

*Briefing paper:*

# **Strengthening International Support for Peacekeeping in Sudan: Lessons from UNMIS**

**Richard Saunders**

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## **Abbreviations**

AEC	Assessment and Evaluation Commission
CHF	Common Humanitarian Fund
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DSRSG/RC/HC	Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Sudan – Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator
GoS	Government of Sudan
GoSS	Government of Southern Sudan
HAC	Humanitarian Aid Commission
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
JMC	Joint Military Commission
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Funds
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PDSRSG	Principal Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Sudan
RCO	United Nations Humanitarian and Resident Coordinators Office
SRSG	Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Sudan
UNAMID	African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UNCT	United Nations Country Team in Sudan
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in Sudan
UNMIS/DDR	UNMIS Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Section
UNMIS/RRR	UNMIS Return, Reintegration and Recovery Section

## **1. Introduction**

In July 2007, the United Nations Security Council agreed to establish a new peacekeeping mission for Darfur, UNAMID, to support a fragile peace process and protect civilians and humanitarian agencies in that region. UNAMID will assume the duties and mandate of the existing African Union Mission in Sudan, AMIS. It will also take over the work in Darfur of the current UN mission to Sudan, UNMIS, whose primary responsibility will remain providing support for the implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement. The establishment of UNAMID and the transferral of peacekeeping and humanitarian mandates for Darfur from UNMIS and AMIS, provides a critical opportunity to revisit and address some of the key challenges of UNMIS and linked international peacekeeping efforts, and to build a strong operational foundation for the new Darfur mission.

The new UN mission comes at a challenging juncture. Rising tensions around delays, disagreements and conflict over the CPA's implementation are threatening to unravel the foundational North-South peace process, which would have critical and highly negative implications for the wider peace process in Sudan. At the same time, the Darfur conflict is becoming increasingly complex and challenging, as the number of armed groups multiplies, the strategic positioning of combatants in peace negotiations shift unpredictably and the humanitarian crisis deepens. There is risk that parallel and fragile peace processes in North-Southern Sudan, East Sudan and Darfur could disintegrate and recombine in a powerful momentum towards wide-scale armed conflict.

The international community has a critical role to play to ensure this does not happen. However, evidence from the current engagement of UNMIS, donors and international humanitarian Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in support of the CPA suggests there are significant obstacles to be overcome. Central among these are difficulties which have emerged with UNMIS, its structures, leadership and resources; its engagement with other UN, inter-governmental and donor agencies; and its working relationship with humanitarian NGOs.

This report aims to support international efforts to strengthen UNMIS and establish an efficient and effective UNAMID, by critically reviewing problems encountered and lessons learned in the current UN mission. The report is based on an extensive 2007 field study in Southern Sudan, Southern Kordofan and Khartoum, during which more than 70 interviews were carried out with a wide variety of stakeholders at national and local level, including: the UN Mission and UN agencies, multilateral donor agencies, diplomats, government, international and national humanitarian NGOs, academics and journalists. Evidence was also compiled from official documentation, unpublished research and materials from official and NGO sources, and a desk top survey of media and grey literature.

The study findings identify critical weaknesses in the international community's support for the CPA, including:

- inadequate institutional coordination and cooperation within the UN mission;
- ambiguous political leadership in UNMIS, the UN and from donors;
- unclear and fragmented strategic approaches to humanitarian work by the UN mission, multilateral agencies, donors and NGOs; and
- insufficient resources and weak processes of resource allocation.

The findings also underscore positive lessons emerging from the experiences of UNMIS and its international and national partners, and identify new opportunities for strengthening UNMIS and UNAMID. These include:

- a capacity for institutional adaptation around planning and cooperation, notably at local operational level;
- the experience of improved coordination among UNMIS, donors, government and NGOs, involving for example advocacy around humanitarian access;
- opportunities for strengthened leadership in the UN mission and at donor level, following recent changes in key leadership positions in both; and
- clarification and restructuring of UNMIS' operational mandate, with the establishment of UNAMID for Darfur.

Donors occupy a critical position in each of these junctures involving the UN mission in Sudan. This report provides evidence-based recommendations for strengthening donor support to the expanded

international peacekeeping mission in the country. Among the key recommendations are the following:

- the need for the development by the UN and donors of a more clearly wholistic approach to peacekeeping and humanitarian engagement in Sudan, encompassing the range of conflicts based in different geographical regions of the country;
- the lending of greater political and diplomatic support from the UN Secretariat, donors and international community to the field leadership of the UN mission in Sudan;
- the need for the provision of expanded funding and other resources for UNMIS activities in support of the CPA;
- the need for donor insistence on improved coordination and cooperation among components of the UN Country Team in Sudan; and
- the need for more systematic inclusion of humanitarian NGOs and development agencies in the planning and funding of humanitarian and development work in support of the CPA.

## 2. Institutional issues

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## 2. Institutional issues

Security Council Resolution 1590 of 24 March 2005 established the UN Mission to Sudan (UNMIS) to work in support of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.<sup>1</sup> The UN's *Unified Mission Plan for Sudan* specifically mandates the UN Secretary-General Special Representative in Sudan (SRSG) with coordinating all UN system activities in the

<sup>1</sup> UNMIS' mandate includes assistance in implementation of specific aspects of the CPA such as monitoring, peacebuilding and assistance with elections, but also entails other key interventions, including assisting in the return of refugees and displaced people; demining; and promoting human rights and the protection of civilians, and vulnerable groups particularly.

country. The SRSG, a post occupied by Jan Pronk until his expulsion by the GoS in late 2006, is deputised by the Principal Deputy Special Representative (PDSRSG), and Deputy Special Representative Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators Office (DSRSG/RC/HC). According to the *Mission Plan*, the PDSRSG retains deputised responsibility for management of mostly political issues and functions, including political and civil affairs, human rights, rule of law, the UN police, information and electoral matters. The DSRSG/RC/HC, on its part, is tasked with a range of planning and implementation functions around humanitarian, recovery and development, security and other issues. It is specifically charged with coordinating the UN Country Team – which includes more than fifteen UN agencies – under the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO), and with coordinating all international humanitarian organisations in their engagements with the UN, the Governments of Sudan and Southern Sudan, and international donors.

The *Mission Plan* sets the terms for an "integrated" country mission, the large scale of which is an exception in the UN system.<sup>2</sup> UNMIS' multi-sector, multi-layered organisational structure brings several challenges. The Mission's multiple units and divisions are deployed in six operational Sectors and across 12 field offices, headquartered in Khartoum. However the boundaries and responsibilities among units are sometimes ill-defined, unclear, contested and susceptible to modification in practice. In this context, the mission's vertically-oriented reporting and coordinating structures have proved problematic.

Stresses on management have been compounded by the inclusion of other UN agencies and international humanitarian organisations within the UN's "integrated mission" approach. From the outset, UNMIS' overlapping responsibilities have proved a challenge, particularly in the context of a delicate political and operational environment in which an increasing number of donors and humanitarian agencies are engaged. Growing demands on UNMIS have placed high stress on its

<sup>2</sup> See *Sudan Unified Mission Plan* (2005) for details of the mission's complexity, involving UNMIS, UN Country Team, plus new agencies added during the Darfur crisis and pre- and post-CPA period. Humanitarian agencies are also included under the UN coordinating role as part of the "integrated mission" approach.

organisational capacities at national and local operational level. While institutional coherence was important to establish on the ground, this has been lacking in many regard, and has been further undermined by changes in the scope of UNMIS' mandate with the Darfur crisis and assignment of large additional responsibilities to the mission. Institutional fragility was exacerbated by attacks on the political leadership of UNMIS in late 2006, which left the mission without an effective political head for more than ten months.

### **2.1 Overlapping and competing jurisdictions**

There is lack of clarity within UNMIS over the jurisdiction of many units and agencies that have overlapping mandates. Such confusion is reflected in the changing responsibilities for important UNMIS activities; for example UNMIS/RRR, the recovery component of which has been taken over by the UNDP. Unclear institutional responsibilities for UNMIS protection, information and human rights promotion activities have helped nurture *antagonism* among UNMIS units, not *integration* and efficiency.<sup>3</sup>

UNMIS' lack of institutional clarity has also fostered uncertainty among government, donors and NGO partners about how and where to engage the mission. A recent study of IDP returns to Southern Sudan and the Three Areas revealed that key government and NGO players were unsure which UNMIS units had coordinating responsibilities for assisting with return and reintegration: UNMIS/RRR, the RCO, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and Joint Logistics Coordination were all involved, but their division of duties was not explicitly known.<sup>4</sup> The report confirmed this study's findings of tensions between UNMIS, and UN agencies and NGOs in Southern Kordofan, where UNMIS is widely seen as isolated in its planning and operational activities. Mistrust,

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<sup>3</sup> Some NGO sources note that within UNMIS, unclear responsibilities among units and offices targeting RRR, Protection, Civil Affairs and Human Rights, are an example of ill-defined institutional overlap leading to uncertainty and diminished engagement by external partners.

<sup>4</sup> Sara Pantuliano, Margie Buchanan-Smith and Paul Murphy, *The long road home: Opportunities and obstacles to the reintegration of IDPs and refugees returning to Southern Sudan and the Three Areas, Report of Phase I* (London: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, August 2007).

competition and inadequate coordination has been the outcome.

Fragmented and compartmentalized mandates within UNMIS, and the lack of a coherent and flexible mission strategy, have contributed to a narrow approach in meeting critical functions. For example, the provision of security and the putting in place of measures that aid in recovery and development, are both integral aspects of support for returnees and their reintegration. Yet in the key case of Southern Kordofan – a high-returns and highly-volatile weaponised area – UNMIS failed to implement this responsibility. Instead, UNMIS' "security" objectives have been mostly limited to preventing the outbreak and escalation of armed conflict. There has been little planning and provision of protection for returnees; and there has been a near-complete failure to implement DDR.<sup>5</sup>

Many feel that UNMIS has been conservative, inflexible and slow to react to urgent needs, partly due to its divided responsibilities and a narrow strategic visions at operational level. Government, NGOs and many communities blame UNMIS for slow delivery of "development" and services in an environment of growing needs exacerbated by the pressures of high returns. They see the mission as unable or unwilling to make the link between returns, reintegration and peace-building, and of dealing with the issue creatively.

In Southern Kordofan, comparison of UNMIS' recent performance with that of earlier peace making and recovery structures has been disparaging.<sup>6</sup> It is widely felt that the effective and rapid addressing of urgent needs in the post-

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<sup>5</sup> One UN informant argued that even while UNMIS has identified narrower and inadequate goals for enhancing "security" in Southern Kordofan, it has no clear strategy for proceeding with DDR activities that would *disable the conditions* for weaponised conflicts.

<sup>6</sup> In 2002-2005 the Joint Military Commission (JMC), a grouping of organisations and individuals with international support and the cooperation of the main parties to the conflict, successfully undertook monitoring of the ceasefire and initiation of localized peace-building activities. The latter included the rapid identification and targeting of basic services urgently needed (such as water pumps and health inputs) in collaboration with local communities, villages, commanders on both sides. Linking peace with "development" in its most rudimentary forms was seen as a key component in the success of the JMC.

Ceasefire period has been replaced by UNMIS bureaucracy and protocol. This is experienced as inaction and unwarranted delays. Resentment and tension is growing in Southern Kordofan and Southern Sudan on the part of government, communities and humanitarian and development agencies, and is threatening the lead coordinating role of UNMIS at operational level.

## 2.2 'Stovepipe' management

Institutional isolation within UNMIS has been nurtured by "vertical" forms of reporting and command. Several sources within UNMIS at Khartoum and Sector level observed a tendency towards "stovepipe" management, in which vertically-oriented reporting and decision-making within mission units has had the effect of isolating Sector-level mission units from each other. While agencies report upwards, not horizontally within their zone of operation, strategic planning and decision-making proceed in a top-down fashion. Efforts to establish thematic cooperation among UNMIS units with intersecting functions are seen by many to have been inadequate. In an environment typified by units and agency offices with overlapping operational mandates, the outcome has been diminished effectiveness of coordination and strategic interventions at sector level. In this regard, isolated 'stovepipe' command chains within UN agencies have helped to *disaggregate* unit operations in what was meant to be *integrated* mission.

## 2.3 UN Agencies

A widely-held view is that many UN agencies in Sudan are reluctant to cede planning and operational jurisdiction to UNMIS (more specifically the RCO) or other UN agencies. There are also questions over the extent to which some agencies are willing to *share* responsibilities. As a result, planning and coordination within a "team approach" has been undermined. Moreover, while information sharing within the UNCT does take place, a common perception is that strategic policy and planning choices by individual UN agencies are made at their head office level, *outside* Sudan. Typically, the UN agencies share information and coordinate around logistics, but plan and cooperate only superficially around broader humanitarian and development strategies.

In some instances intense joint programmes involving several UN agencies have been developed at local or regional level under the

leadership of a designated mandated agency, and demonstrating signs of forward movement around institutional coordination at operational level.<sup>7</sup> More typically however, operational organisations engage UN agencies most effectively in bilateral contexts. Broader operational coordination among UN agencies and NGOs therefore remains disjointed, and often confined to information-sharing.

Many point to the SRSG's low capacity to develop a viable strategic vision for engagement, and the RCO's corresponding low capacity in developing and implementing a unified country strategy, as a critical obstacle for the Sudan mission. This is seen as contributing to a fragile policy consensus within the UNCT. For NGOs, low inter-agency consensus and fragmentation of UN agency strategies stand as disincentives for engagement with UNMIS. Participation by NGOs in non-operational inter-agency structures is therefore generally weak, especially at national level. Local level inter-agency group structures are still seen by many NGOs as useful platforms for sharing information – but not for *coordinating* activities in any substantial, systematic way.

## 2.4 NGO impacts

While UNMIS is structured as an integrated exercise, and specifically includes cooperation and coordination with external agencies like NGOs, in practice this process has tended to work less smoothly at national level than at operational level in the field. Some NGOs cite persistent lack of clarity (and effective disagreement) within UNMIS and the UNCT about UN strategy, and suggest that this has encouraged the deflection of the most effective contact with UNMIS and UN agencies to lower levels of operation. However, this has also contributed to the emergence of critical policy gaps on key issues at Khartoum level engagements among NGOs and the UN. For example, the absence of effective operational frameworks for NGOs within the unified mission on the sensitive issue of "protection" has been a source problems.

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<sup>7</sup> For example, the UNDP-led *Community Empowerment Programme* (started 2006) which incorporates multiple donors and humanitarian and development organisations, and the UNICEF-led *Integrated Community Development Project* (2007-2009), involving five UN Agencies. Both initiatives are based in Southern Kordofan.

The lack of a clear agreed framework delineating the roles, responsibilities and channels of communications among UN and NGO agencies is seen by many as having rendered NGOs vulnerable to attack from GoS, particularly but not exclusively in highly-charged political contexts like IDP camps in Darfur. The same problem applies more generally in North and Southern Sudan where NGO work includes protection, human rights and monitoring components.

### **2.5 Lessons in cooperation from Southern Kordofan**

The effects of UNMIS' institutional and coordination shortcomings have been widely apparent, notably with regard to the pressurised situation of IDPs and refugees in high-returns areas like Southern Kordofan. The case of UNMIS/RRR, the main UN coordinating body around returns, is exemplary. In Southern Kordofan, many feel that UNMIS/RRR has demonstrated very low capacity in tracking and coordinating assistance to returnees, and in overseeing the regular collection and analysis of information vital to transport and relocation processes. Assessments of, and responses to, returnees' rising needs has been unacceptably slow. Follow-up on data provided by other UN agencies is delayed and weak, and when urgent attention has been recommended UNMIS has taken up to 45 days to organise a field response due to issues of "logistics".

Because UNMIS/RRR has failed in the past to undertake responsibilities around "reintegration", this work has effectively come under the jurisdiction of the UNDP. Meanwhile, the UNMIS unit mostly failed to plan for a comprehensive assessment of returnees' situations on the ground, in support of informed planning for reintegration and peace-building.<sup>8</sup> As a result of these shortcomings there is growing resentment towards UNMIS/RRR within local communities, operational humanitarian organisations and sister UN agencies. This is diminishing community trust and cooperation in the unit, and undermining the work of a centrally important UNMIS activity.

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<sup>8</sup> IOM, in collaboration with the UK-based ODI and the Nuba Mountains International Association for Development, a local NGO, has recently taken a lead role in this process.

On the other hand, there are positive cases of closer cooperation and integrated planning among UN agencies, donors and NGOs, which stand as examples to be emulated. In Southern Kordofan, the UNDP is spearheading a *Community Empowerment Programme* in partnership with 24 local communities, UN agencies and NGOs. This combines aspects of locally-driven needs and risk assessments, recovery and development planning, and aims to help cement peace building by obtaining local buy-in for development. In the same areas, UNICEF is leading a coalition of five UN agencies in a pilot *Integrated Community Development Project*. This initiative will start by targeting 15 needy and vulnerable villages for basic needs cluster interventions, and include aspects of local level cooperation with humanitarian and development NGOs in rolling out the programme – notably, in pursuing the provision of complementary inputs from NGOs as part of their own interventions in the region.

NGOs see the potential of strong mutual benefits from this kind of locally-coordinated planning and implementation. Many note the positive outcomes of collaborative work in geographically delimited areas where intensive multiple initiatives exist, and where intensive preparatory consultations and joint assessments have taken place. Such work, they note, is invaluable for the development of a clear, phased strategy that targets potential crisis points in communities. An additional contributing factor in building success is the undisputed and "championing" leadership of an agency or unit that drives a project and ensures that a clear strategy is kept on track through regular consultation with cooperating agencies.

### **2.6 New opportunities**

UNMIS has been beset from the outset by severe institutional and management challenges. Several of these have since been compounded by the Darfur emergency and the accompanying additional political and logistical responsibilities for UNMIS, and by political attacks on the senior ranks of the mission including the office of SRSR.

The establishment of UNAMID represents an opportunity for rethinking and redressing UNMIS' and the UNCT's institutional shortfalls. Clarity is now needed concerning the relationship between the two peacekeeping missions, and between them and the SRSR and the UNCT. Transparency and greater institutional clarity in the establishment of

new arrangements can serve as a means for consolidating institutional strengths within UNMIS and the UNCT, and building a more effective mission in UNAMID. There is strong feeling among many donors and NGOs that this process is both needed and overdue.

Recent positive experiences arising from inter-agency engagements in operational sites suggests that a key problem plaguing UNMIS has been the development of clear lines of horizontal and vertical communication and administrative cooperation. At the same time, there is evidence that these challenges can be overcome by more effective consultation at local and sector level, among UN agencies, donors, Government, NGOs and local communities. There is strong need to take these positive experiences into account when revising institutional and command structures in the current period of transition in advance of UNAMID's deployment.

### **3. Leadership Issues**

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### **3. Leadership Issues**

The performance of command structures within UNMIS and UNCT raises questions about the consolidation of authority within decentralised operational structures, and points to the risks faced by humanitarian agencies when political leadership is weakened and vulnerable. In the coming period, when a new UN peacekeeping mission will be inaugurated as the existing UNMIS faces new critical tests associated with the transition towards elections in 2009 and Southern Sudan referendum on unity in 2011, the demands on leadership capacity in the UN system in Sudan will increase substantially. It is critically important that lessons from the recent experience of UNMIS and Darfur relief efforts be reviewed with a view to strengthening structures and processes on the ground.

#### **3.1 SRSG and UNMIS leadership**

While leadership responsibility for UNMIS rests primarily with the SRSG, it is widely-held within

and outside the mission that the office has struggled to establish its leading role and notably, to develop and implement a strategic vision for UNMIS and the UNCT. The first Special Representative, Jan Pronk, was faced with multiple challenges in consolidating operational structures and policy at the start-up of UNMIS, and was slow to put in place a strong political strategy. By 2006 relations with GoS were increasingly marked by tension and conflict, largely manufactured by GoS as part of its own strategy around Darfur. This eventually led to GoS' effective expulsion of Pronk in late 2006. Critically, however, Pronk's expulsion was only mildly rebuked by the UN Secretariat, and he was not replaced by a substantial political head until September 2007. For nearly a year, an Acting SRSG<sup>9</sup> occupied the senior UNMIS position with a notably low profile and with little discernible impact on recouping ground lost with the attack on Pronk. As a result, according to many observers, there was no effective undisputed "No.1" at UNMIS for an extended period. An important consequence was the further erosion of UNMIS' already fragile capacity to develop viable operational strategies in a period of mounting conflict and tension; and critically, to obtain buy-in from a range of UN and non-UN humanitarian and development agencies.

Within UNMIS and the UNCT, there has been far less mutual engagement among senior structures in the operational context than is suggested by the *Unified Mission Plan*. Part of the problem stems from inadequate inter-institutional coordination and the growing policy-making incursions of the UNDP and large donors in the shaping of recovery and development activities in Southern Sudan and the Three Areas. But weaknesses at the top level of UNMIS leadership have also been a factor. The political constraints of government, multiple operational requirements specified for UNMIS, and in 2005-06, the growing and large needs

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<sup>9</sup> The Acting SRSG post was filled by Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, UNMIS' PDSRSG, who is regarded by many sources as having been insufficiently assertive in defending key aspects of UNMIS' mandate at operational level around political affairs. It is notable that while the PDSRSG is accorded substantial political responsibility in the *Unified Mission Plan*, in practice the PDSRSG is seldom identified by sources inside and outside the UN as a leading or significant political player in UNMIS engagement with government and donors.

associated with the Darfur humanitarian emergency, together pointed to the need for consolidated and focused leadership under the SRSG. Many inside and outside the UN identified weaknesses in this regard. The UNMIS leadership was seen as insufficiently attentive in setting time-frames and criteria for making and implementing agreements with the authorities; and as providing mixed signals to partners on core elements of UN country strategy.

Some NGOs point to the slow pace of progress on the “humanitarian space” initiative by the RCO and the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in 2006-07. Critical measures enabling greater humanitarian access in Darfur were only meaningfully pursued by the RCO and OCHA after continued prodding from NGOs and donors. For organisations working in support of the CPA in North and Southern Sudan, there is a widely-held perception that UNMIS’ strategic objectives in Darfur came to undermine its univocal commitment to implementing its primary mission.<sup>10</sup> The need to maintain access to Darfur left UNMIS vulnerable to political leverage from GoS, and at the same time weakened any strategic vision concerning North-South activities. Some NGO observers argue that instead of providing political leadership based on principles and strategic vision, the UNMIS leadership increasingly became bogged down in the politics of negotiation and conciliation. This is seen as a potentially disastrous approach in the context of Sudan, where multiple conflicts and peace-making processes exist side-by-side, and where concessions for gains in one peace-making process can lead to the undermining of established positions in another. GoS, rooted at the centre of these multiple conflicts and processes, is well-placed to exploit prevarication and conciliation on the part of UNMIS. For many observers, it is clear that GoS will continue to seize such opportunities in the absence of strong, politically univocal UNMIS leadership coordinated through the SRSG.

### **3.2 Sector level successes**

Comparative evidence suggests that UNMIS’ local performance has been strengthened in instances

where local leadership has been more assertive, strategic and operationally-focused. However, the effectiveness of UNMIS local operations is circumscribed in North Sudan by the degree of support UNMIS headquarters in Khartoum provide to the local Sector leadership, and here there have been problems. In some notable instances the SRSG and PDSRSG failed to intervene with sufficient commitment and assertiveness to defend UNMIS’ rights and privileges.<sup>11</sup> As a result the integrity, effectiveness and public perception of the mission was undermined locally.

The discrepancies between sector- and headquarter-level engagements stem partly from their proximity to operational functions. Coordination, policy making and decision making in Khartoum take place in an environment that is leadership-focused, and relatively removed from operational obstacles – and opportunities. This means that leadership at headquarters, in reality, often has low capacity to respond to the kinds of complex and specifically local operational needs arising in different sectors; and has diminished incentive to integrate such issues in centralised decision-making processes. Therefore, while the decentralisation of UNMIS structures across six operational Sectors offers the potential for effective UNMIS coordination in a variety of local contexts, this has been undermined by a pattern of isolated decision-making at national headquarters level; as well as by the diffusion of leadership authority through a range of competing agencies in the UNCT.

### **3.3 UN vulnerabilities**

The 2006 expulsion of UNMIS political chief Jan Pronk was an unprecedented attack by a host government on a UN peacekeeping mission. The resulting relatively mild response by the UN Secretariat in New York underlined a further challenge facing UNMIS leadership: an unusually high level of tolerance by the UN for abuse of its mission at the hands of GoS and its coordinating

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<sup>10</sup> In this explanation, the leadership’s shifting strategy involving Darfur was heavily influenced by pressures from donor governments and international NGOs, themselves responding to powerful international advocacy campaigns focused on the Darfur crisis.

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<sup>11</sup> For example, in Abyei the effective confinement of UNMIS to Sector base by GoS (and later GoSS) was not adequately challenged by the SRSG or PDSRSG in Khartoum, which are primarily responsible for engaging with government on these issues.

body, the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC).<sup>12</sup> Ambiguous political commitment was also reflected in the New York Secretariat's hesitancy to invest additional political capital in shoring up UNMIS' expanding mission in Darfur.

Inadequate insistence on political and resource support for UNMIS at the UN Secretariat has been noted by NGO advocacy campaigns working on Sudan. The latter have consistently called for increased resource flows enabling the filling of staff complements with experienced peacekeeping and humanitarian professionals;<sup>13</sup> but especially, for the political strengthening of the mission by the provision of strong international backing for UNMIS and insistence on the recognition of its status and authority as specified in Resolution 1590 and subsequent protocols. Many NGOs argue that the demonstrated weaknesses of UNMIS and its struggling leadership are signs of insufficient commitment and support from UN headquarters, and the broader international community. Part of the solution to the problem of UNMIS' sub-optimal performance therefore involves addressing the shortfalls of the broader UN and international diplomatic approach to engaging Sudan.

In the Pronk case, while there was speculation over the specific circumstances leading to his expulsion, the weak UN response unquestionably diminished UNMIS' local credibility and authority at a critical time, following months of escalating violence and targeting of humanitarian agencies in Darfur. The perception of diminished political authority provided important opportunities for exploitation by the GoS and other Sudanese interests. Humanitarian NGOs, recalling 2006 attacks on Darfur-based humanitarian workers and officials, expulsions of UN and NGO officers,<sup>14</sup>

and increasing problems in reliably obtaining visas, permits, customs clearances and other government-regulated approvals enabling humanitarian work, identify the UNMIS leadership's perceived weakness as a critical stumbling block in NGOs' consolidation of political room for manoeuvre. In this sense, the effective erosion of UNMIS' political capital via engagements with GoS on Darfur had important and damaging spill-over effects for the core UNMIS mission in North and Southern Sudan.

### **3.4 Donors: fragmented approaches**

Existing weaknesses in political leadership in the UN mission have been importantly exacerbated by lack of cohesion and shared political strategy among many donors in support of UNMIS, and notably around issues of humanitarian protection. There has been generally weak action from European Union countries in support of humanitarian space, as traditional diplomatic tools (démarches, public and joint pronouncements of various kinds) have not been used effectively in the difficult circumstances of 2006 up to May 2007. In the case of the NRC's 2006 removal from Darfur, it took five weeks for EU to register an official complaint with GoS. In early 2007, diplomats failed entirely to protest the GoS' denial of entry permits for the UN-appointed Jodi Williams Commission.<sup>15</sup>

Opportunities have regularly been missed by EU diplomats based in Sudan to mount more effective support for both UNMIS and international humanitarian and development efforts, and several sources note competing interests and objectives among EU countries in particular with regard to Sudan. As a result the EU, for example, has been slow to develop an effective, coherent common humanitarian policy approach, which was still awaiting approval from governments in Brussels in mid 2007.<sup>16</sup> Some diplomats see part of the

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<sup>12</sup> UNMIS sources suggest that UNMIS Khartoum-based leadership, too, was surprised by the levels of tolerance and inaction in New York.

<sup>13</sup> UNMIS sources from a variety of Sectors underscore the mission's below-normal staff complements, the comparatively junior ranking of officers put in middle and senior positions of authority, and difficulty of attracting experienced and competent staff to difficult working environments with compensation packages paid in US dollars that are diminishingly attractive and competitive.

<sup>14</sup> Oxfam's Country Director was removed on GoS' order in 2006. More worrying was the effective expulsion of two OCHA heads of office in South

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Darfur, neither of which was protested by OCHA to its GoS counterpart, HAC.

<sup>15</sup> While the UN-delegated Commissioners waited in Addis Ababa for permission to enter Sudan, some in the EU delegation insisted on an EU diplomatic démarche to protest the GoS action. But this suggestion was rejected by other Khartoum-based EU diplomats who said it would have no constructive impact. "Silence was preferred to bothersome noise", according to one EU diplomat involved in the issue.

<sup>16</sup> As a consequence the important instrument, the European Commission for Humanitarian Operations

problem as originating in the relatively low station ranking that Sudan had until recently: for the most part, junior ranking EU ambassadors were in Sudan when Darfur erupted and they proved politically weak, uncreative, and professionally slow in response to the crisis.

That situation no longer pertains, yet diplomatic activity has been slow to catch up to the real political needs demonstrated by UNMIS' increasingly obvious vulnerabilities. Typically EU representatives in a country meet every year to review the principles of a common approach among ambassadors. In Sudan, however, this process only began in early 2007: before this, the EU ambassadors had not met to discuss strategy and common positions for about five years.

Diplomatic sources note continuing signs of inertia in the wider diplomatic community, and argue that the weight of western diplomatic interventions (particularly on critical issues of humanitarian access and protection) have been led by a few key players including the US, UK, Norway and the Netherlands. Many diplomatic and NGO sources point to the critically important role of donors in the recent campaign around 'humanitarian space' as suggestive of the broader potential of strategic diplomatic engagement in support of UNMIS and the UN's engagement in Sudan.

Some analysts have suggested that greater "diplomatic activism" be undertaken to encourage and support the work of existing weakened structures, notably the Assessment and Evaluation Commission (AEC), the joint structure of national and international parties and observers to the CPA, which is tasked with monitoring the CPA's implementation and is chaired Norwegian Tom Vraalsen. The International Crisis Group, for example, suggests that the vital work of the AEC has been hampered by procedural issues put forward by the NCP and by other constraints, and recommends that a "shadow structure" of UN and embassy representatives be created to unofficially

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(ECHO), was significantly handicapped as it required the full political support of governments in Brussels to be effective. ECHO in Sudan has been weakened by low EU state contributions and the preference by many key donors to fund bilaterally and therefore maintain greater political direction over resources. ECHO is the main funding platform for France, Spain and Greece; but Sweden, Finland, the UK, Denmark, Germany and Netherlands fund bilaterally.

carry out important monitoring and reporting tasks, with the aim of buttressing awareness and attention to violations, delays and other issues concerning CPA implementation.<sup>17</sup> Recent experiences involving donors and others in the reassertion of rights to humanitarian access in Darfur point to the potential viability and importance of such measures.

### **3.5 Lessons from 'Humanitarian Space'**

Recent progress in engagements with GoS around rights to 'humanitarian space' in Darfur underscore not only the political challenges faced by UNMIS, the UNCT, donors and NGOs, but also the benefits of more focused collective political pressure and strategic leadership. While the humanitarian space initiative was primarily motivated and energised by NGOs working in close cooperation with donors, their joint action encouraged UNMIS, acting through the RCO and OCHA, to play an important role in concluding a new and potentially critical agreement with GoS.

Increasing physical and rhetorical attacks on humanitarian agencies and workers in Darfur by GoS and armed groups; threats, denial of visas and permits, expulsions and other hostile interventions by HAC designed to restrict and otherwise control humanitarian activities; and the introduction of a new and constraining NGO Act; set the background in 2006 for more focused efforts led by humanitarian NGOs demanding greater respect for humanitarian protection standards in Darfur.<sup>18</sup> As the key point of engagement on these issues in GoS, HAC represented a number of challenges. HAC's low capacity, its fragmented and powerful political undercurrents, and its often combative, unpredictable interventions tended to destabilize planning and implementation of projects by humanitarian organisations, and increase the financial costs of their work.

HAC also was the key GoS counterpart for the UN's growing humanitarian efforts coordinated by OCHA. In this regard, OCHA both carried out

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<sup>17</sup> International Crisis Group, *A Strategy for Comprehensive Peace in Sudan* (Africa Report No.130, 26 July 2007).

<sup>18</sup> HAC's growing incursions on humanitarian activities also included a refusal to abide by key terms of a 2004 *Moratorium* on ensuring humanitarian access to Darfur. The "Organisation of Voluntary and Humanitarian Work Act" was signed by President Bashir in March 2006.

humanitarian work with HAC's permission and was tasked with representing all international humanitarian initiatives to GoS through HAC. Many in NGO and diplomatic circles recognised the problem of conflicting interests and the potential for compromise in this situation, and cited as an example inadequate leadership by OCHA and the DSRSG on the issue of humanitarian access. Most NGOs and donors agreed that OCHA failed to act early and decisively.

In important ways OCHA was on unfamiliar ground in Sudan and had insufficient resources to address its operational and political weaknesses. OCHA's experience elsewhere (typically in situations where governments have been less hostile to the UN's humanitarian presence) did not serve the organisation well in Sudan. Strong leadership and resources were needed to take stock of the new kind of operational terrain and set appropriate priorities and strategies – including the development of a political strategy in what is a highly politicized environment. This was slow to happen. NGOs report numerous occasions of OCHA failing to respond quickly, predictably and effectively to requests for intervention with GoS by NGOs. They argue that under pressure from all sides, OCHA often did not make NGOs its priority, and rather pursued its own and related UN interests in engaging HAC and GoS. This political problem was compounded by OCHA's inadequate resources and skills, due to under-funding and recruitment issues that were only partly ameliorated by the personal campaigning and intervention of OCHA Head of Office Jan Egeland, following intensive NGO lobbying and advocacy. Even then, NGOs were still complaining in early 2007 of spending too much time following-up on grievances *with OCHA*, in addition to their entreaties to HAC.

The political and bureaucratic logjam at both HAC and OCHA helped provoke renewed collective responses among NGOs, which soon shifted to include donors and the UN. The NGO Forum, an association of 60-70 Khartoum-based NGOs that operates informally due to restrictions under the NGO Act, intensely lobbied a range of donors and delegations<sup>19</sup> in late 2006 and early 2007. Through

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<sup>19</sup> Delegations consulted included the UN Secretary-General Special Envoy for Darfur, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and

an elected eight-member Steering Committee the Forum was represented directly on the Khartoum Inter-Agency Committee,<sup>20</sup> and developed closer structured links with the Khartoum-based groups of donors and diplomats.

Initially donors had been slow to establish criteria for acceptable levels of humanitarian access, and provide positive and negative incentives for GoS to work by them. The absence of clear signals in 2006 provided opportunities for intrusive interventions by authorities, and undermined the humanitarian work of the UN and NGOs. Donors and the UN for the most part left such advocacy initiatives up to NGOs, and more rapid, forceful interventions to protection humanitarian work might have resulted from more concerted donor efforts. But the urgency of the Darfur crisis and increased pace of NGO lobbying around humanitarian space issues led to stepped-up donor lobbying of UNMIS, HAC and GoS. This resulted in a consultative process whose outcome was a March 2007 *Joint Communiqué on Facilitation of Humanitarian Activities in Darfur*, signed by the DSRSG/RC/HC on behalf of UNMIS, and GoS. The agreement set up inclusive structures for developing and overseeing protocols enabling greater humanitarian access. Importantly, the High Level Committee overseeing the process specifically included representatives from UNMIS, donors and NGOs.

The effectiveness of this latest initiative in removing key bureaucratic and technical impediments to humanitarian access remains uncertain – some NGO sources have reservations about the scope and pace of the promised fast-track approach to lifting restrictions, while noting that many other GoS bureaucratic and technical impediments remain in place, and that the *Communiqué* applies only to Darfur.<sup>21</sup> Some also

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Emergency Relief Coordinator, African Union Special Envoy for Darfur, and EU and several other diplomatic missions.

<sup>20</sup> Among other tasks, the IAC contributes to UNCT work plans and other aspects of UN coordination.

<sup>21</sup> For example, "Technical Agreements" are emerging as a new and effective means of controlling humanitarian access by placing multiple restrictions on human and physical resources. Technical Agreements for projects and cooperation need to be concluded as part of the procedure for permit and visa applications, and require the approval of relevant line ministries –

express concern about the manner in which some UN officials and diplomats<sup>22</sup> linked the process with the threat of sanctions, thereby further and dangerously risking politicisation of the humanitarian access issue. Notwithstanding these concerns, the recent ‘humanitarian space’ experience highlights donors’ important role in mobilising and strengthening political leadership in the UN system in Sudan; in linking with and strengthening the position of humanitarian organisations; and in encouraging greater cooperation and compliance from GoS on critical issues of humanitarian access. Despite continuing and severe constraints on diplomatic and humanitarian activity, the political process surrounding the *Communiqué* demonstrates that with creative and flexible leadership backed by political support, space remains for creative and constructive engagement on the part of UNMIS and the UNCT.

### **3.6 New opportunities**

An important period of transition in diplomatic and humanitarian circles is currently underway in Khartoum. Key leadership posts have recently been filled in the UN system (including the SRSG, DSRSG/RC/HC and Head of OCHA)<sup>23</sup>, diplomatic corps (including the US and UK ambassadors) and humanitarian NGOs (country programme heads and advocacy advisers at NRC, Oxfam, World Vision, among others). These changes are taking place as new diplomatic and peace-making initiatives are afoot with the establishment and ramping-up to deployment of UNAMID; and also as new questions are being strongly raised, especially in Southern Sudan, about the insufficiently slow pace of progress in implementing the CPA, and the dangers this poses to peace.

This situation raises the need for caution; particularly with the relatively rapid loss of senior experienced personnel, the restructuring of UN

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thereby extending supervision and constraints on humanitarian NGOs far beyond the realm of HAC.

<sup>22</sup> Including the new OCHA Head John Holmes, and US Special Envoy to Sudan, Andrew Natsios.

<sup>23</sup> Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, a senior Pakistani diplomat who previously served as the UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative to Iraq, was appointed to succeed Pronk as SRSG in September 2007. The post of DSRSG/RC/HC, critical in UNMIS coordination and planning, was filled in the same period; as was the vacant position of Head of OCHA in Sudan.

operations and systems of engagement under conditions of political and resource pressure, and the demonstrated skills of GoS in manipulating a range of international diplomatic and humanitarian players on a shifting terrain.

But the situation also presents important opportunities for political strengthening of the UN, donor and NGO roles in supporting peacekeeping and recovery. In this period of restructuring and transition, the consolidation of political leadership and strategic vision in the UN system organisations in Sudan will be critical. Both have been lacking, notably in the difficult 18 month period ending December 2007 during which the political leadership of UNMIS was rebuked by GoS, and the coordinating and planning authority of UNMIS led by the DSRSG/RC/HC was effectively eroded. In a revealing reflection of UNMIS’ diminished political leadership and credibility in early 2007, none of the more than 70 sources interviewed in the field work identified the Acting SRSG and PDSRSG as the effective political head of UNMIS. Instead, most referred to the DSRSG as occupying – albeit problematically and weakly – the key political leadership role of the UN in Sudan.

There is now pressing need to establish clear, centralised political direction and authority within the UNCT, especially given the imminent co-existence of two UN peacekeeping missions. Donors will have a critical role to play in strengthening and consolidating international political support for this evolving UN presence Sudan. Any revised and expanded UN “integrated mission” will also require close cooperation with non-UN humanitarian and development actors, through inclusive and clearly-structured consultations and operational links with key donor and humanitarian NGO representative structures; here, the recent NGO and donor-led humanitarian space initiative provides examples of workable and productive cooperative arrangements. Finally, with the geographical and political expansion of the UN’s role at a critical time in Sudan’s complex peacemaking processes, it is increasingly clear that renewed UN leadership can be effective only if it reflects a more wholistic strategic approach, which in turn demands a centralisation and consolidation of leadership backed by unambiguous political support.

#### **4. Resource Issues**

4.1 UNMIS resource shortages

4.2 MDTF and CHF

4.3 Donor interventions

4.4 New opportunities

#### **4. Resource Issues**

Funding of the UN's integrated mission in Sudan has been challenged by problems of resource shortfalls, fragmented programme strategies and inadequate donor coordination. The increasing consumption of increasing financial, capital and human resources by the Darfur crisis has further eroded UNMIS' situation. The performance of the UN and World Bank in setting the priorities and disbursement procedures for humanitarian assistance in Southern Sudan and the Three Areas has provoked complaints from the humanitarian sector, and changes in resource targeting and allocation are evident. There are important lessons to be learned as the UN prepares for UNAMID.

##### **4.1 UNMIS resource shortages**

Funding for UNMIS has been inadequate and increasingly stretched by the extension of the mission to include responsibility for humanitarian activities in Darfur. Currently four of UNMIS' eleven regional offices are located in Darfur, and the region absorbs the majority of humanitarian spending in Sudan.<sup>24</sup> In the shadow of Darfur, resource allocations within the UN in support of the CPA have been undermined.

In UNMIS, funding gaps have been reflected in various operations, including significant shortfalls of staff in some operations. In one sector visited, UNMIS regional managers reported staff complements were 30% or more below expected levels. At the same time, mission sources reported a comparatively high turnover / non-renewal of staff positions. These gaps have been exacerbated by an atypical profile of middle level staff, who tend to be younger and less experienced in UN missions than the norm.<sup>25</sup> Some suggested that

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<sup>24</sup> In 2007, Darfur alone is earmarked US\$652.8 million in humanitarian spending, about 52% of all humanitarian funding for Sudan. UN and Partners, *2007 Work Plan for Sudan* (2007).

<sup>25</sup> According to some UNMIS officials working at sector level, mission staff have been disproportionately recruited from the NGO sector, and there is an atypically low proportion of staff with previous UN peacekeeping experience. Comparatively low salaries

personnel shortages were indicative of wider resource shortfalls within UNMIS, particularly at local level, which together diminished the mission's capacity to respond effectively to both political and operational challenges on the ground.

UNAMID's establishment provides an important opportunity for renewed attention on the core priorities and funding needs of UNMIS. The UN's current country *Work Plan* recognises the pressing importance for the CPA of recovery and development funding in Southern Sudan and Southern Kordofan, and implies a shift of UNMIS funding and spending targets away from humanitarian activities outside of Darfur. The question remains, however, of whether recovery and development – and their critical peace-building impacts, especially for areas with high numbers of returnees – will be prioritised by donors ahead of the needs of humanitarian relief in Darfur and the rest of Sudan. Recent budget figures indicate that humanitarian funding, narrowly defined as life-saving interventions, continues to attract the bulk of funding disbursements.

##### **4.2 MDTF and CHF**

The pooled funding instruments for supporting humanitarian and development work in Sudan have proved problematic in practice. The two primary sources of pooled funding are the Multi-Donor Trust Funds (MDTF) and the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF), in addition to which there are a number of multilateral and bilateral funding channels. Both the MDTF and the CHF have posed challenges for humanitarian and development activities.

The MDTF mechanism, administered by the World Bank, emerged in the context of the CPA's Wealth Sharing Protocol, and was expected to serve as key channel of funding for capacity building and institutional strengthening in the early post-conflict recovery phase in Southern Sudan, Three Areas and the North. However processing and delivery of funding has been very slow, hampered by procedures, politics and capacity at both the Bank and at Government level.<sup>26</sup> Government contributions, which are

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and benefits are seen by some as a contributing factor in this regard.

<sup>26</sup> Donor funding for government institutional development enabling greater take-up of MDTF

matched by and mixed with donor inputs to the MDTF, have also been below expectations. The resulting slow pace of funding and operational support through the MDTF has led to complaints from some NGOs that donors have failed to apply sufficient pressure on the World Bank to redress this problem. In Southern Sudan, GoSS has voiced rising concern over the slow implementation of the MDTF and the negative implications of non-delivery of the “peace dividend” for political stability in the south, especially for the continuing returns programme. By April 2007 only 14% of total MDTF pledges for recovery and development in Southern Sudan had been implemented since 2005. GoSS frustration and suspicion around the slowness of MDTF disbursements remained an important point of friction, and along with continuing disputes around wealth sharing, helped prompt GoSS’ politically precarious temporary withdrawal from cooperation in the Government of National Unity in late 2007.<sup>27</sup>

The CHF was created in 2006 as a pooling mechanism for donor funds targeting humanitarian activities identified in the UN Work Plan. Here too there have been problems arising from the CHF’s administration, and the strategy for setting funding priorities via the Work Plan.<sup>28</sup> Some NGOs report that CHF funds, administered by the UN, have been difficult to access due to cumbersome and poorly managed procedures. Several NGOs see the UN Work Plan as highly problematic: its annual planning timeframe is unrealistically short and artificial; its substance is not based upon well-researched needs assessments; it fails to systematically incorporate the activities and strategies of significant humanitarian players outside the UNCT; and a clear basis for funding allocations is often difficult to grasp. There is

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funding has also been an issue, notably in Southern Sudan where some public institutions have been too weak or recently formed to be able to draw down funds.

<sup>27</sup> As of December 2007 the political tensions around GoSS’ suspension of participation appear to have settled, amid indications that resource flows from national earnings to GoSS had recently improved, and that processing of MDTF projects – if not project *delivery* – had also accelerated.

<sup>28</sup> For a useful evaluation of the first six months of the CHF, see Dirk Salomons, *Evaluation of the Common Funds in the Sudan: Component Report for the Study Monitoring and Evaluation of Common Funds for Humanitarian Action* (Center on International Cooperation, New York University, November 2006).

widespread complaint by NGOs that UN agencies have benefited disproportionately from the CHF, with the effect that many NGOs have been displaced as equal, integrated partners in CHF-funded humanitarian work. Some outside the UN see the CHF as a means by which UN agencies are able to cover their own costs while effectively engaging implementing agencies as contractors.<sup>29</sup> Several NGOs reported that they had requested donors to lobby UNMIS and specifically the RCO, to make the CHF’s disbursement criteria and mechanisms more transparent, accessible and predictable.

#### 4.3 Donor interventions

Donor interventions in support of the CPA have been increasingly undermined by the international focus on Darfur crisis, insufficient attention to the changing needs of funding in Southern Sudan and particularly the Transitional Areas, and inadequate insistence upon accessibility to funding provided through instruments like the MDTF and the CHF. More broadly, donor interventions have also been a factor in the emergence of a fragmented, strategically weak approach to solving the complexity of interlinked crises in Sudan. Few donors have taken a wholistic approach to funding humanitarian and development work in Sudan that recognises the different needs, priorities and phasing of different regions and interests covered by the CPA. Rather, targeted donor funding has sometimes created divisions and imbalances among humanitarian and development agencies and activities.

Some donors appear not to have taken full cognisance of the divisions within the UNCT, and have inadvertently contributed by their funding to the sharpening of differences and consolidation of imbalances among some agencies and structures, including the RCO and larger UN agency players. Some sources cite specific leading donors as being “obsessive” about the role of the RCO and its strategic importance as humanitarian coordinator, channelling substantial funding to the RCO while neglecting to consider the RCO’s weaknesses in leading the development of – and obtaining *active* UNCT support for – a unified country strategy.

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<sup>29</sup> However one recent report suggests that complaints over the allocation of CHF funds may have been ameliorated in 2007 by decentralisation of disbursement decision-making; see ODI, *The Long Road Home*, p.12.

The situation has been compounded on the terrain of NGOs by an important legacy of the North-South war: the mostly separate administration of humanitarian assistance to the South and Nuba Mountains from outside the country through Operation Lifeline Sudan and through other activities in SPLA controlled areas. This administrative division of donor funding is changing but gradually, and the existence of separately managed North and Southern Sudan programmes by several larger NGOs reflects a continuing fragmented approach by donors that fails to address the full scale of the related political, security and developmental factors that stand as challenges to the CPA, not least of which is Darfur.

Some NGOs, too, have not been in a position to undertake important and time-consuming steps of restructuring and merging divided country programmes into a coherent whole with unified overall strategies that allow for the considerable differences in context and need on the ground in different regions.

Overall, these kinds of strategic and administrative shortcomings undermine capacity to develop a broader, more substantial approach to dealing with both systemic risks and local challenges to the CPA.

#### **4.4 New opportunities**

The establishment of UNAMID, and the lessons learned from two years of funding humanitarian, recovery and development activities in support of the CPA, present new opportunities for strengthening peace-building in Sudan.

The transferral to UNAMID of funding for Darfur-related peacekeeping and peace-building should enable a process of clarification around the core funding requirements of UNMIS. This is especially the case given that the focal point of UNMIS work is moving, in many locations, beyond humanitarian efforts towards development activities. Within UNMIS, there is evidence that a more adaptive, responsive approach to allocating resources is in the process of being implemented at regional level in Southern Sudan and the Three Areas.

It seems clear that the UN, Government, donors and NGOs increasingly recognise the peace-building implications of recovery and

development work – particularly in areas heavily affected by large numbers of returns. Moreover, for UNMIS, the role of evidence-based needs assessments from ground-level agency operations is emerging as an indispensable component of planning and resource allocation. These are important lessons for both UNMIS and UNAMID, which need to be incorporated into future planning and funding processes.

The main multilateral funding mechanisms are under increasing pressure from Government, NGOs and donors to improve their performance. With the imminent transfer of the weighty Darfur humanitarian budget to separate funding mechanisms, there is room for fresh thinking about the focus and scope of CHF humanitarian funding under the CPA; the needs to be met by new recovery and development funding; and the means by which UNCT planning is done, funding criteria set and allocation decisions made.

With regard to the MDTF and the World Bank, recent experiences of administrative and procedural delays point to problem areas of programme design that may be considered in any parallel process of recovery and development funding associated with the new Darfur mission. There is a clear role for donors to play in insisting that blockages and obstacles that emerged with the CHF and MDTF be avoided at the outset in any new or revised schemes, through proper design and active consultation of key stakeholders.

The restructuring of aid targeting UNAMID and UNMIS provides a clear and important opportunity to reemphasize the need for a more holistic approach by donors to Sudan. The fragmentation of donor interventions, which has undermined the work of both UNMIS and broader efforts at peace-making in Sudan, now needs to be addressed in order to consolidate and strengthen the international community's commitment to peace-building inside and outside the CPA. This will require a clear strategy supporting the coordination of peace-building efforts across the different regions of conflict in Sudan.

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 UN administrative and operational structures
- 5.2 UN political leadership
- 5.3 Wholistic Strategy
- 5.4 Donors

### 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The peace process in Sudan is entering a new and complex phase which contains risks for the conflict in Darfur and the existing peace ushered in by the CPA. The securing of peace in *both* conflicts is critical for the stability of Sudan and the avoidance of further large-scale humanitarian disaster.

The likelihood of sustainable peace depends in part on the capacities of UNMIS and UNAMID to make meaningful peacekeeping interventions under difficult conditions. Lessons learned from the international community's engagement around the CPA will be critical for advancing the CPA process *and* mounting a strong new intervention through UNAMID.

Peacekeeping in the Darfur and North-South conflicts demands efficient, well-resourced interventions that have strong political backing from the international community, and are led in the field by officials who are able to marshal and coordinate the activities of diverse donors, agencies and interests. The peacekeeping mandates for UNMIS and UNAMID will need to be confidently, resolutely defended and implemented. These missions also require adequate contributions from donors, improved strategic coordination among the UN, donors and humanitarian agencies, and strengthened integration of NGOs within the UN's "integrated" country mission.

The reality of multiple overlapping conflicts also demands a more broad-based, wholistic approach to building peace in Sudan. While international attention has shifted to focus on the establishment of UNAMID, it is essential for the international community to remain vigilant about the numerous challenges that continue to confront the implementation of the CPA. The pressing objective of peacemaking in Darfur is insufficient in itself: there can be no lasting peace in Darfur or East Sudan if the CPA breaks down. Strategic planning for the new UN mission and for the restructuring of the existing one must take into account the wider parameters of Sudan's national

conflict, because in practice these stand as key orienting elements for all combatant parties – not least of which, the GoS in Khartoum.

The current situation of change – in the structure of the UN's peacekeeping mission and its senior leadership, in the diplomatic corps in Khartoum and in parallel Sudanese peace processes which are advancing at varying pace – raises new opportunities for peacemaking as well as cause for caution. The formation of UNAMID and the transfer from UNMIS of peacekeeping and humanitarian responsibilities for Darfur presents opportunities for rethinking the operational, administrative and strategic political priorities of UNMIS, at a time when new leadership of UNMIS and UNAMID are being put in place in the field, and leadership positions among key donors and NGOs in Sudan are changing. New operational-level forms of coordination and planning emerging in some UNMIS sectors provide signals about new ways to manage and set targets for peacekeeping support for both UNMIS and UNAMID.

At the same time, the performance of the UN and donors in raising and allocating resources is coming under pressure for improvement from Government, NGOs and some donors. With the likelihood of more clearly segmented humanitarian and development funding between the two missions, there are new opportunities for the assessment of funding needs and priorities, particularly under UNMIS operations, which may contribute to more targeted, responsive and effective peace building interventions at local level – notably with regard to recovery and development spending in areas of high returns. The reality of UNAMID and UNMIS establishes an important point of departure for refocusing on the need for a more wholistic strategic approach to funding by donors. The fragmentation of donor interventions, which has undermined the work of both UNMIS and broader efforts at peace-making in Sudan, now stands as a critical problem in need of redress.

To support and the strengthen the opportunities for improved international interventions that are emerging, and to diminish risks arising, the report makes the following recommendations based upon the fieldwork findings:

### **5.1 UN administrative and operational structures**

There is need for clearer and more effective decision-making and implementation at the UN country mission level, particularly with the establishment of UNAMID. This suggests measures are needed that will help to strengthen the existing UNMIS and UN Country Team, and establish clear lines of political and administrative authority within and between UNMIS and UNAMID. Such measures include:

- reforming, centralising and consolidating management and leadership in the existing UN integrated mission and Country Team, particularly with regard to the SRSG's central role in managing the country mission;
- improving horizontal and vertical communication and management within and among the UN agencies, to avoid problems associated with 'stovepipe reporting', to take advantage of complementarities and synergies, and to benefit more effectively from diverse inputs from field-level operations;
- strengthening advocacy by the UN in support of humanitarian access in all conflict areas, not solely Darfur;
- improving systematic coordination and cooperation with non-UN agencies and NGOs, particularly at non-operational national level on issues of strategic planning and resource allocation targeting; and
- clarifying the specific mandates and roles of UNMIS and its leadership structures, UNAMID, and other UN and multilateral agencies in support of the CPA and the Darfur peace processes.

### **5.2 UN political leadership**

There is a widespread feeling among the UN, donor and NGO community in Sudan that uncertain and halting political leadership in the UN country mission in Sudan partly explains the current cycle of problems encountered from the Government of Sudan and other parties to conflict in Southern Sudan, the Three Areas, Khartoum and Darfur. There is also sentiment that this problem has emerged not only due to the difficult conjunctures faced by the country mission since 2005 – including the perceived need by some in the UN country mission to make “trade-offs”

made around the CPA in order to leverage UN access to Darfur – but also because of inadequate support from the UN Secretariat and international diplomacy efforts.

These assessments imply several corrective actions, including:

- (i) stronger and unequivocal support by the UN Secretariat and its component agencies (including for example, OCHA) of the UN country presence in Sudan represented by UNMIS and UNAMID, including a greater demonstrated willingness by the Secretariat to pursue and defend the mandated role of both missions, their structures and leadership, and to hold all combatant parties accountable to agreements reached and approved by the UN and international community;
- (ii) clear, consistent and transparent political leadership by the political head of the UN mission in Sudan in engagements with Government, combatant and other armed groups, UN agencies and the UN Country Team, donors, international NGOs, local NGOs and other stakeholders in the Sudanese peace process;
- (iii) strong, clear and consistent leadership by UN agencies mandated to deal with humanitarian, recovery and development activities within the context of the UN's integrated mission in Sudan, including for example OCHA and the UNDP;
- (iv) improved lobbying and advocacy by donors, in Sudan and internationally, in support of the UN's mandated peacekeeping presence in Sudan; and
- (v) strengthened donor cooperation with, and advocacy on behalf of, humanitarian and development NGOs in Sudan, following recent progress made on the issue of 'humanitarian space' by means of regular structured interactions between donors and international NGOs.

### **5.3 Wholistic Strategy**

There is wide agreement among peacekeeping practitioners, humanitarian actors, observers and researchers that the interlaced complexity of the Sudanese conflict and the strategic guile of the Khartoum Government urgently require the development of a wholistic strategic approach to

peacekeeping by UNMIS and UNAMID. If such an approach has existed within UNMIS and the UN country mission to Sudan, it has been in little evidence up until now, and it certainly has not been a significant motivating factor in the development of operational policies and practices. Many donors, too, have failed to envisage and elaborate a comprehensive, unified approach to dealing with Government and supporting different mandated peace initiatives.

In this context, actions required include:

- (i) development and communication of a unified strategic country approach to peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, and recovery and development efforts, led by the UN country team and including inputs from the array of peace-supporting stakeholders including UNMIS, UNAMID, UN agencies, donors, and NGOs;
- (ii) strengthening of systems for integrating needs assessment and responses from field and sector regional level at national decision-making level, including for example inputs from UNMIS, UNAMID, and other UN agencies, multilateral agencies, Government, local stakeholder parties and interests, donors, NGOs, and community, research and other bodies active on the ground; and
- (iii) revision of the wholistic country strategy according to evidence obtained through (ii) above, and systems for the concordant revision of strategies, resource allocations, etc. at sector regional and local operational level.

#### **5.4 Donors**

Donors have been important, albeit inconsistently, in consolidating support for the UN mission in Sudan, unblocking political and funding obstacles, working towards and sometimes securing improved humanitarian access for NGOs and the UN when they have been interfered with, and as conduits for political mediation and peace-making. In the current context of change the role of donors in advancing the UN country mission will be critical. In addition to donor roles specified above, important supportive actions from donors in the coming period include:

- (i) the development and collective elaboration of wholistic strategic

approaches to donor funding, particularly with regard to support for the CPA, where needs and critical points for donor intervention are changing, particularly in areas of high returns such as Southern Kordofan;

- (ii) improved donor lobbying and active supervision of funding mechanisms such as the CHF and MDTF, leading to strengthened targeting and implementation of humanitarian, recovery and development activities that are responsive to changing needs on the ground, transparent and equitably inclusive of UN and non-UN agencies in the allocation of funds;
- (iii) strengthened funding for the UN in Sudan, particularly given the diverse needs associated with peacekeeping in the CPA (including increasing activities for recovery and development) and humanitarian assistance in Darfur, and recognising the critical importance of both peacekeeping missions for each other and for the overall peace and stability of Sudan; and
- (iv) insistence on, and protection by donors through all diplomatic and political means possible, of the mandate and associated rights and privileges of the UN country mission in Sudan; and of international humanitarian actors operating under international humanitarian law.

*J.*