office manager and a private secretary. The legislature itself has its own staff, such as the clerk, the sergeant-at-arms, and library staff. In all, the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs estimates the number of parliamentary staff at about 400 persons.

The Ministry sees the lack of trained staff, especially in the clerk's office, as the major impediment. In this view, most legislative staff lack the requisite skills for their job. Basic skills such as computer literacy, basic accounting, and recordkeeping are as needed among the support staff as specialized skills of policy research, government budgeting, and legislative drafting are needed by the staff working for the clerk and the committees. Past efforts to improve staff capacity, especially in policy research, were unintentionally undermined through personnel transfers.

The opposing view, expressed by international groups working with SSLA committees, is that the priority should be on the capacity of members before staff. (Both camps speak of existing legislative staff as highly motivated and intelligent.) In this view, SSLA members actually do have subject-specific knowledge of the issues under the committees they are assigned to, but they lack an understanding of the role of a legislator; they do not understand the legislative process (and perhaps not the role of a legislature in a democracy) or the "why?" and certainly the "how?" of oversight of the government. An additional question sparking disagreement among experts and practitioners is what role existing legislative support provisions have been effectively utilized.

The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs representative spoke of the well-stocked library in the SSLA going virtually unused. A member of the SSLA described to IRI his belief that members of the SSLA should be given money by the government in order to pay for trips to their constituencies "like you do for members of Congress in the United States," unaware that an allowance for such funds was already available to every member of the SSLA (and that, in the United States, congressmen do not have funds to travel to their districts but only to travel to Washington). The SSLA created the independent Kush Institute think tank via legislation but it disappeared after its leader died unexpectedly. Now discussions of creating an internal think tank or a dedicated research faculty with

the SSLA library akin to the Congressional Research Service take place without reference to the past efforts.

The human, physical, and information resources already in place at the SSLA need to be better utilized before any more layers are added on top. Each new idea for improving the staff and their structure within the SSLA building needs to be critically evaluated against what has already been attempted. For a legislature of such short history, it has not suffered from a lack of people wanting to help.

Doubtlessly, the ability of the SSLA to drive policy needs to be strengthened. Ideally, this will be accomplished through a combination of means: members should become more interested in improving government policy in areas of interest, the research and analysis capacity of the staff available to legislators should improve, and political parties should develop their policy-formulation arms to supplement SSLA members' thinking.

Constituency Relations
Too often discussions of legislative strengthening artificially confine themselves to activities within the four walls of the parliament building and ignore that the role of the legislator extends beyond the capital city.

As of the April elections, elected members of the SSLA and of the SLAs replaced those that were previously appointed to represent specific, geographically defined constituencies. Beginning with their campaigns, members are accountable to a specific set of place-bound voters and their area-specific problems. For most, this is a new experience.

According to civil society experts, a large number of appointed southern Sudanese legislators from the first SSLA spend their time out of session in Juba or out of the country, rather than in the districts they represent. Anecdotally, the elected members of the second SSLA also fit this description, however it is too early to definitely state this. Although most originate from the areas where they were elected, they may have lived away for them for decades; their candidacy resulted from party selection rather than from any grassroots strength.

It is essential to augment what limited accountability there is from members to the districts they represent to ensure the democratic nature of the legislature. Where the electoral system establishes single-member districts and party lists are not used, the successful candidate should be primarily accountable to his or her electorate and not to his or her political party. Southern Sudan does not have strict party discipline enshrined in either its Constitution or the rules of procedure for the SSLA. Members "own" their seats, are free to vote as they like, and do not forfeit their seats if they break with their parties.

The norm of accountability to the electorate is sometimes difficult to establish in young democracies that lack such a tradition, but conditions are promising for it to take root in southern Sudan. The SPLM has demonstrated its porous nature by allowing members who broke from the party to successfully challenge SPLM candidates to rejoin the party afterwards. It has absorbed a large number of party-switchers. Districts in Sudan at all levels are defined geographically. The SPLM has implicitly acknowledged the role of its elected officeholders as the face of the party in their constituencies by ordering them back to their districts following the SSLA's adjournment. The exchanges between member and constituency must continue to be encouraged.

A final component of the representative-constituent relationship provides the greatest potential and the most enticing unmet need. Each member of the SSLA oversees a "constituency development fund" established by law and currently valuing more than one million Sudanese pounds per

constituency per year. The impact of these funds during the first SSLA was difficult to track but the SSLA has stepped up oversight by forming a Constituency Development Fund Committee. Importantly, the SSLA member does not have the exclusive ability to disburse these funds himself or herself, but must allow for a local committee to review applications for constituency development funds and to disburse the funds. Members of the SSLA, despite their success in campaigning, are still underprepared for their role as representatives.

IRI has plans to coordinate with NDI to facilitate town-hall meetings at the local level. IRI would prepare the legislators on how to listen to constituents, answer questions, and follow-up as necessary; NDI, through its civil society partners, would arrange for representative, informed, and civil audiences. This collaboration starts the logical next step forward.

The constituency development funds provide another area ripe for assistance. Not only are they a powerful opportunity for elected legislators to win support by demonstrating their ability to improve local conditions, resolve local conflicts, and improve the local economy, but the legal framework governing these constituency development funds—assembling a team to review applications, forging consensus, apportioning funds according to some form of budget, and reporting back on spending to the SSLA—all require greater capacity in order to live up to the intent of the Constituency Development Act.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The assessment team makes the following recommendation for USAID's support for political party development in the immediate period and to guide for potential future support to political parties and governance in the post-CPA period.

Recommendation 1
(Southern Sudan, possibly northern Sudan and/or the Three Areas; current period)
Scientific public opinion research is needed to help political actors understand the diversity of needs of the Sudanese citizens and their priority. Polling should also inform the work of the GOSS and the state governments and serve as an assessment tool for the international community. The need for this information is immediate, and such research should be carried out before the end of 2011, at least in southern Sudan, to help political actors identify the post-referendum agenda and to inform the design of USAID's post-2011 democracy and governance assistance.

Key measurements are lacking on how Sudanese feel about the performance of their government, the problems they feel the government should prioritize, their satisfaction with the delivery of services, and their level of awareness of political processes. Political parties and elected governments need such information to enable democratic governments to sort out competing priorities. Scientific polling, unlike focus groups, allows for the cross tabulation of data by demographic groups and can reliably track shifts in citizen preferences over time. IRI reports that at least three southern political parties, including SPLM, have requested polling data for Sudan, and the assessment team itself received one such request from a leader in the SSLA.

Sudan does not have a tradition of public opinion research, but USAID's current implementing partner, IRI, has the tools, experience, and willingness to build the institutions necessary in a minimum amount of time. Additionally, it has a proven record of conducting accurate polls in conflict and post-conflict zone (Afghanistan, Iraq, West Bank), in countries under states of emergency (Pakistan, Bangladesh), and in closed societies (Cuba)—and the ability to work with

politicians to understand public opinion as a tool in decision-making. Other organizations also have these demonstrated capabilities.

In southern Sudan, such opinion research should be carried out by a qualified international organization in partnership with one (or more) southern Sudanese organizations. Although no Sudanese commercial or non-commercial entity has the expertise or resources, potential partner organizations include the University of Juba (specifically one of its academic departments or the Centre for Peace and Development Studies) or one of the few embryonic think tanks in southern Sudan.[13] Alternatively, the Bureau of Census and National Statistics has related skills and capacity, but poses disadvantages as a government office. Regrettably but understandably, few informants were willing to name any civil society organization they thought capable of this work.[14] It should also be understood that this task will require the implementing partner to begin with little or no local capacity in place.

The assessment team itself and its key informants saw no insurmountable political or technical barriers to conducting quantitative public opinion research in southern Sudan.

Such an activity in northern Sudan would be similarly valuable for opposition parties, although the stronger barriers to that activity in the North require a more circumspect approach. In the North, experienced local organizations have conducted opinion surveys, although not overtly "political" ones. It is conceivable to conduct a informative "quality of life" survey and use the information it yields to assess levels of satisfaction with government services and areas of concern. Alternatively, IRI conveyed to the assessment team its interest in conducting a more explicit survey measuring political views using a methodology similar to that which they used in Cuba.

According to one estimate, the cost of a survey of southern Sudan with a margin of error of ±2.83% would be less than 75,000 USD.[15] Rather than being viewed as a single, isolated activity, the findings of a survey would provide content for political party development programming and other USAID democracy and governance activities. More importantly, these findings could better inform the decision-making of GOSS and their expenditures by accurately identifying and prioritizing citizen concerns. Additionally, it could provide feedback to USAID and potentially other international donors as to effectiveness of their efforts and the highest priority developmental needs.

Recommendation 2
(Northern Sudan; current period)
The time before the expiration of current assistance at the end of 2011 should be considered a window of opportunity to explore bolder approaches to working with political parties and elected officials in northern Sudan. Given PPAC's restriction of USAID's work with political parties in northern Sudan to preparing for specific electoral events set in the CPA, there is limited room for work past 2011.

USAID's current implementing partner(s) should enter discussions with political parties, including the NCP and regional parties, on an individual basis. USAID should request current implementing partner(s) to further explore the possibility of working with the National Assembly and/or its elected members in Khartoum and/or in their constituencies along the lines of IRI's current work with the SSLA. This period is needed to gently test the boundaries of what might be permissible in the North

---

[13] Management Systems International; "Government of Southern Sudan Strategic Capacity Building Study"; June 15, 2010.

[14] SuNDE was the most commonly mentioned potential local partner for conducting field work for an opinion survey but they themselves expressed to the assessment team that there was no group capable of doing such work in Southern Sudan.

[15] International Republican Institute; "Conducting Public Opinion Survey in Southern Sudan Ahead of Referendum"; 2010.

and to identify government offices other than PPAC that may be more open to sponsorship of USAID democracy and governance activities included in USAID's post-2011 strategy.

There is no unanimity among assessment team members on this recommendation. Some members further recognize that the outcome of such efforts is likely to be discouraging, but feel it is critical to gauge feasibility and demand during the transition period between the southern Sudan referendum (regardless of outcome) and the exhaustion of the CPA and before the expiration of current programming.

Recommendation 3
(Southern Sudan and northern Sudan)

Political party assistance for northern Sudan and for southern Sudan should be designed as two separate programs regardless of the question of the seccession because the capabilities and operating environment of the political parties in the North and the South are radically different. Ideally, two separate implementing partners would be selected to allow attentions to focus on separate issues and to prevent entanglements if work in one area is displeasing to decision-makers in the other. Coordination must be encouraged especially in regard to the Three Areas, which merits a greater level of assistance, and other parts of the periphery.

Recommendation 4
(Northern Sudan)

In order for more intensive and more effective work with Khartoum-based parties to take place, the work must be done outside of Sudan because restrictive government oversight of programming is unlikely to end at any point in the foreseeable future. This requires a shift to more intensive work with a smaller group of leaders from a much smaller set of political parties.

Recommendation 5
(Southern Sudan, northern Sudan, and the Three Areas)

USAID must establish objective criteria for selecting which, if any, political parties to engage although those criteria should differ between northern Sudan, southern Sudan, and the border areas and potentially Darfur and eastern Sudan. These objective criteria should accommodate foreseeable contingencies such as changes in leadership, party splintering, the forced divisions of parties in the case of succession, and the taking up of arms.

The NCP, which fundamentally opposes the goals of democracy and governance assistance and has demonstrated the ability to use its government offices to impede them, should be excluded from USAID assistance. It does not currently meet the criteria set out in USAID's *Political Party Assistance Policy*, and for it to do so would require changes in leadership, in policy, and in practice.[16] As a well-developed political party with ample resources—and arguably the greatest amount of internal democracy among all Sudanese political parties—the NCP does not actually require or seek the same manner of assistance as other parties. But it is the NCP's actions as the ruling party which have created a more tangible record that excludes the NCP from eligibility for USAID political party development assistance.

A more constructive avenue for promoting reform within the NCP without necessitating a waiver to USAID policy would be to design assistance for elected officials in their capacity as legislators at the national and state level (specifically in Khartoum, Southern Kordofan, and Blue Nile states) which happen to be mostly NCP at this time.

---

[16] U.S. Agency for International Development; *USAID Political Party Assistance Policy;* September 2003.

For southern Sudan, assistance to the SPLM must continue to assist its ongoing transformation from a military movement to a responsible governing party. In the event of independence for southern Sudan, consideration of assistance to a separately organized NCP in the South or its successor, would be in order at that time.

Assistance to other armed forces in Darfur, eastern Sudan, the Three Areas, and the South, specifically seeking to establish stronger political wings should also be available if the opportunity arises.

Recommendation 6
(Southern Sudan)
The goal for future political party assistance programming in southern Sudan should be to equip the SPLM with best practices on balancing its roles as the dominant political party and the government. Therefore, a complementary goal should be to prepare the minor southern political parties for a role in the opposition as a check on the SPLM.

Recommendation 7
(Southern Sudan and northern Sudan)
In the North and the South, political party assistance must diversify from its sole reliance on trainings since they have limited impact in generating behavioral changes and reforming structures without practical reinforcement. Specific programming activities that should be considered, in addition to the utilization of public opinion research, include targeted technical assistance, dedicated leader development courses, mentorships and internships, and constituency outreach.

Recommendation 8
(Southern Sudan and northern Sudan)
Implementing partners for political party programming should focus more on practical applications in real world settings. The goal—the "deliverable" from such programming—should require many intermediary steps of lesser obvious value to the party but which, by their nature, stimulate intra-party dialogues and force decision-making about the utilization of scarce party resources such as money and visibility. One example would be replacing message development trainings with more practicums where party leaders must not just develop an appealing and representative message but also are challenged on how to present that unique message in media appearances, SMS messages to supporters, and in member recruitment.

Recommendation 9
(Northern Sudan)
Avoid working to develop PPAC's capacity. PPAC will likely disappear over the next one or two years as attention on the elections recedes and priorities of the government of Sudan move elsewhere. PPAC's aspirations to provide training to political parties and to disburse government funds to political parties may or may not be well intentioned, but in honoring their purported neutrality toward political parties they have undermined current assistance by requiring IRI to work with all political parties on an equal basis regardless of size.

Recommendation 10
(Southern Sudan)
A stronger relationship between elected members of the SSLA (and also the SLAs) and their constituents will advance goals in both political party development and governance. Programming should support improving how elected officials relate to individual citizens, interest groups, and other elected and unelected leaders in their home districts including, but not limited to, the utilization of Constituency Development Funds.

Recommendation 11
(Southern Sudan, northern Sudan, and the Three Areas)
The necessary contributions of civil society organizations to the proper functioning of democratic systems can no longer be neglected. Despite the near total absence of organizations with either the will or the capacity to fill the roles of watchdog, advocate, and/or idea generator at this time, efforts can and should be made to develop these external contributors to better political party and government performance through work with civil society organizations, chambers of commerce, labor unions, schools and universities, the media, and think tanks. To accomplish this, consideration should be given to harnessing the talents of returning members of the Sudanese diaspora and skilled civil society leaders who accepted government positions but are exiting government service.

Recommendation 12
(Southern Sudan)
The elected governments and political party organizations at the state level in southern Sudan should balance the concentration of power in Juba. Outside Juba, capacity drops quickly, but to accept that as an obstacle to prioritizing the development of local governance consigns southern Sudan to recreating the disparities between the center and the periphery in allocation of power and accumulation of wealth which have torn at Sudan since before its independence.

Recommendation 13
(Southern Sudan)
Sudan, and possibly an independent southern Sudan, will once again return to establishing their fundamental structures of governance after the CPA terminates mid-year 2011. The expiration of the interim constitution of Sudan and the all-but-inevitable rewriting of a southern constitution provide an opportunity to address balances of power between the legislative and executive branches and redress any systemic bias working against diverse political party representation in government. At every opportunity, USAID should support the establishment of regular, periodic elections to ensure basic accountability and incentivize better performance by political parties.

ANNEX 1—SCOPE OF WORK

**Assessment of Needs and Strategic Direction for Post-2011 Political Party Assistance
Scope of Work**

(Estimated start date: August 2010)

Purpose
The purpose of this assessment is to explore prospects for USAID/Sudan political party assistance following the 2011 Abyei and southern Sudan self-determination referenda. The assessment will map out and identify developmental needs of political parties, determine the impact of a post-referenda environment on those needs, appraise demand and openings for political party assistance both in South and North Sudan, and delineate the types of potential technical assistance specific to each post-referenda context.

Current Assistance
USAID currently supports political party strengthening in Sudan through the International Republican Institute (IRI). IRI's program focuses its support to southern political parties, but has also provided assistance to select caucuses and committees of the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly (SSLA). In the lead-up to the April 2010 elections, IRI provided assistance to political parties in both northern and southern Sudan to strengthen their participation in peaceful, multiparty, and competitive electoral contests. Election-related assistance included activities such as multi-party forums to build knowledge and understanding of the National Elections Act, Political Parties Act, and other relevant regulations, and multi-party training on topics such as candidate selection, message and platform development, the voter registration process, campaign budgeting and finance, and party poll agent training to strengthen parties' capacity to monitor elections.

Overall, USAID assistance in political party development in Sudan has sought to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) by promoting political party participation and strengthening the institutional capacity of political parties. Assistance has focused on three areas:

- Support the organizational development of southern Sudanese political parties;
- Build southern and northern Sudanese political party capacity to participate in democratic elections; and
- Improve party effectiveness in governance (this work included assistance to specialized committees and caucuses in the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly (SSLA) and public forums for members of SSLA and state legislatures to interact with their constituents in advance of elections).

Scope and Tasks
The assessment will need to identify and prioritize possible assistance needs in several distinct geographical areas, including the north (primarily Khartoum), Abyei, Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan states, and southern Sudan. The team should identify key contextual and organizational factors relevant to political party strengthening in each location and make recommendations regarding unique objectives and possible key activities for political party assistance in each geographical area, given the needs that have been identified and recognizing prevailing constraints.

The primary task of the assessment team is to produce an assessment document for USAID/Sudan that—

1. Analyzes:
   - The political party landscape, operating context, and role of political parties in supporting post-2011 political and transitional processes and mitigating threats to peaceful post-2011 transition in each of Sudan's three regions (south, north and the Three Areas);
   - The political party development and organizational development needs of eligible political parties in each of the three regions;
   - The conduciveness of the political environment in each of the three regions to effective political party development assistance from the perspective of advancing post-2011 political processes and democratic governance.
2. Recommends:
   - Objectives for USAID/Sudan political party assistance, if any, in each of the three regions.;
   - Technical approach and context-specific illustrative activities.

In carrying out the assessment, the expert team will:

- Meet or consult with contacts in political parties, civil society, and academia to gather diverse perspectives on political party development needs and opportunities in the context of the four identified geographic areas;
- Provide expert insight and advice to the USAID/Sudan Democracy and Governance Team with regard to the critical strengths, weaknesses, and needs of political parties in the context of post-2011 Sudan; and
- Compile a list of key contacts with contact numbers to the team following the assessment, so that appropriate follow-up can be conducted, as appropriate.

Methodology
The assessment will be informed by a desk study of existing knowledge and practices in political party development. As part of that study, the assessment team will compile, review and summarize information that may be available through documentation and interviews. Immediately following the desk study, the assessment team will present USAID with a detailed field research methodology. The methodology must yield findings from a representative cross-section of individual and institutional actors in political party development including, but not limited to, political party leaders and rank-and-file members, NGO representatives, implementing partners, academics, and the media. The assessment team will also ensure input from women and youth. The assessment team may also meet with other donors as part of mapping out current assistance and to gauge future interest in political party assistance.

Available Information to support the Study:

The following information will be provided by the USAID/Sudan Democracy and Governance Team for the initial preparation (desk study) portion of the assessment:
- IRI quarterly and semi-annual reports for FY 2009
- IRI narrative reports for the current year
- NDI' Guide to Conducting a Baseline Assessment of Political Parties
- USAID Political Party Assistance Policy
- USAID/Sudan Country Strategy
- International observation reports on Sudan's elections of April 2010.

Team Composition

The team will be comprised of three full time MSI-contracted experts, including an international expert/team leader and two senior team members. The team leader will be responsible for the written assessment report and will have the requisite technical and programming expertise. The team lead will be the formal representative of the Assessment Team. At least one other team member should have in-depth understanding of the political context in Sudan and familiarity with political party needs throughout the country. The third candidate should be a Sudanese expert and a political analyst.

MSI Level of Effort (LOE)

LOE is approximately 24 days as outlined below.

Projected Level of Effort

Tasks	Work Days
Preparation days (review of background material)	2
Travel days	2
In-country preparation	2
Initial Preparation Desk Study and methodology development	4
Field Visits	10
Briefings	3
Report preparation (to include USAID feedback, report completion, and submission to the MSI office in Juba	5
Travel days	2
Final report preparation	3
TOTAL	33 for Team Leader (24 for consultant already in Juba) Third team member will have 12 days—including prep days, travel, and time in Sudan.

DELIVERABLES:

- Methodology and detailed field activity schedules.
- Preliminary report outline
- Draft summary report of findings and recommendations
- Out-briefing with supporting documents
- Draft report
- Final report

ANNEX 2—LIST OF PERSONS CONSULTED

Abbas Milhem
International Republican Institute
904 555 109
909 888 558
melhimabbas@gmail.com
selbagir@iri.org

Adel A. Ibrahim
Dana Com Media Services
249 183 798 188
249 912 392 890
adeldana@yahoo.com

Alex Dowling
Adam Smith International
0 477 259 461
alex.dowling@adamsmithinternational.com
alex.dowling@gmail.com

Annika Dawson
U.S. Embassy

Atta El-Battahani
In ternational IDEA
249 183 497 200
249 912 164 226
a.el-battahani@idea.int
abattahani@gmail.com

Daniel Ryan
PACT
0 929 852 742
dryan@pactworld.com

David Bliel
SANU

Faisal Mohamed Salih
Teeba Press
249 183 779 828
249 912 275 296
faisalmsalih@yahoo.co.uk
faisalsalih@hotmail.com

Frank Bonner
International Republican Institute

fbonner@iri.org

Gabriel Changson Chang
Minister of History and Culture, Chairman of UDSF-M
0 477 112 222
0 912 140 731

Gabriel Gabriel Deng
Director General for Legislative Affairs, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs
249 122 641 114
249 955 471 885
gg.deng@yahoo.com

Hasan Abdel Ati
National Civic Forum
912 355 545

Hasan Abdin
Political Parties Affairs Council
249 912 143 333
hasabdin@hotmail.com

James R. Gony
Chairman, SSLA Committee on Constituency Development Fund
249 955 997 175
249 909 201 033
jrgony@gmail.com

Jamie Tronnes
International Republican Institute

Jeremy Eckstein
United Nations Development Program

John Tomaszewski
International Republican Institute
jtomaszewski@iri.org

John Young
Carter Center
0 912 979 580
johnr_young@hotmail.com

Jon Temin
U.S. Institute of Peace

Joseph Tucker
Special Envoy's staff

K.C. Choe
USAID

Ken Spear
U.S. Embassy

Lazar Antonic
International Republican Institute
lantonic@iri.org

Lazhar Aloui
USAID

Leben Nelsen Moro
Juba University Centre for Peace and Development Studies
0 128 105 701

Miriam al Madhi
Umma National Party

Mohamed Elfatih Braima
Peace Research Institute, university of Khartoum
249 155 660 250
249 912 312 599
braima1000@yahoo.com
pri@uofk.edu

Mohamed Mondur
National Congress Party

Mohammed Ali
Civil Society Consortium
912 103 644

Nizar Khalid Mahgoub
National Congress Party
249 912 305 540
249 155 660 110
nazar.khalid@alfaisalhospital.com

Nyenagwek Kuol
Abyei Referendum Forum, SPLM candidate
0 907 203 260

Omar Fur
SPLM

Peter Bashir Gbanda Alawa
SPLM Caucus Chairman, Member of SSLA
249 129 583 335
249 955 433 121
petergbandialawa@hotmail.com

Sami Mamoun El Bagir
International republican Institute

Sara Taylor
USAID

Sharani Nimairi Daldoum
NUBANET
249 155 125 104
249 912 288 679
sharani.daldoum@yahoo.com

Tariqul Ghani
National Democratic Institute

Traci Cook
National Democratic Institute
tcook@ndi.org

Yasir Jafir
SPLM, Northern Sector secretary for political affairs

Zahra Saied
SuNDE
0 903 439 509

ANNEX 3—LIST OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

African Union; "Communique on the Sudanese General Elections"; April 16, 2010.

Al Jazerra; "Political Parties in the Fray: A Brief Look at the Political Parties That Registered to Contest the 2010 Elections"; April 7, 2010.

Bishai, Linda, Kelly Campbell, and Jacki Wilson; "Building Blocks for Citizenship and a Peaceful Transition in Sudan"; *USIPeace Briefing;* United States Institute of Peace; March 2009.

Carter Center; "Carter Center Reports Widespread Irregularities in Sudan's Vote Tabulation and Strongly Urges Steps to Increase Transparency"; Press Release; May 10, 2010.

Carter Center; "Election Observation Mission Preliminary Statement"; April 17, 2010.

Carter Center; "Preliminary Statement on the Final Stages of Sudan's Electoral Process"; March 17, 2010.

Clinton, Hillary; "Remarks on Sudan Strategy"; U.S. Department of State; October 19, 2009.

Clinton, Hillary; "Remarks on United States Foreign Policy"; U.S. Department of State; http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/09/146917.htm; September 8, 2010.

Cook, Traci and Dan Vexler; *Imaging the Election: A Look at What Citizens Know and Expect of Sudan's 2010 Vote;* National Democratic Institute for International Affairs; September 30, 2009.

Cook, Traci; *Losing Hope: Citizen Perceptions of Peace and Reconciliation in the Three Areas;* National Democratic Institute for International Affairs; March 31, 2009.

Comprehensive Peace Agreement Between the Government of the Republic of The Sudan and The Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Sudan People's Liberation Army; 2005.

Consortium of Civil Society Organizations (TAMAM), National Civic Forum, and Justice Africa; "The Position of the Independent Civil Society Network on the Electoral Process"; 2010.

Cordoba Initative; "Press Statement"; April 17, 2010.

European Union Election Observation Mission to Sudan; "Preliminary Statement"; April 17, 2010.

European Union Election Observation Mission to Sudan; "Final Report"; 2010.

Greystone SRL; "Security and Advance Report" [Malakal]; February 19–20, 2009.

Intergovernmental Authority on Development Election Observer Mission to the Sudan; "Interim Statement"; April 18, 2010.

International Republican Institute; "CEPPS/IRI Semi-Annual Report Sudan Political party Development Program"; series October 2008—March 2010.

International Republican Institute; "Conducting Public Opinion Survey in Southern Sudan Ahead of Referendum"; 2010.

International Republican Institute; "Guide to the Southern Sudan Referendum"; 2010.

International Republican Institute; "Southern Sudan Legislative Assemblies: A Legislator's Guide to Gender Politics"; September 2010.

International Republican Institute; "Southern Sudan Political Party Assessments"; September 2009.

Laws of Southern Sudan; Constituencies Development Fund Act; 2007.

Laws of Sudan; National Elections Act; 2008.

Laws of Sudan; National Security Act; 2009.

Laws of Sudan; Political Parties Act; 2007.

Laws of Sudan; Press and Publications Act; 2009.

League of Arab States; "League of Arab States Observation Mission for the Elections in Sudan—April 2010"; 2010.

Management Systems International; "Government of Southern Sudan Strategic Capacity Building Study"; June 15, 2010.

Management Systems International; "Southern Sudan and the Three Areas: Civic Participation Assessment [Draft]" July 5-August 18, 2010.

Management Systems International; "USAID Support to Sudanese Political Parties and the Southern Sudanese Legislative Assembly: Mid-Term Evaluation"; April-May 2008.

Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (Government of Southern Sudan); "Capacity Building for the Opposition MPs (Concept Note)"; September 2010.

Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (Government of Southern Sudan); "Southern Sudan Assemblies Political Party and Gender Representation"; August 2010.

Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (Government of Southern Sudan); "Southern Sudan Governments' Political Party and Gender Representation"; August 2010.

National Democratic Institute for International Affairs; *A Guide to Political Party Development;* 2008.

National Democratic Institute for International Affairs; *Minimum Standards for the Democratic Functioning of Political Parties;* 2008.

National Endowment for Democracy; "Sudan"; www.ned.org/where-we-work/africa/sudan ; August 27, 2010.

Obama, Barack; "Statement of President Barack Obama on Sudan Strategy"; The White House Office of the Press Secretary; http://www.state.gov/p/af/rls/rm/2009/130710.htm; October 19, 2009.

Schomerus, Mareike, Tim Allen, et al.; "Southern Sudan at Odds with Itself' Dynamics of Conflict and Predicaments of Peace"; London School of Economics Development Studies Institute (DESTIN); 2010.

Sudan Democracy First Group; "Sudan's Rigged Elections: The Post Election Implications on Sudan's Stability"; *Sudan Tribune;* August 20, 2010.

Sudan Domestic Election Monitoring and Observation Programme (SuDEMOP); "Final Report on the April 2010 Sudan General Election"; July 2010.

Sudan People's Liberation Movement; "SPLM Vision and Programme"; http://splmtoday.com; August 30, 2010.

Sudan People's Liberation Movement for Democratic Change; "Hon. MP. Onyoti Adigo Nyikwee Had [sic] Officially Been Named the Leader of Opposition in SSLA"; *SPLM-DC Press Release;* www.splm-dc.org; September 8, 2010.

Sudanese Group for Democracy and Elections and the Sudanese Network for Democratic Elections; "Elections Statement"; April 24, 2010.

Sudanese Group for Democracy and Elections and the Sudanese Network for Democratic Elections; "SuGDE and SuNDE Begin Observing Polling Stations Across the Country"; Press Release; April 10, 2010.

Temin, Jon; "Negotiating Sudan's Post-Referendum Arrangements"; *Peace Brief;* United States Institute of Peace; January 22, 2010.

Temin, Jon; "Six Important Issues for Sudan and Its Future"; *USIPeace Briefing;* United States Institute of Peace; September 2009.

Temin, Jon and Jaïr van der Lun; "Scenarios for Sudan's Future, Revisited"; *Peace Brief;* United States Institute of Peace; July 28, 2010.

U.S. Agency for International Development; *USAID Political Party Assistance Policy;* September 2003.

U.S. Agency for International Development / Sudan; "Strategic Objective: 'More Responsive and Participatory Governance' FY 2004—FY 2007 Design Document"; August 2004.

U.S. Agency for International Development / Sudan; "Strategy Statement 2006–08"; December 2005.

U.S. Department of State Office of the Spokesman; "Sudan: A Critical Moment, A Comprehensive Approach"; http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/oct/130672.htm; October 19, 2009.

U.S. Department of State Senior Administration Officials; "Background Briefing on Sudan"; http://www.state.gov/p/af/rls/spbr/2009/130696.htm; October 19, 2009.

ANNEX 4—INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

POLITICAL PARTY INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

Tell me, how did your party do in the April elections?

Is this what you expected?

Why is it that you think your party gained seats/lost seats/did so well/did so poorly? Can you tell me specific reasons?

Are there other reasons other members of your party think might have contributed to your party's performance?

Why do you think voters vote for your party?

If the NCP/SPLM were not competing, how well do you think your party would do? How about the other parties?

How do you foresee your party in five years? What will be different?

Do you think your party is more competitive for seats at the national/GOSS level or at the state level or more local? Where is the greatest opportunity for growth?

What is the biggest external problem your party faces? What is the biggest internal problem your party has to address?

What does your party need to do in order to gain more seats in future elections?

What do you think of the resources out there to help political parties? Has your party received assistance/training/information from outside sources? Did it have lasting benefit or not? How could it have been more useful to your party?

How many members does your party have? [How do you know that? What does "membership" mean?]

Why does someone formally join the party?

What is the party's budget? How big is the party's staff?

Who makes decisions over how that is spent?

Who makes decisions over the party's policy platform?

Who makes decision over candidate selection?

How many of your candidates were first-time candidates? How many were women?

Competing and winning elections is only the first step—how does your party support winning candidates in office?

If, for whatever reason, your party were asked to form the government (possible at the state level), would the party be ready? What are your needs?

Is your party as effective in the opposition as you want to be? Why or why not?

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

What did you think of the April elections? Was the outcome what you expected?

What do you think will happen next year?

What has been your experience in working with Sudanese political parties? (Which ones do you work with, why, and how?)

What is the difference between parties in South and parties in the North?

How do you think voters decide whom to vote for? What are they thinking when they cast their votes?

If the NCP/SPLM were not competing, how well do you think other parties would do?

What is the difference in competiveness at the national, state, and more local levels for political parties?

What are the needs of political parties to develop as professional, well-functioning, and representative political organizations? (Are these needs you have identified or needs party members have expressed to you?)

What requests have you heard from political parties that you were not in a position to meet?

Thinking about assistance to political parties from outside sources, what is working and what is not?

If you were given a $500,000 for programming over the next year to improve the performance of political parties, what you would spend it on?

Is there any role for civil society or the media in improving the performance of political parties? Can they provide oversight or accountability?

What are the needs of political parties to serve their responsibilities in the government or the opposition?

ANNEX 5—LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The implementation of the CPA and Sudan's 2005 Interim Constitution envisages a comprehensive review of Sudan's legislation to begin immediately after signature of the agreement. This law reform process was intended to bring all legislation into harmony with the principles and provisions of the Interim Constitution. The principle behind the legislative reform process was that it represented a key way to enhance the protection of human rights, strengthen the rule of law and pave the way for the transformation that was intended by the CPA. The CPA itself identifies a set of legislative reforms that were/are essential for achieving the major millstones of the agreement. Among others, in particular the CPA identifies the Political Party Act, National Election Act, Press and Publication Act, Human Rights Commission Act, South Sudan Referendum Act, Popular Consultation Act, Abyei Referendum Act, and the National Security Act.

In a very brief assessment of the law reform process, and only couple of months before the expiration of the Interim Constitutional period, it is clear that six years after the signing of the CPA one of its key objectives—namely, law reform—has not been achieved. Reform showed itself ultimately as process against both the interests and the ideology of the senior ruling party, the NCP. Thus the NCP utilized various policies and tactics to undermine the will and interest of the SPLM and the opposition parties to reform laws in contradiction with the Constitution and international instruments. As a result, a combination of lack of political will, the weakness of the process itself, substantial delays, an absence of political inclusiveness and citizens' participation, and exploitation of the mechanical majority in parliament, has produced little movement toward the CPA's law reform objectives.

With the adoption of the 2005 Interim Constitution, Sudanese political parties began to focus on reform of elements of the legal framework that impacted the environment in which they were active and engaged in public affairs, including the context for democratization. Certain laws attracted their particular attention, as well as that of the public. The sections below provide brief summaries of the new legislation passed since the signing of the CPA which directly relate to the engagement of the political parties.

Political Parties Act (2007)
The Political Parties Act was passed in early 2007, almost two years behind schedule. It constitutes the legal basis for registering and regulating the activities of political parties. The Political Parties Affairs Council (PPAC) is the national body charged with implementing the Act. The formation of the PPAC came almost one year after passing the law. According to the law, the PPAC is established as an independent national body, with members appointed by the presidency and charged with registering political parties and changes that take place in the mandate of any party, receiving and investigating complaints relating to violations of the Act's stipulations, directing any party to follow the interim constitution, and issuing rules and regulations to enforce the Act.

When the PPAC was formed, there were already more than 40 parties registered under the old Act of 1998. Most of these parties had actually splintered from older and more significant political forces, and were not examined under the new law. As the Act does not address situations where groups present with similar names, some significant political parties with long histories found it harder to register under their old names, creating confusion among their supporters. Further, many political parties raised concerns that the powers of the PPAC were too broad and its mandate too vague, allowing far too much room for different interpretations and interference from other bodies of the state. Political stakeholders have criticized in particular the power of the PPAC to receive complaints,

investigate, and make decisions, as too broadly conceived. Stakeholders view this power as granting the PPAC significant influence in political life to the extent that it affects its independence and neutrality.

National Elections Act (2008)
The National Elections Act (NEA) of 2008 constitutes the legal foundation for the establishment of the National Election Commission (NEC). The NEC was established as an independent body to manage, regulate, and supervise the elections as stipulated in the CPA. The NEA sets out the mandate of the NEC to prepare, update and keep the voters' register; determine the boundaries of the electoral districts; issue general rules for the elections process and take the necessary administrative measures; and to determine measures to be taken to ensure the order, freedom, fairness and secrecy of the performance of registration and polling.

The experience of the April 2010 national elections showed that neither the NEA nor the NEC had created a conducive environment for fair, free, and credible elections. In particular, the NEC failed to ensure that it was transparent and inclusive in representing all parties. The work of the NEC was characterized by a lack of communication with the major political forces, an absence of timely public information and education, the isolation of the electoral process from the broader political and legal context through an approach which tackled the election as simply a technical process; and a failure to build confidence in the electoral process whether among the public or the political forces. Various Sudanese and international stakeholders have also criticized the NEC for not allowing political parties fair and equal access to media and to state funding during the election period.

Except for NCP, the major political parties contesting the April elections found it difficult to communicate their concerns to the NEC. Regular reports and statements were published during the election period that accused the electoral process of being corrupt from the outset, without any serious efforts from the NEC to attempt reform and to positively engage with the parties. Among the main problems identified by the opposition political parties were the manipulation of census results; constitutionally inconsistent laws restricting basic freedoms, the demarcation of constituencies in line with the interests of the NCP, and the monopolization and usage of State resources, including media and government property, by the NCP.

Ultimately the majority of the political parties that had been calling for legal reform and the lifting of restrictions of civic and political rights joined together and boycotted the elections, removing any serious competition for the NCP.

Press and Publications Act (2009)
It was hoped that the new press law would allow for more freedom of expression and access to information for citizens. For political parties in particular, passage of the law was seen as vital as it represented the principal mechanism to ensure fair and equal access to media outlets. However, the Press and Publications Act of 2009 was a major disappointment, its provisions viewed as having legalized the monopoly of the ruling party and permitted the continuation of censorship and harassment of journalists.

In particular the law did not address the daily pre-print newspaper censorship conducted by security agents, a practice authorized under the 1999 National Security Forces Act and that had been employed in an increasingly draconian manner during 2009 (and again in early 2010 and more recently), a practice which seriously debilitated the operations of many newspapers. The Act also maintained most of the extensive powers of the National Press Publication Council (NPPC). The NPPC has the authority to shut down newspapers for up to three days without judicial review, confiscate printing and other equipments, arbitrarily investigate journalists, impose disciplinary measures, grant and revoke the licenses of both journalists and newspapers. The Act also includes a

series of general prohibitions, such as on writing which provokes "religious or ethnic or racial sedition or calling for war or violence," and imposes requirements on journalists in their work to "respect and protect public morals, ethics, religious values." Violations of these admonitions are subject to punishments. The recent cases of newspaper closure, the banning of the BBC FM station and the arresting and sentencing of journalists have resulted from the implementation of these provisions.

In reading the Act, it is important also to understand the impact of other legislation and mechanisms related to the exercise of basic human rights and freedoms such as the National Security Act, War Against Terror Act, and the lack of independent judicial institutions. Despite its presentation in the context of a law reform process mandated by the CPA, many of the provisions of this law are themselves non-compliant with the INC and do not reflect the framework necessary for the conduct of free, fair, and equal participation in public affairs.

National Security Act
The revised national security act was passed at the end of 2009 (repealing the previous 1999 Act) and entered into force in 2010. The Act was intended to be one of the most important reforms of the CPA period, envisaged as ending repressive practices by state agencies and, in particular, facilitating democratic transformation and a freer election environment. The resulting draft was a major disappointment, maintaining sweeping powers of arrest and detention for the National Security Service (NISS) and copper fastening immunities which shield officials from prosecution for offences committed in the course of their duties. Although the INC envisaged a NISS with a primarily "information gathering, analysis, and advice to appropriate authorities" role, as prescribed by the INC, the new Act generally replicates the pervasive and unaccountable "police" powers of the service, which answer to none but executive fiat and can be easily manipulated for political ends.

Although there are some small, welcome reforms—for example, the duration of the period of non-judicially reviewable detention has been reduced from to four and a half months from nine months—broad powers of search, seizure, arrest, and detention remain unreviewable, continue to be wielded extensively to harass and detain without accountability, and are unconstitutional. Unregulated seizure of assets can destroy an organization or media house. In particular power to arrest and detain without judicial oversight and subject only to executive review (whether by the Director of the NISS or the National Security Council) for up to four and a half months, at least permit a context and climate in which violation of the rights of detainees are myriad. As has been recently reported by Amnesty International, torture in NISS detention continues to be reported, and there has not yet been a single case in which a prosecution against an NISS official has been taken.

Despite the long, drawn-out, and controversial political battle around the new Act, little has changed. This climate of fear which is fostered by the new Act, in continuity with its predecessor, has clearly impacted the behavior and engagement of political parties during the period: although during the final stages of the election process arrest and detention of senior political figures was not a tactic employed by the NISS, the service was still active against those engaging politically in the civil society process more broadly and in areas geographically far from public scrutiny. A number of severe cases of torture of members of the youth movement Girifna were intended to impact political engagement, and the use of NISS agents to intimidate political actors at time of polling and election monitors was common. In the post-election period, it can be said that the NISS has not altered its methods and engagements: the "reform" has had no discernable impact on the political or civic environment.

Interim National Constitution (2005)
The 2005 Interim Constitution will expire in July 2011 after the end of the six month post-referendum interim period. There is no clarity yet as to what the constitutional framework in either northern or southern Sudan will look like after that period. In southern Sudan, preparations are

advancing for the post-referendum period, and one of the committees in the South Sudan referendum task force is tasked with constitutional review. This pillar of the process will lay out the foundations for the work of political parties. Priorities in terms of political democratization past the setting out of the basic constitutional arrangements in the South should be on (1) a new political parties act for the South, (2) a new media law, (3) a human rights act, (4) a security law and (5) an electoral act. As national laws are currently being considered for retention or otherwise in the event of secession at the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs, it is vital that the current national repressive legislative approach is not used as a model for the South. The nature of the legal framework which emerges in the South is critical to the creation of an enabling environment for political parties and the engagement of civic and democratic actors.

In the North the post Interim Constitutional arrangements and legal framework are likely to be constructed upon the implied mandate of the results of April election and the resulting complete domination of the NCP. New legislation or implementation practices will thus tend to bring back those of the pre CPA era. This trend can already be seen in the calls from the national parliament (now dominated by the NCP) for the encouragement of child marriage or the more rigorous imposition of the various public order acts.

ANNEX 6—MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN SUDAN

Political Parties Active in Sudan[17]
In all, 84 political parties are currently registered with the government of Sudan through the Political Parties Affairs Council (PPAC); seventy-two of these fielded candidates during the April 2010 elections for national, regional, and state legislative and executive offices. However, the real number of organized, influential political parties is much lower, since only 15 to 20 political parties can be described as significant in at least three states.

Many political parties are not functional. Many were created or cultivated by the ruling NCP after the coup of 1989 in an attempt to create an image of a multi-party landscape. In addition to the NCP and the SPLM, four other political parties in the North have long-standing legitimacy among various segments of Sudanese society. These four parties—the DUP, the Umma, the Sudanese Communists, Party (SCP) and the PCP—were the most commonly named by informants in discussions with the assessment team regarding the politics of the North.

In the South, the CPA legitimized six political parties by granting them seats in the original, appointed SSLA (alongside the SPLM and NCP). The recognition given by the CPA, however, does not equate to popular appeal. According to NDI's focus group reports from southern Sudan, the only political parties most participants could name were the SPLM and/or the NCP.[18] The assessment team's interviews with average, non-political southern Sudanese citizens confirmed this finding.

According to the Political Parties Act of 2007, a new political party must demonstrate that it has at least 500 supporters drawn from at least three different states. Existing political parties that had been recognized under the provisions of the Political Parties and Organizations Act of 2001 were grandfathered in. The Political Parties Act set up PPAC to oversee the registration of political parties and related matters.

Political parties must demonstrate basic organization by adopting a party constitution and a logo and by holding party conventions. The Political Parties Act also names the legitimate sources of party income. No excessively burdensome or limiting restrictions are placed on political parties except that their manifestos cannot contradict the CPA or the Interim Constitution of Sudan; this, according to PPAC's interpretation of the law, prohibits southern political parties from incorporating a call for the independence of southern Sudan into their identities.

There is no legal distinction between political parties operating at the national, regional, or local levels, but the different histories, levels of capacity, and areas of operation have given rise to various terms for speaking about sets of political parties. The Umma and DUP are referred to variously as the "old," "sectarian," or "first-generation" parties, in contrast to the Communists, PCP, and others which are collectively described as "new," "ideological," or "second-generation." There is a distinction between "real" parties and those that exist only "on paper." Registered political parties are legally distinguishable from unregistered political parties and political movements.

---

[17] See Annex 6 for an expanded discussion of political parties active in Sudan.
[18] Traci Cook and Dan Vexler; *Imaging the Election: A Look at What Citizens Know and Expect of Sudan's 2010 Vote;* National Democratic Institute for International Affairs; September 30, 2009; pp. 19–20.

Functionally, there are national political parties active in the North and the South, with the NCP and SPLM falling into this category. This assessment follows this nomenclature by identifying NCP and SPLM as national political parties and the others by their area of activity

National Political Parties

Only two political parties in Sudan operate in all areas of the country—the North, South, East, and Darfur. The National Congress Party (NCP) under the leadership of President Omar Bashir maintains autocratic rule over Sudan, but the party's influence is weakest in the South. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) dominates political life in southern Sudan, but also attracts sizeable support in Khartoum, Darfur, eastern Sudan, and the Three Areas.

National Congress Party (NCP)

The NCP is unquestionably the strongest political party in Sudan at this time, despite its limited presence in southern Sudan. The NCP heads the authoritarian state, controls government jobs, has ample resources, runs an efficiently structured organization, maintains internal discipline, attracts young and talented Sudanese, and takes credit for all positive accomplishments. Even most (but not all) of those who question the validity of the April 2010 elections admit that NCP would have won had the elections been free and fair (although that electoral victory would have been built on decades of undemocratic practices strengthening the NCP's hand and weakening all opposition).

The NCP functions well and achieves its goals. It largely acts rationally to advance its own interest. It knows when to take firm stands and is capable of negotiating and compromising when the situation necessitates it.

Seen from the outside, the NCP is often perceived as running a one-party authoritarian state and pushing an Islamist agenda. Its leader, Omar Bashir, is called a dictator who seized power through a military coup and became the first sitting head of state to be indicted for war crimes by the International Criminal Court. These perceptions do not negate the fact that the NCP is a successful political organization.

Where the NCP falls short as a political party is in formulating a broadly supported, robust political agenda. It was said by one international observer that the NCP is devoid of ideas except for the need to stay in power. A leader of another political party described NCP as "a collection of employees with no commitment to ideas."

Historically, the strategic objective of the NCP is to institutionalize Islamic law throughout the country. The NCP presents itself as the defender and promoter of Islam in Sudanese society, and it has attempted to export its political Islam model to the neighboring countries. Yet, according to one diplomat, the NCP fears that the biggest challenge to its rule comes not from any political faction but from the radical Islamist movement.

The origins of the NCP are rooted in the Islamic Charter Front (ICF), a student group founded in 1960. In 1969, the ICF under the leadership of Hasan al-Turabi became the Muslim Brotherhood, adopting the same name as the older Egyptian organization. The National Islamic Front (NIF) replaced the Muslim Brotherhood and formally entered politics in 1979 when Turabi was appointed Attorney General.

Ten years later, Col. Omar al Bashir aligned himself with the NIF during his coup. Thereafter, Bashir replaced Turabi as the primary leader of the movement, and the NIF transformed into a formal political party, the National Congress Party (NCP). The NCP inherited a civil war and continued it

for almost two decades, in different corners of Sudan, in order to realize the project of the Islamic state, deploying both state and outside resources to control the economy, leverage the security situation, and limit basic freedoms.

To maintain incumbency, the NCP reached political compromises with most of its rivals in Khartoum and signed various peace agreements (CPA, ESPA, DPA and Cairo Agreement) with the armed factions of Sudan's periphery; such deals brought little gains for the other parties, and none resulted in diluting the NCP's power.

The results of the April 2010 elections cemented the NCP's control over northern Sudan's political life and enabled the party to recapture the power it enjoyed during the 1990s. The NCP consolidated power in the North by gaining seats in the National Assembly and in the state legislative assemblies at the expense of other parties—especially those who futilely boycotted the election. In southern Sudan, the NCP won only a single seat in the SSLA; its support in the South is largely confined to Upper Nile state and to pockets elsewhere, and since the signing of the CPA, NCP members in the South have been joining the SPLM.

The NCP attributes its success at the ballot box to delivering solutions to the people, especially negotiating the CPA and improving the security situation, producing real economic growth and a higher per capita income, and building roads and increasing access to clean water. They also claim that they have earned the trust of the Sudanese people for these accomplishments and for the personal connections their leaders have with the people.

The NCP's candidate selection process provides a glimpse at the level of internal democracy in the ruling party, but opinions differ. Naturally, the NCP portrays the process as fully open and competitive with the decisions reflecting the will of party members. Some critics of the NCP confirm that, consistent with their well-organized nature, the NCP did indeed adjudicate disputes in the candidate selection process more or less democratically. Other critics dismissed these events as show or "a lot of motion but with the decisions foreknown." These differences of expert opinion notwithstanding, other than the Sudanese Communist Party, the NCP probably has the most democratic internal decision-making of any political party based in Khartoum.

One key shift for the NCP shown in the April 2010 elections was a more strategic selection of candidates, including consideration given to ethnic and tribal identities that enhance the local appeal of candidates. This points to a possible feared erosion of the NCP "brand." It has been said that this time, NCP selected candidates based on their ability to win rather than on their ability to govern.

The recent elections also reconfirmed the authority of Bashir as both the head of the party and the head of the government—a fact seemingly legitimized by the international community's acceptance of the electoral results despite the serious misgivings of domestic and international election observers over the integrity of the election. A surprising number of northern and southern Sudanese pointed to this fact and others, such as the CIA's ongoing cooperation with the National Intelligence Security Service (NISS), as evidence of the U.S. government's unacknowledged support for Bashir and tacit support for NCP rule, at least in the North, as a buffer against radical Islam and/or access to oil reserves.

The arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against Bashir presents a major challenge for those in the party looking forward. Internal divisions within NCP pit military and Islamist hard-liners who are supporting Bashir against the so-called moderates who see Bashir as a growing burden on the party's long-term strategy.

The NCP understands that its political survival lies in protecting its own access to resources and economic development. The party has three main sources of funding: revenue from the state, businessmen who benefit from NCP backing, and Islamic sources.

The potential loss of oil fields in southern Sudan following the referendum poses a major threat to the government's and NCP's ability to continue to co-opt support amongst its members and the elites of the North. The abrupt forfeiture of this revenue stream imperils the stability of the NCP government as much as the blow to its prestige from overseeing the dissolution of the country if the southern Sudan referendum favors succession.

Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)
Although national in scope, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement's (SPLM) strength resides in southern Sudan where it is the single most dominant political entity and the undisputed ruling party. In addition to holding the office of the President of the Government of Southern Sudan since its creation in 2005, the April 2010 elections produced gains for the SPLM in the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly where they now hold 159 of the 170 seats and all but 36 of the 480 seats in the 10 state legislative assemblies.

SPLM originated in 1983 as the political wing of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) which fought the Khartoum-based government of Sudan until 2005. In 1994 it held its first convention and launched the process of separating itself from the military operations. The goal of international assistance to facilitate the transformation of SPLA from an armed force into a broad-based political movement and then from a political party to the government is unfinished.

Since signing the CPA in 2005, the SPLM has gone through many challenges, including losing its long-time charismatic leader, Dr. John Garang, in a helicopter crash shortly after forming the GOSS. After the CPA, the party also faced internal governance issues associated with transforming itself from a revolutionary military movement into a ruling political party.

The party has also suffered from splits and internal divisions. Through its history, there has been a contest for positions in both the SPLA and the SPLM, with many officers converting their record on the battlefield into elected and unelected offices through SPLM patronage.

The 2009 break-away faction led by Lam Akol formed the Sudan People's Liberation Movement for Democratic Change (SPLM-DC) which became the only non-national political party to win seats in the SSLA and has now formed the opposition to the SPLM government in the southern assembly. Many SPLM members who lost primary nominations for the April 2010 elections ran as independents; almost all the successful independent candidates have now rejoined SPLM. Many SPLM Northern Sector members disaffected with their Southern Sector colleagues' preoccupation with the southern Sudan referendum have also left the party.

Yet the movement of members flows in both directions. UDSF and UDF leaders volunteered to the assessment team that they are losing members to SPLM, especially after their domination of the April elections. All members of USAP-2 dissolved their party and chose to join SPLM *en masse* in July 2010 rather than reunite with their brethren in USAP-1. And the SPLM issues press releases over the defections from NCP.

As one SPLM candidate from Darfur told the assessment team, "The SPLM is like a train: anyone can get on or off at their station, but the train keeps going." He was speaking of ideology as well as membership.

The SPLM's official manifesto presents the vision of a secular "New Sudan" that is ethnically, religiously, and politically pluralistic and breaks the concentration of wealth in the center, Khartoum, and focuses on development, equality, and justice for the marginalized peripheral regions of Sudan.

The SPLM manifesto also calls for self-determination but stops short of endorsing the separation of southern Sudan or any other region from the unified Sudanese state.

In reality, the SPLM, like the SPLA, finds its strongest support in southern Sudan from those who seek independence and feel that the SPLA/M is the best vehicle to achieve that goal. But although the SPLM's main base is in southern Sudan, it attracted various regional parties and groups with its vision of the "New Sudan," especially in the Nuba Mountains, Blue Nile, Darfur, and eastern Sudan. Moreover, after the signing of the CPA many northerners regarded the SPLM as a possible secular alternative to the NCP.

This schism between the official party ideology and the views of its supporters and the majority of its leaders in the South has come to the forefront as the date of the southern Sudan referendum approaches. Under the terms of the CPA, the Government of Southern Sudan was charged with "making unity attractive" and no political party is legally allowed to espouse a call for independence of any part of the country.

In southern Sudan, the SPLM enjoys the legacy of being the liberation movement that brought peace and laid the ground for "independence." But the Northern Sector is cool to the realization of an independent southern Sudan because it would isolate them in their struggle against the Khartoum government and deprive them of resources, enthusiasm, and a safe haven.

Whether or not the northerners and southerners of SPLM ever shared a common vision is a legitimate question, according to a security expert who has followed the SPLA since its inception. To resolve this mounting tension, the SPLM called the first meeting of its steering committee, the National Liberation Council, in several years. (Meetings are supposed to take place every six months.) But the September 2010 meeting was cancelled just days beforehand and rescheduled for October, officially at the mutual request of both sectors to have more time to prepare, but in reality to avoid airing still unresolved issues publicly.

The overdue convening of the National Liberation Council and the further postponement of the meeting notwithstanding, the SPLM is not just the most popular political party in southern Sudan but also the best organized.

Below the president and secretary general of the party, the SPLM's internal governance organizes the party into a Northern Sector and a Southern Sector. The Southern Sector covers the 10 states of southern Sudan and additionally the border states of Blue Nile and South Kordofan which are legally part of the North and, under the CPA, will remain so regardless of the outcome of the 2011 referendum. The Northern Sector's membership comes from Darfur and eastern Sudan as well as from the capital.

Interestingly, the Northern Sector claims to be better organized than the dominant Southern Sector. The Northern Sector additionally credit the greater capacity of society in the North and the more "mature" political life. The members of SPLM's Northern Sector are able to learn from a long tradition of political resistance. They take credit for pressuring the NCP to move on legislation authorizing the referendum and the popular consultations to take place in the Two Areas.

While the North cites a culture of political resistance as a unique asset in its development, they have also watched from afar as the Southern Sector has benefited from the freedoms in the South, from

their learning experiences as the ruling party, and from the influx of international support for the government and the party. The two wings are growing apart as they undergo separate formative experiences.

SPLM's national headquarters in Juba dwarf those of the other political parties, and the same can be said of their relative sizes at the state level. In contrast to the poorly furnished or non-existent offices of the minor parties, SPLM offices are well-equipped with furniture and office equipment belonging to the party and, more impressively, are centers of activity.

Other political parties express envy at the resources that SPLM has at its disposal. They accuse SPLM of capitalizing on their power as the government to expropriate resources for themselves. The SPLM stands accused of extracting tribute from government workers' salaries. The assessment team heard this account often repeated and usually accompanied with specific details; the charge even came from one non-SPLM GOSS Cabinet minister.

In many ways the dominance of the SPLM is too complete. While this assessment looks at what the SPLM is, many Sudanese citizens with whom the team spoke with are confused about what SPLM is not; in impromptu interviews, southern Sudanese denied that SPLM was a political party, equated SPLM with the government interchangeably, named SPLA as the leading political party, expressed different political parties as parts of SPLM, and made other understandable but imprecise statements. One of the most common assertions heard is that SPLM is fighting for the independence of southern Sudan (a statement not made by the SPLM itself).

The inaccurate perceptions of SPLM and the fluid nature of its membership blur the lines between a responsible political party and a mass movement.

With a near monopoly on elected offices and with no other political party in any position to challenge that in the foreseeable future, there is no significant outside opposition to SPLM (with due respect to the SPLM-DC, recently recognized as the official opposition party).

When asked where that dissenting voice would be coming from, an academic at the University of Juba announced that "the opposition to SPLM...is SPLM." Others of different backgrounds concur and cite a tradition of debate within the SPLM which continues today and can be seen in the SSLA. Other internationals working with the SSLA acknowledge that SPLM deputies do frequently question their party's proposals, but in the end they all vote in favor of them.

Without external and only limited internal dissent, the SPLM suffers. Candidate selection, officially screened by local committees before being nominated by the party's central Political Bureau, left a minority of Sudanese disaffected saying the best people were not selected, according to NDI's focus group studies. More visibly, some party members dissatisfied with not receiving nominations ran as independents against the official SPLM candidates only to rejoin the party after the April 2010 elections. One young candidate on the women's list in Abyei was asked to give up her seat after the election in favor of a more senior woman leader who had not been successful. (Even though the young candidate had spent a large amount of her personal wealth on her campaign, she was happy to forfeit her seat as the party wished.)

Moving forward, SPLM must overcome a number of challenges. First, it must resolve the differences in vision between the Northern Sector, which adheres to the vision of a secular, decentralized "New Sudan," and the Southern Sector, whose members who favor independence for the South. Complicating the issue, the southern public has already made up its mind that SPLM shares their desire for separation. It is unclear whether the SPLM can satisfy both wings and the public without

alienating one of them in the remaining time before the referendum when events will reveal the answer.

Another challenge facing the SPLM in case of independence for the South is the future of its northern Sudanese constituencies, namely the Northern Sector and its strong presence in South Kordofan, the Nuba Mountains, and Blue Nile. The Two Areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile are organizationally part of Southern Sector of the SPLM; however, in case of secession they will remain in the North. The Northern Sector seems ready to absorb them into their hierarchy, but their allegiances may lie to the South, and nothing can be a foregone conclusion.

The SPLM is also facing challenges of identifying the post-election strategic allies in the North. The SPLM has experienced close relationship with opposition parties. It was a leading member of NDA during the 1990s. Now it is actively engaged with Juba Forces Alliance that formed before the elections and joins them in strategizing on the post-elections and post-referenda political landscape.

Finally, the SPLM has benefited from the crisis that bore it. Party solidarity has been a function of perceived necessity to achieve the goals. Sudanese deferred voicing criticism of SPLM to avoid undermining the war effort. Then critics feared derailing the peace negotiations, and then they were told they could not object to the CPA. This year, the focus has been on achieving the elections and the next milestone, the referendum. Many egregious campaign violations by SPLM candidates went overlooked so as not to taint confidence in the South's ability to hold the future referendum. If independence is achieved peacefully, the SPLM will lose its aegis.

In the near future, the prospects of SPLM maintaining both control of the government and its own internal unity, at least as far as the Southern Sector goes, is high. Several other political parties in the South optimistically profess that once independence is achieved, the SPLM will have achieved its purpose and its supporters will disperse and the party will evaporate. Others see independence as removing the SPLA as the SPLM's private force and appending it to the state, and therefore removing SPLM's source of strength. Others see more personality-led factions splitting away from SPLM or a failure to deliver "independence dividends" as leading to a debilitating crisis of confidence triggering SPLM's downfall, but most of those more reasonable forecasts include a timetable placing a hypothetical SPLM fracturing past the three-to-five year time horizon of this assessment.

Two Sides of the Same Coin?
As diametrically opposed as the goals of the NCP and the SPLM are, the two parties bear much in common. In northern Sudan, the NCP has as strong a near monopoly as the government as SPLM does in the South. Both are equally intent of holding power in their respective areas.

Together they hold the public eye. According to NDI's focus group research, the only political parties most participants could name were only SPLM and/or NCP.

Both the NCP and the SPLM validly claim to have brought "peace" to Sudan as the signatories of the CPA in 2005.

Interviewees generally agree that SPLM would have swept free and fair elections in southern Sudan and that the NCP, to a lesser extent, would have dominated free and fair elections in the North. Yet both are faulted for committing egregious and unnecessary intimidation and fraud around the election out of fear of underperforming.

The assessment team heard from political parties, ministry officials, and civil society leaders who believed that NCP and SPLM were coordinating their actions behind closed doors for their mutual benefit. From this perspective, the April 2010 elections were delayed so that other parties doubted

they would be held and were underprepared when they did take place. They accuse NCP and SPLM of joint fraud in engineering election results to expand their majorities.

Indeed, southern Sudan is as much of a one party state as northern Sudan is, if not more so. It is not yet clear whether the SPLM is truly committed to supporting a democratic environment and political inclusiveness or follow the example to the North and seek to consolidate its power as ruling party.

Political Parties Active in the North
The significant political parties active in northern Sudan are all closely tied to the history of Sudan. The Umma National Party, the Democratic Unionist Party, and the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) all formed before the independence of Sudan, and the Umma and DUP have led the government at different times. The Popular Congress Party was formed and is still led by Hassan al-Turabi, one of the more dynamic figures in modern Sudanese history.

Although these and other political parties have become emaciated under NCP rule (if judged by their performance in the April 2010 elections), they maintain a strong reservoir of capacity. The Umma and DUP retain a large number of members who served in government when those parties were in power. Their leaders, as well as those of SCP, are practiced politicians who have spent their adult lives active in politics. They retain knowledge on the workings of government, skills for reaching voters during elections and in the period between them, and the experience in operating and navigating within different levels of political space. In other words, they have political "know-how" and they are survivors.

In contrast to countries where the political opposition is systematically shattered, Sudan's political leaders have avoided existential threats not just under the NCP but through a history of military coups and long periods out of power. They possess and have deployed contingency plans for going underground and for leaving (and returning to) the country. They know how to survive under pressure.

The skill set of political parties in northern Sudan also includes coalition building. These political parties have a documented history of cooperating for mutual gain both when in power and when out of power. The Umma, DUP, SCP, and various groups led by Turabi have shared power in government and taken junior partner status when optimal or necessary. They have all lent support to and dropped out of government coalitions based on their political calculus at the time. Out of power, northern political forces (not limited to the four significant parties) have joined the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) before the CPA and now the Juba Forces Alliance.

Yet, despite their latent potential, these political parties are fundamentally weak. Having been out of power for so long has cost them access to financial resources and internal party unity. With the true results of the April 2010 elections obscured and parties boycotting the contest, the level of public following generated by each party remains a mystery.

It should also not be forgotten that these political parties may provide a political alternative to the NCP, but not necessarily an ideological one. The NCP did not start the Second Sudanese Civil War. The fundamental grievance of disproportionate wealth accumulation at the center of the state at the expense of the peripheral areas began before independence and continued when the Umma, DUP, and other forces were the decision-makers. Although the NCP is associated with the Islamization of Sudan, the beginnings of this process were put in place long before. The current leaders of the Umma, DUP, PCP, and—to a lesser extent, the SCP—are tied to the policies of the past.

There are also another sixty-odd registered political parties that are too small to mention, the majority of which are very local parties (tied to a specific geographic area). Some of these resulted from the

splintering of established parties and have adopted similar names and/or claim to be the "true" heir to the party's heritage. For example, Federal Umma won seats in the National Assembly in 2010, but other splinter parties may be one-man operations. Regional parties are discussed separately below. It was commonly alleged to the assessment team that many of these political parties were set up by NCP to sow confusion.

Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)

The Democratic Unionist Party holds the distinction of forming Sudan's first democratically elected government. It won the majority of seats in the 1953 parliamentary elections and therefore became the first ruling party in independent Sudan. More tellingly, the DUP holds the distinction of being the only major political party not to have supported any of the numerous coups d'état.

Named the National Unionist Party until a 1967 change, the roots of Sudan's oldest political party go back to its position advocating a union with Egypt. It advocates for the continued unity of Sudan.

The DUP draws its main support from the Khatmiyyah Sufi religious sect and secular-minded professionals, urban dwellers, and businessmen. The party's traditional geographical support comes from Khartoum, Gezira, Northern State and eastern Sudan. In the 1986 elections, the DUP won the largest number of votes and the second largest number of seats in the National Assembly.

The party has long experience in forming and participating in democratically elected government. As many parties after the military coup in 1989, the DUP has suffered from NCP tactics of divide and rule, resulting in four factions and the loss of most of its supporters.

The historic leader of the party, Mohamed Osman al-Mirghani, played a major role in leading the opposition alliance, the NDA, during the 1990s, working closely with SPLM, in particular in eastern Sudan. After signing the Cairo Agreement in 2005, the party tried to improve its leverage through engaging with government and existing political processes post-CPA. The secular segments of the DUP are focusing on the democratization process rather than allying with NCP. The party is currently divided with regard to the Juba Forces Alliance. The vice-president of the party, Ali Hassanain, is more in favor of the development of the Juba Forces Alliance into a strategic political front, while the chairperson of the party is reluctant to fully commit.

Umma National Party (UNP)

The Umma National Party formed during the colonial period to advocate for an independent Sudan and has long experience of leadership and participation in democratic governments. Its long-standing leader, Al Sadiq Al Mahdi, served as prime minister twice and was the elected prime minister who was overthrown by the NCP's military coup. The Umma, like the DUP, draws it main supporters from the Ansari Sufi sect.

Like many other parties, Umma has suffered from fragmentation, with five different factions now claiming legitimacy. The party also faces a challenge of internal political coherence, divided between pro-democracy and pluralism on one hand and the Al Ansar sect and Al Mahdi family on the other hand.

The geographic support of the Umma party comes from rural areas, in particular from Kordofan, White Nile, and the states of Darfur. The war in Darfur has negatively impacted the presence of Umma there. The party also has been weakened by financial difficulties since 1989.

Umma won the second largest number of seats in the 1953 elections and the largest number in 1986. Critical of the exclusion of other political parties from the CPA negotiation process, Umma refused

to participate in the power-sharing arrangement and therefore was not represented in parliament after 2005.

Umma boycotted the April 2010 elections and is intensifying its networking with forces of the Juba Forces Alliance to explore the future of the political landscape. The current political discourse of the party focuses on Sudan's political state post-referenda. The party calls for either a new basis for united Sudan or friendly neighborhood if southern Sudan decides to separate.

Sudanese Communist Party (SCP)

Once one of the strongest Communist parties in the Middle East and Africa, the Sudanese Communist Party has enjoyed influence in politics disproportionate to its electoral success or popular following.

Despite its social democratic political program, the convention of SCP in 2009 decided to keep the historic name of the party. The SCP's convention was held 40 years after the previous convention in the 1960s. The party does not enjoy wide popularity among Sudanese society; however, it maintains its role as a vocal pressure and mobilization party in public as well as in the parliament. The SCP has more solid organizational structure, maintains a clearly distinct ideological program, and enjoys a reasonable degree of internal democracy. The party is financially very weak, getting its main support from the party's supporters in the diaspora.

Because of reservations of Muslim Sudanese against the SCP's position about religion and the accusation of atheism, the party finds its support among intellectuals, professionals, and university students. The limited popularity of the SCP did not prevent it from playing a significant role in Sudan's politics. The party is known for its capacity in coordination and supporting joint positions by political parties, such as law reform programs. The SCP had contributed to development of the opposition alliance, NDA, during the 1990s and now is actively engaged with Juba Alliance working toward consensus building and articulation of future political agenda.

Popular Congress Party (PCP)

After being expelled from the NCP in 1999 for disloyalty to President Bashir, Hassan al Turabi founded the Popular Congress Party the following year. One of the more impressive figures in Sudanese politics, the highly educated Turabi began with the student group which became the Muslim Brotherhood and then NIF and ultimately the NCP. He has served as Attorney General, Speaker of the National Assembly, and Secretary General of NCP. Turabi helped advance Islamic law in Sudan and infamously invited Osama bin Laden to take up residence in Sudan. The Popular Congress Party is still led by this founder and architect of the NCP's regime.

Despite his engagement with opposition parties against the NCP, many observers and Sudanese political actors accuse Turabi of being responsible for the destruction of pluralistic political life.

After the initial spilt from the NCP, many core supporters of the party decided to rejoin the NCP, in particular the influential businessmen. This has left the PCP facing serious financial problems, particularly after the cutting off of financial sources from abroad. Further, the Islamist cadres of the PCP were placed under serious pressure by the NCP, including intimidation of the PCP's leaders and supporters. One of the reasons for this is said to be Turabi's knowledge of the internal structure, organizational mechanisms, and the "secrets" of the NCP planning.

The PCP is now an active leading member of the Juba Alliance and is energetically working to reach out and to mobilize other opposition parties to obstruct the NCP wherever possible.

In the April 2010 elections, the PCP won the largest number of seats in the North after the NCP yet many people neglect to count it as a major party.

Political Parties Active in the South
Most of the political parties active in southern Sudan claim to be active on the national stage, but aside from having an office or a few representatives or members in Khartoum, none of them attract any significant level of following outside of the 10 states of the South. Generally speaking, their members in the South do have a strong identification with the party of their choice. However, the leadership in these political parties has frequently shown less loyalty to the party than the rank-and-file; the history of southern political parties is populated with party splinters, factional fighting, and party switchers (not unlike the North) for the sake of influence, power, and prestige.

Southern politics is dominated by the issue of self-determination, and despite the nuances they illuminate between themselves, the political parties vying for the voters of the southern Sudanese do not offer any variety on the issue that is discernable to the voters.

In describing the common features of the southern political parties, the word "weak" is often used. Among the general population, they are unknown: the assessment team's interviews with an opportunistic sample of Sudanese citizens in Juba confirmed the finding of focus groups held by NDI in other areas that the only political parties most southerners can identify are SPLM and NCP.

The April elections were not kind to political parties in the South. The constitution of southern Sudan allotted each political party active at the time of adoption four of the seats other than those that went to the national political parties. None of those political parties retained their seats in the voting. (Four seats were won by a SPLM-DC, a new political party breaking away from SPLM, and six were won by former-SPLM independent candidates.) After the election, many of the parties sought appointed positions in the GOSS, applying in the name of political diversity.

The resources and organization of southern political parties pale in comparison to that of the four significant political parties of the North. Repeatedly the assessment team heard that these younger political parties were not as "sophisticated" as their northern counterparts.

Southern political parties do benefit from loyal members at the lowest levels as well as passionate and informed members at the middle levels, although the numbers in those cadres is small. The leaders of the southern parties do not lack in confidence; they remain certain that there is a role for their parties in southern Sudan. Many of them are also optimistically confident (or overconfident in the evaluation of the assessment team) that once independence for southern Sudan is achieved, the SPLM, having fulfilled its mandate, will spontaneously dissolve.

Others in academia, civil society, and the international community envision a less promising future for the political parties of southern Sudan. One Sudanese professor politely stated that, "other parties don't have a bright future," whereas another long-time Sudan expert put it more bluntly, saying that "other political parties in the South can't make a dent."

Sudan African National Union (SANU)
The Sudan African National Union (SANU) is southern Sudan's oldest political party, formed in 1962 by exiled political luminaries and formally registered as a political party after its 1964 convention. The party's agenda was to fight for freedom and a democratic and decentralized system of government in Sudan.

Between 1964 and 1969, SANU faced huge challenges from the Khartoum government. Many of its activists were arrested and jailed, while others were forced to go underground. In 1968, SANU's

president was assassinated and his replacement was gunned down in Uganda the following year. This resulted in SANU's leadership again going into exile with the party run from neighboring countries.

SANU's current president, Toby Madout, a medical doctor and frequent political prisoner, took over in 1989 and was reelected at the party's 2009 convention.

While SANU claims a large following of 100,000 members across southern Sudan and in Khartoum, it considers Western Bahr el Ghazal to be its traditional stronghold. Allotted four seats in the SSLA under the CPA, SANU won no seats in either the SSLA or any of the state legislative assemblies in the April 2010 elections.

Dr. Toby Madut describes SANU as a pan-African party, a term used by socialist-minded former African leaders. The party sees poverty reduction as the key issue to champion but cannot define its strategy. The party has never supported armed struggle in resolving Sudan's political problems, and has always advocated for a decentralized federal system of governance where wealth and power are shared based on the population of each region.

Notably, SANU supported a confederation of northern and southern Sudan until it reversed its position in September 2010 and now supports the independence option in the upcoming referendum. Dr. Madut explained to the assessment team that although the party still favored a single Sudanese nation with greater diversification of wealth outside of Khartoum, recent meetings with the NCP in the capital had convinced him that that goal is unachievable because the ruling party does not share that vision. The assessment team was impressed that the head of SANU in Upper Nile could repeat nearly verbatim Dr. Toby Madut's reasoning just days after the decision; however, the state chairman confirmed that there had been no participatory decision-making within the party on this reversal. Interestingly, when asked for her views on this switch a couple weeks later, a SANU candidate from Eastern Equatoria denied that SANU had ever supported anything other than southern independence even though moments earlier she herself had declared that SANU stood for "unity and freedom" for Sudan.

United Democratic Salvation Front (UDSF)
The United Democratic Salvation Front (UDSF) is one of the many splinter groups from the SPLM. In the mid-1990s, some proponents of an independent southern Sudan took issue with SPLM leader John Garang's support for a unified Sudan and formed the UDSF. In 1997, the UDSF struck a deal with the NCP and became a signatory of the Khartoum Peace Agreement which called for a referendum on the independence of southern Sudan in 2001.

The UDSF formally registered as a political party in 1999, and in 2000 its founding president rejoined the SPLM and eventually became the vice president of GOSS. In 2001, the second president, Peter Sule, left to form the United Democratic Front.

A final split occurred in 2009 when the incumbent UDSF leadership failed to make adequate preparations for the mandatory party convention and new leadership was elected. The incumbents refused to recognize the legitimacy of the new leadership and the party split with the newly elected leaders settling on the name the United Democratic Salvation Front—Mainstream (UDSF-M) although it is unclear if there are any ideological difference between the two.

UDSF believes it will reabsorb UDF and UDSF-M in the future.

UDSF supports an independent southern Sudan and is organizing its supporters to vote yes on the upcoming referendum. The UDSF claims support in all 10 states in southern Sudan but lacks a

concentration of strength in any area. It was given four seats in the SSLA under the CPA but won no seats in either the SSLA of the state legislatures during the April 2010 elections.

United Democratic Salvation Front—Mainstream (UDSF-M)
A recent splinter of its namesake political party, the UDSF, the United Democratic Salvation Front—Mainstream (UDSF-M) is led by Gabriel Changson Chang.

Chang was elected chairman of UDSF in April 2009 at a poorly organized convention which the incumbent UDSF leadership had called but not participated in. The Political Parties Affairs Council (PPAC) mediated the party's dispute, and it was decided the newly elected leadership would form a new party to be called the United Democratic Salvation Front—Mainstream.

True to nature of his ascendency to the party helm, Chairman Chang has moved to strengthen the democratic processes in place within the party including amending the party constitution to limit the power of the chairman.

Although neither the USDF-M nor the UDSF hold seats in the SSLA, Chairman Chang serves as Minister for History and Culture in the current the Government of Southern Sudan—one of only four ministries run by a non-SPLM party. Chang previously served as Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, acting Minister of Finance, and Minister of Youth and Sport and was an unsuccessful candidate for governor of Upper Nile state. UDSF-M also won a single seat in the Western Bahr el Ghazal state legislature.

United Democratic Front (UDF)
The identity of the United Democratic Front (UDF) centers on its call for an independent Sudan. As party leaders and members make clear, their position does not stop at self-determination, and they do not support "making unity attractive." They believe that their unqualified support for independence sets them apart from all other political parties in Sudan.

UDF originated when leaders broke away from UDSF in 2001 when it became clear that the NCP was reneging on the Khartoum Peace Agreement, which the UDSF and NCP both signed in 1997, allowing for a referendum on independence for southern Sudan.

UDF members are unwavering on their party's message that secession of the South takes primacy over all other issues facing southerners. Paradoxically, the assessment team found UDF's leaders the most prescient in discerning the issues on the minds of voters—e.g., widespread poverty, lack of health care, and poor roads—but most insistent that the party should not and will not address those issues before independence. (Individual UDF candidates proved to be more accommodating to the day-to-day concerns of voters.)

When attempting to register as a political party in 2009, PPAC flagged the provisions in UDF's manifesto calling for southern succession. Under the Political Parties Act, parties cannot espouse views contrary to the CPA, that is, a party can support the referendum on self-determination but not succession itself. After initially resisting, in August 2009 UDF removed the offending provisions in order to obtain registration.

Today UDF is one of the most recognizable parties in southern Sudan, albeit still a minor party despite their claim to be the second largest party in the South. Contemporary reports estimated that almost a thousand people converged on Juba to attend UDF's convention in February 2009, and the UDF is becoming a more organized and mobilized party.

One international implementing partner conveyed that the SPLM consider the UDF the strongest of the other political parties in southern Sudan and the only potential long-term challenger to SPLM's hegemony.

However, UDF was given four seats in the SSLA under the CPA but won no seats in either the SSLA or the state legislatures during the April 2010 elections.

Union of Sudanese African Parties (USAP)
Five smaller southern Sudanese political parties banded together in 1987 to form the Union of Sudanese African Parties in reaction to the Arab-dominated parliament. In 1994, their founding chairman fled the country after having been arrested and tortured; the party continued with new leadership within Sudan and with the continued involvement of expatriates. After the signing of the CPA in 2005, the founding chairman returned to Sudan and triggered a contest for power. At the party convention, USAP voted to split itself into USAP-1 under the current leadership and USAP-2 under the leadership of the founding chairman.

USAP was given four seats in the SSLA under the CPA but won no seats in the SSLA during the April 2010 elections. USAP holds one seat in each of the state legislatures of Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Jonglei. Importantly, USAP leads one of the four ministries of GOSS not held by the SPLM.

In July 2010, USAP-2 announced that it was dissolving itself and all members had joined the SPLM.

South Sudan Democratic Forum (DF)
The South Sudan Democratic Forum (DF) finds its roots in the South-South dialogue of the early 1990s which advocated for peace, unity, and self-determination for the southern Sudanese people. Strategists for the South-South dialogue formed in London under the name of the South Sudan Civic Forum. This group's membership extended to the diaspora, political leaders, armed groups, and civil society organizations both within and outside Sudan.

The South Sudan Civic Forum transformed into a political party in 2001 during its first convention in London, where it adopted the new name of the South Sudan Democratic Forum (choosing the abbreviation DF to avoid confusion with the existing SSDF, the Southern Sudan Defense Force). Following the signing of the CPA, DF transferred its operations to Sudan, and its leader, Dr. Martin Elia, was appointed to the cabinet of the GOSS.

In 2009, DF became a registered political party in Sudan following a convention in Juba which drew relatively high attendance from throughout southern Sudan and Khartoum. DF is strongest in Central Equatoria state and can trace its support in the whole Equatoria region back to its days as a civil society organization.

DF identifies itself as being aligned with the conservative principles of smaller, decentralized government, but the most dominant issue for the party continues to be self-determination for southern Sudan. Members of DF feel that the major partners of the CPA have not done enough to address tribalism in the South.

DF was given four seats in the SSLA under the CPA but won no seats in either the SSLA of the state legislatures during the April 2010 elections. Its chairman was named an advisor to the president of GOSS.

Sudan People's Liberation Movement for Democratic Change (SPLM-DC)

In 2009, the SPLM-DC broke away from the SPLM over issues of mismanagement and the clash of personalities. Chairman Lam Akol led the emergent party to greater electoral success in southern Sudan than any party aside from the SPLM, winning four seats in the SSLA and eight SLA seats in Upper Nile state, the stronghold of the SPLM-DC. (To put that in perspective, the NCP only won one seat in the SSLA and six seats in the SLAs. All other southern political parties won no seats in the SSLA and only four seats in the SLAs.)

In September 2010, the four members of the SSLA from the SPLM-DC sought and were declared as the official opposition party. But the path for these four legislators was challenged. All four were stripped of their legislative immunity for being implicated in the May murder of a tribal chief and seven others. In September, the SSLA restored their immunity, citing a lack of evidence. This episode was widely seen as a direct challenge by the ruling SPLM to the political dissent represented by the SPLM-DC.

Members of the SPLM-DC have difficulty specifying how their party differs from the SPLM. One respondent even emphasized that SPLM-DC is a part of SPLM. The confusion is understandable. Since its formation, the SPLM-DC has been troubled with defections back to the SPLM, most notably with several senior members leaving *en masse* in July 2010.

Regional Political Parties and Political Movements
Regionalization is an emerging trend of contemporary Sudanese politics. Parties in the East, Darfur, and the Nuba Mountains represent regional constituencies that increasingly do not identify with the politics of Khartoum. Even NCP representatives shared with the assessment team that regional parties in the Two Areas, Blue Nile, and Southern Kordofan are attracting supporters and have a future. Further regionalization of Sudanese politics can be anticipated, particularly if the South secedes.

Regional political parties are smaller and may or may not be registered as political parties with PPAC. In fact, the legal requirement that a party have support in three states is an impediment for some. The Beja Congress/Eastern Front in eastern Sudan and several parties active in the Nuba Mountains do have official standing.

These smaller political parties have not benefited from the same programming as have the more established parties and they are not especially more or less internally democratic than other parties. One international civil society and security expert advocated for sustained, long-term assistance to these fledgling parties as the only hope for producing a meaningful alternative to the current authoritarian state.