

South Sudan from a Regional View: Local Stakeholders and Shared Issues

Defined by Thyne Neighbor

Giuseppe Provenzano

www.giuseppeprovenzano.com

Foreword

The split and partition of the southern third of Sudan from its former mainland was viewed by many as a unique and great chance for a lasting peace in the country that would lock in broader stability in the whole region of East Africa. Many others feared that an economically weak and separated South Sudan would soon become a possible failed state, easy prey of a North still owner of the only assets that would grant vital access to the sea to South resources, a geo-economic strategy long sought and willingly followed by the Khartoum regime. After a year of independence, ever-lasting struggles and conducts of concern from both sides, it is difficult to recognize one of these predictions as true. Especially under the point of view of the ailing security and a growing humanitarian concern, it can be said that the diplomatic and economic war has just stopped short of becoming a full scale one. The closing of oil extractions, the bombing of the South regions nearby the border with the North, the occupation of Heglig, the unfinished business of Abyei and the revival of full violence in the Blue Nile State showed that the issues unsettled by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement were just the harbingers of the present disputes and diplomatic deadlock. As summed up by the Special US Envoy Princeton Lyman "Each side thinks the other is more vulnerable. But it is a very dangerous attitude. It is kind of a mutual economic suicide approach."¹

Whereas much of the blame for former Sudan's issues can be placed inside Sudan itself, the CPA agreement and its implementation has showed how much of the hopes for a lasting peace between Sudan and South Sudan should be put in the neighbouring countries. Refusal to include them, or avoidance by them to be included, in any new brokered agreement would be ignoring a vital pool of shared history, entanglements, issues and economic and geo-strategic interests. A luxury that no-one could truly afford.

¹ *One year on, US sees Sudans in 'mutual suicide' struggle*, Egypt Independent, 10/07/2012 available at <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/one-year-us-sees-sudans-mutual-suicide-struggle>

The aim of this paper is to briefly analyze the relationship of South Sudan with the main regional actors and issues that are countries, international organizations, life-changing infrastructure developments and a shifting power balance.

State Actors

Uganda

During the years of the lengthy civil wars inside the now two Sudans, Uganda has proved to be one of the most reliable active supporter of the Southern forces of the SPLM/A².

The past policy of keeping an open border during the fighting between SPLA and the Sudanese Army proved to be vital both for the insurgents, who could easily retreat during harsher times, and for the population fleeing from insecure land. The eagerness to support the SPLA showed by Uganda has been counterbalanced by Sudan allegedly financing the Lord's Resistance Army in the past and, by some accounts, still today.³ Signs of the closeness between the SPLM/A and the Ugandan Army can be found in the common struggle today endured by both in fighting the LRA. The SPLA maintains dedicated combat-ready units both in the CAR and near its southern border⁴ and its active support is seen as vital in helping defeating the much causing havoc LRA⁵, also the risks following an increasing insecure northern border are not lost on the Uganda's ruling elite.

President Museveni is known for personally following and handling the South Sudan's file and for always being very vociferous to the South's cause. He was a personal close friend with John Garang since University and his death on the Ugandan presidential helicopter was much mourned through the country and a source of embarrassment to the government. Ugandan support goes however much beyond Museveni's personal engagement, the vision of Uganda's ruling class and the perceived links of common heritage between the peoples divided by a border cut arbitrarily by foreign powers. Despite lacking the warmth of strong personal ties like with Garang, President Museveni is in touch with President Kiir about most core issues and the senior officials of both governments regularly meet for discussing shared areas of interest.

² Sudan's People Liberation Movement / Army

³ Sudan accused of using Kony's army, The Independent, 1 May 2012 available at <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/sudan-accused-of-using-konys-army-7697720.html>

⁴ Apart from elements from its divisions, the SPLA has also armed local defence units ("arrow-boys") to assist in repelling the LRA in Western Equatoria. Its engagement is largely oriented toward the civilian protection, not pursuit. See Crisis Group Africa Report N°157, *LRA: A Regional Strategy beyond Killing Kony*, 28 April 2010

⁵ Crisis Group Africa Report N°182, *The Lord's Resistance Army: End Game?*, 17 Nov 2011

Years of civil wars in the South made many senior SPLA's officers settle their families down and own property in Kampala, further strengthening ties. More than 12,000 South Sudanese are registered in Kampala and it is not uncommon to find many senior officials in the Ugandan Army or Government being South Sudanese born.⁶ Furthermore a chronic shortage of skilled manpower in Africa's youngest nation has caused many Ugandan workers to move in Juba and regional capitals, even for low-profile sectors like Boda Bodas (motorcycle taxis), raising some concerns among the local population⁷ and sometimes provoking violent reactions. However in this regard, the official position of Uganda has been they were just few limited incidents, caused mostly by criminal activities conducted by few of their nationals in South Sudan, and vowed to work with the local government in order to eradicate them.⁸

South Sudan is the world major importer of Ugandan goods⁹ and both countries see this liaison as an essential asset and the sky as the limit. This perspective is reflected by the recent agreements between the two governments for strengthening border security¹⁰ and ensuring a more effective rule of law and easier trade exchanges at the border.¹¹

Uganda still remains the closest ally in the region for South Sudan and closely watches the development of its controversial conflicting issues with Sudan, knowing to be itself a major stakeholder profiting from a lasting peace between the Sudans (especially regarding the LRA issue)¹² and from the possible implications in the broader region of East Africa. Taking its roots of engagement with South Sudan and its future perspective of economic and security development into account, it can be understood why Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) recently declared that they would not hold back fire if SAF attacked South Sudan.¹³

6 Crisis Group Africa Report N°159, *Sudan: Regional Perspectives on the Prospect of Southern Independence*, 6 May 2010

7 Manyang Deng, *Is South Sudan Economic Independent At Risk?*, Gurtong.net, 4 February 2012 available at <http://www.gurtong.net/ECM/Editorial/tabid/124/ctl/ArticleView/mid/519/articleId/6428/Is-South-Sudan-Economic-Independent-At-Risk.aspx>

8 Andrew Jeff Lule & Anne Mugisa, *Uganda: Kayihura Warns Public On Uganda-South Sudan Ties*, The New Vision, 25 June 2012 <http://allafrica.com/stories/201206250909.html>

9 Crisis Group Africa Report N°159, *Sudan: Regional Perspectives on the Prospect of Southern Independence*, 6 May 2010

10 *South Sudan Strengthens Security Cooperation With Uganda to Combat Border Crime*, Sudan Tribune, 24 June 2012 available at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201206250214.html>

11 *Uganda, South Sudan to Meet Over Trade Barriers*, The New Vision, 1 July 2012 available at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201207021200.html>

12 Jackee Batanda, *Uganda feels the heat from South Sudan*, Foreign Policy, 8 May 2012 available at http://transitions.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/05/08/uganda_feels_the_heat_from_south_sudan

Kenya

Among the regional actors, Kenya is the one that most invested its diplomatic and political capital in chairing the talks leading to the CPA, also by consciously using their turn at the IGAD presidency for giving them a stronger and more coordinated backing. The growing ownership of the peace process didn't go unnoticed in the Sudans and whereas at the end many in Khartoum felt Kenya as southern leaning, Nairobi managed to not put too much strain to the relationship between the two countries. Being pro-South without being anti-North can be seen as a major accomplishment of the Kenyan diplomacy and this behavior is starting to bear fruit.

South Sudan is a net importer from Uganda and Kenya, but whereas Uganda is providing much of the low-earning goods and unskilled manpower, Kenya can act on a higher level thanks to its position as the economic giant of the region. Decades of stability have paid in a stronger industrial sector, high availability of skilled labour and a bigger banking sector relatively to its neighbors.

While many Ugandan nationals are successfully taking part, and partially controlling, e.g. the Boda Boda network or the prostitution business in Juba¹⁴, Kenyan-owned Equity Bank branches have boomed in the whole South Sudan since the CPA agreements in 2005, starting to fund vital infrastructure development plans, an industrial sector still in its infancy (and open to be exploited by the first comers) and successfully competing with international giants like Barclays.¹⁵

Despite there have been some outcries of inequality of mortgage coverage between Southerners and their own nationals, Kenyan banks are securing their share of exploiting on the new booming market of the untapped resources existing in South Sudan. Kenya understands that being the economic hegemon of the area, it would greatly profit from a broader free trade area, and struggles to expand its capability as East African Hub in order to fully serve and further attract the commercial flow of landlocked countries suffering from unstable or hostile coastal neighbors. From this point of view, it's easier to understand the great affinity that Kenya has with Ethiopia, Uganda and recently South Sudan.

When in the first half of 90's the SPLA was forced out of Ethiopia, Kenya gladly offered political and physical space for them to set up their new headquarter, causing many SPLA officers to take roots in and make links with Kenya. This situation has proved to be extremely helpful in establishing formal (and informal) relations with

¹³ *South Sudan leaders 'run to Uganda for help'*, The Citizen, 5 May 2012 available at <http://thecitizen.co.tz/news/2-international-news/22049-south-sudan-leaders-run-to-uganda-for-help.html>

¹⁴ Manyang Deng, *Is South Sudan Economic Independent At Risk?*, Gurtong.net, 4 February 2012

¹⁵ Luke M. Obala, *South Sudan and Kenya: The Relationships*, Al Jazeera Center for Studies, 29 March 2012

GoSS first, and with the independent South Sudan after. Many civil servants from both sides state that these relations are just a formalization of already existing links between the two countries and ruling elites¹⁶.

Security concerns about South Sudan can be primarily seen as worries of a full escalation of the hostilities between the two Sudans, leading, as already it is happening, to a new humanitarian crisis putting strain again to the Refugee Camps operated in Kenya¹⁷ and to broader instability in the region hampering Kenya's reinforced economic ambitions.

Besides being mainly a political support, in the past Kenya has been found to ease military supplying for South Sudan (Kenyan officials privately argued that it had a right to defend itself while the North was being lavishly armed by Iranian, Russian and Chinese suppliers¹⁸) and, despite having a fairly conservative army apparatus, it could become a key military ally for Southerners if forced to a possible defensive war against Khartoum.

Ethiopia

If Uganda can be seen as the nation keenest in showing itself as a first-line partisan to South Sudan, Ethiopia can be described as a background seater, aware of its fragile position between a South Sudan with cultural ties with its own population and the threat of huge instability posed by a newly hostile Sudan. Given its current in-between condition, Ethiopia has tried in the recent past to look as neutral as possible, but its southern leaning sympathies are undeniable.

Historically, the Mengistu's regime was one of the earliest most solid supporters of the SPLA, giving it permission to establish its first headquarters in the country. After being ousted by the Tigrayan Peoples' Liberation Front, the relations between Ethiopia and the SPLA were severed, as homage to the support given to the TPLF during its fight for Addis Ababa by the Sudanese Government. However despite the regime change, the support began anew in a more discreet fashion, at a pace that dismayed Khartoum. The two countries were nevertheless conscious of the importance of not shifting too far away from each others, especially because of the comparable regional influence, the strategically importance of the location of the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa and the ability to enable and enhance the fighting capability of other's rebel movements.¹⁹

16 *ibidem*

17 Fredrick Nzili, *South Sudan refugee influx strains Kenyan camps*, The Christian Science Monitor, 16 May 2012 available at <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2012/0516/South-Sudan-refugee-influx-strains-Kenyan-camps>

18 Crisis Group Africa Report N°159, *Sudan: Regional Perspectives on the Prospect of Southern Independence*, 6 May 2010

19 *ibidem*

Given this matter-of-factly approach of both nations, it's easy to understand the rationale between the economic engagement deals signed, such as a granted access price lower than market standard for Sudanese oil to Ethiopia and recent deals and structures for selling hydroelectric power to Sudan.²⁰ However, despite the recent boost in diplomatic relations, both countries know at the end of the day where the other stands on South Sudan.

Despite trying to avoid alienating Sudan, aware of the risk coming from a renewed Asmara-Khartoum axis and a reinforced support to Islamist fighting elements in its mainland, Ethiopia has been found to at least facilitate Juba to acquire new arms and refurbish its arsenals.²¹

Ties between South Sudan and Ethiopia are strengthened by monthly meetings held at senior level over cooperation and SPLA training, and they go as far that has been formed a joint quarterly forum in which governors from the bordering territories meet and discuss common issues.

State-owned Commercial Bank of Ethiopia has begun business in South Sudan and vast array of common development infrastructure projects are being built, linking peripheral regions of the two nations and starting local growth.

Despite having been often called to a greater involvement in the peace talks between the Sudans, Ethiopian ruling elite is still feeling that such a move would endanger their frail situation, resulting in a more awkward position. Their usual advice has been to involve greater international organizations, be the Kenyan-led IGAD for the CPA or the AU envoy Thabo Mbeki in the recent agreement on the oil fees.²²

However willfully not on the frontline, the Ethiopian diplomacy has proved to be a force actively working for a lasting peace in the former Sudan, and it was especially one of the priorities of President Zenawi. Now that this historical leader passed away, there could be change in the Ethiopian establishment, but there will be probably little room for changing focus on the matter, being the costs and the risks of a new full-blown war between the Sudans to Addis Ababa of such a scale that would bear a dramatic impact on the livelihood of all its inhabitants.²³

20 Chatham House, Black Gold for Blue Gold? Sudan's Oil, Ethiopia's Water and Regional Integration, Harry Verhoeven, June 2011

21 Crisis Group Africa Report N°159, *Sudan: Regional Perspectives on the Prospect of Southern Independence*, 6 May 2010

22 Inside Story, *Sudan and South Sudan: Good Neighbours?*, Al Jazeera 6 August 2012 available at <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/insidestory/2012/08/20128653715388516.html>

23 Steve Paterno, *Sudan: What Is Next for Sudan and South Sudan After Meles Zenawi*, Sudan Tribune 26 August 2012 available at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201208270385.html>

Egypt

Before the referendum, Egypt has been the staunchest opponent of the Separation, having been seen by many observers as the actor trying the most to make Unity appealing to the South, with a struggle superior to the one of Khartoum itself. However it didn't want to find itself on the wrong side of history, and at the end submitted itself to the will of the South Sudanese people recognizing the new State. On their part, the SPLM understands the importance of engaging Egypt and has tried to assure Cairo of its goodwill in not damaging its interests.²⁴

The main source of concern on the new shifting power balance in Sudan for Egypt is the Nile. Khartoum has always backed Cairo's claims for maintaining the current status quo, which grants the overwhelming majority of the Nile water to Egypt and Sudan. South Sudan has declared to Egypt that it would carve its own quota from the Sudanese one, in order to relieve Cairo's fears of finding a new challenger to the established water-sharing order.

Even if it has been seen as the biggest regional ally of the Khartoum's regime, Egypt, especially after the fall of Mubarak, is struggling not to appear anti-South and gain political leverage on both Sudans by financing development and economic projects²⁵ on their territories.

Whatever route will choose the new administration in Cairo, its recent struggles to mediate the standing issues between Khartoum and Juba, like in the recent Heglig dispute²⁶, can only be welcomed, especially given its connections with the ruling elites of the NCP.²⁷

International Organizations and Issues

The Nile Basin Initiative and the Nile Dispute

One of the most central issues for the Ethiopian foreign policy is also the Nile, and its quotas. Ethiopia has been the leader of the riparian upstream countries currently trying to bargain a new grand agreement, possibly with a smaller Egyptian quota through an international body called the Nile Basin Initiative. Ethiopia claims that an

²⁴ Crisis Group Africa Report N°159, *Sudan: Regional Perspectives on the Prospect of Southern Independence*, 6 May 2010

²⁵ E.g. see *Sudan: Kirti Reviews With His Egyptian Counterpart Progress of Bilateral Relations and Reactivation of Golden Triangle*, Sudan News Agency, 26 August 2012 available at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201208270018.html>

²⁶ Alex Thurston, *Egypt Enters Sudan-South Sudan Conflict*, Sahel Blog, 16 April 2012 available at <http://sahelblog.wordpress.com/2012/04/16/egypt-enters-sudan-south-sudan-conflict/>

²⁷ National Congress Party: the Islamist ruling party in Sudan.

allotted share of 5% is what is keeping its agriculture “artificially low”²⁸, on the other side the *hawkish* Nile policy of the Mubarak’s government prevented any real agreement on the subject. Given the uncertain status of the Egyptian politics, it’s difficult to forecast what will be Morsi’s Nile policy; however Cairo has now shown signs of wanting to solve this long-standing dispute with Ethiopia peacefully once and for all²⁹ and the following months will be crucial for understanding if serious efforts will be put in it.³⁰

The Ethiopian Dam Program could free the country’s huge energetic potential, feeding a growing power-hungry Horn of Africa with cheap and environmental-friendly energy. This is however seen by Egypt as building a dangerous water stream control system on the river universally recognized as essential for Egypt’s survival, and by Khartoum as establishing an exchange grid in which the upper hand would be the Ethiopian, posing a security threat best summed up by a Sudanese Senior Intelligence Official as follows:

“It is one thing for Ethiopia to import all this fuel from Sudan, it’s another thing for us to import all that power from across the border [...] They can easily diversify out of our fuel if they needed to; it will cost them lots of money, but they can do it in a crisis. We would be on our knees: they could switch off the lights and there is nothing we could do about it.”³¹

With this African Great Game in mind, it can be read part of the interest of Ethiopia in the relations with South Sudan. As a matter of fact, the South hosts a great share of the White Nile, and it’s not to be forgotten the unresolved dispute between the SPLA-North and Sudan’s Defense Forces over control of the Blue Nile State, the region from which the Ethiopian share of the Nile enters Sudan and where the fighting is still raging.³²

Trying to counterbalance Ethiopian influence on the region, Egypt has shown to be accommodating and even if it was eventually left out the decisional process that led to the signing of the CPA, it showed respect for the decision results and promptly recognized the new nation. Juba in turn showed a balanced position between the two countries. It is not to be forgotten the unfinished plan of the Jongley Canal, a project for piping and

28 Steve Paterno, *Sudan: What Is Next for Sudan and South Sudan After Meles Zenawi*, Sudan Tribune 26 August 2012

29 *Egypt and Ethiopia to review Nile river dam*, Al Jazeera, 17 Sep 2011 available at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/09/2011917132445980153.html>

30 Al-Masry Al-Youm, *Morsy to visit Addis Ababa to discuss Nile water agreements*, 8 July 2012 available at <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/morsy-visit-addis-ababa-discuss-nile-water-agreements>

31 Cited in Chatham House, *Black Gold for Blue Gold? Sudan’s Oil, Ethiopia’s Water and Regional Integration*, Harry Verhoeven, June 2011

32 *Fresh fighting in Sudan’s Blue Nile*, AFP, 3 July 2012 available at http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gSAaJoS2IHK8so5OGk8rFPzzy8_w?docId=CNG.684b4d7aacd3a292e3358aae5a0327af.761

diverting much of the waters of the Nile away from the Sudd swamps in South Sudan, which would result in an increased flow downstream and in the possible endangerment of a fragile ecosystem.³³

The recent request by South Sudan to enter the Nile Basin Initiative³⁴ is a reminder to both Egypt and Ethiopia that although South Sudan has been caught by more urgent issues, it is going to develop a Nile and dam policy on its own and there will be a growing need to take it into account whether the aim will be to hold it as it is or to shake up the present Nile river status quo.³⁵

Another way to look at the standing issues, instead of being often analysed as a dangerous path to conflict, it's the possibility of them being used as ways to lock in greater regional economic integration leading to enduring stability. Being the Nile Basin an asset too important putting at stake the well-being and the survival of many countries, those nations could be tilted in the direction of new agreements in order to engage each other in a long standing peace. Choosing regional logics over national security paranoia is a long journey ahead, especially in a region historically characterized by being war-torn, but it's its best chance for finally setting aside not every but many of its interlocking conflicts. The case for "regional logics" is best summed up by a key adviser to Meles Zenawi when asked about what would mean a "grand bargain" in the area:

"Ethiopia provides the power, Sudan grows food and Egypt brings the cash".

One might add "South Sudan provides the oil".³⁶

IGAD and African Union

The regional organization IGAD was of the utmost importance during the years before separation. Under its Kenyan presidency, the CPA was signed and South Sudan strategically succeeded in playing the presence of supporting actors inside this organization against the member Sudan. Many observers believe fundamental its close watch during the referendum, beside many other "external eyes", in preventing many nasty different

33 Koank Tut Jing, *Jonglei Canal Project is a Looming Catastrophe*, 8 September 2006 available at <http://www.gurtong.net/ECM/Editorial/tabid/124/ctl/ArticleView/mid/519/articleId/2718/Jonglei-Canal-Project-is-a-Looming-Catastrophe.aspx>

34 *South Sudan seeks membership of the Nile Basin Initiative*, Sudan Tribune, 25 September 2011 available at <http://www.sudantribune.com/South-Sudan-seeks-membership-of,40240>

35 Alex Thurston, *South Sudan could shake up Nile River status quo*, The Christian Science Monitor, 27 September 2011 available at <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/Africa-Monitor/2011/0927/South-Sudan-could-shake-up-Nile-River-status-quo>

36 Cited in Chatham House, *Black Gold for Blue Gold? Sudan's Oil, Ethiopia's Water and Regional Integration*, Harry Verhoeven, June 2011

possible outcomes.³⁷ Now their active engagement on the Sudan file appear to be weaker, however they're still helping (as they are as single states) South Sudan in building statehood capability, and Juba is recently trying to make them focus on the ongoing negotiations with Sudan that are managed by former South African president Thabo Mbeki.³⁸

On the opposite, the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel on Sudan (AUHIP) had a more limited diplomatic impact on the Sudans before Separation. That was due partly to Juba reticence to engage in talks with an Organization that has made of the respect of Independence Borders one of its main aims, however other IGAD countries convinced the SPLM of the importance of obtaining the AU support, in order not to have two conflicting international organizations on the matter, which would have lead easily to blunted efforts to peace. After independence the mediation of the Panel has been and still is crucial in the attempt of making the two countries agree on the matters left out by the CPA, namely border demarcation, Abiey ownership, South Kordofan and Blue Nile State statuses and oil fees. The effort recently bore fruit in the agreement between Juba and Khartoum for the transit fees of South Sudanese oil.³⁹ Also the recent announcement of talks to be held between the SPLM-North⁴⁰ is to be seen as a diplomatic victory for the AU Commission.⁴¹

37 Crisis Group Africa Report N°159, *Sudan: Regional Perspectives on the Prospect of Southern Independence*, 6 May 2010

38 South Sudan Welcomes IGAD Capacity Building Initiative, Oye! Times, 14 August 2012 available at <http://www.oyetimes.com/news/africa/27738-south-sudan-welcomes-igad-capacity-building-initiative>

39 *Sudan, South Sudan reach deal over oil transportation fees*, Sudan Tribune, 4 August 2012 available at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Sudan-South-Sudan-reach-deal-over,43453>

40 The Former SPLM/A divisions left in Sudan by the CPA, still actively fighting especially in Blue Nile State.

41 *Sudan to hold direct political talks with SPLM-N rebels, says spokesperson*, Sudan Tribune, 26 July 2012 available at <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article43364>

Lamu-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport Corridor



The LAPSSET has been called “the biggest African project ever”.⁴² It’s an ambitious development plan made by Kenya that is currently trying to take advantage of its relative stability and stronger economy in order to engage the neighbouring countries by becoming physically their hub to the external world. Many of the problems faced by landlocked Ethiopia (after the loss of Eritrea) and South Sudan (after Independence) reside in their structural inability to access to the sea in an environment of unfriendly coastal neighbours: Sudan, largely hostile to the South, Eritrea, separated after a long and bloody struggle from Ethiopia and Somalia, in a perpetual war with itself. Nearly all of the sea exchanges of Ethiopia pass through small Djibouti, and after the recent shutdown of the South Sudan oil wells in protest for the retaliatory seizing of oil made by Sudan over unreasonable requested transit fees, the need for a reliable hub in a stable country was felt more than ever in the whole region.

⁴² *Lamu port project launched for South Sudan and Ethiopia*, BBC, 2 March 2012 available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17231889>

The grandiose project for a multibillion port in Lamu, Kenya⁴³ is purposed to address these issues linking Kenya both to South Sudan and Ethiopia and should feature an international port, a highway, a railway, a pipeline and an oil refinery. Should the new oil findings in Uganda be confirmed, it would probably be extended there.

Despite the difficulties in financing such a massive work, the positive outcome would be most beneficial to South Sudan, resolving definitely in its favor its issues in accessing to the sea through Sudan and Port Sudan. Knowing the strategic importance of true independence to Juba, it's easy to understand the eagerness with which President Salva Kiir urged donors to participate and underlined the speed with which the planning was progressing, especially after the shutdown of the oil wells.⁴⁴

The project, combined with possible Chinese pressures on Khartoum, is thought to have driven Sudan to haggle down with Juba for the transit fees for Port Sudan, probably as a show of goodwill on their side.

Conclusion

Even if the help given by some countries during the fight for the South has been huge, it is time for South Sudan and the SPLM to change focus and perspective from a belligerent one to a developmental one. Given that Security plays still a huge role for South Sudan, only by shifting priorities towards developing the country, and by being emulated in such a way by Khartoum, a broader peace in the region could be assured (aside from extreme scenarios like the Somali one). The Relations between South Sudan and the world around it will revolve less around ethnic links and military allegiances and more on infrastructures, markets and manufacturing. If Juba will succeed in creating wealth and spreading it among its impoverished population will depend on a great deal on the goodwill of its neighbors and their ability to help the government of Juba to open its lands to foreign markets and internal development. The LAPSET Corridor could be a great chance of change and integration for South Sudan and its possible impact should not be underestimated, not only for the pipeline, but also for the benefits that a modern linkage infrastructure would bear. Many of the standing issues with Sudan could be resolved by the help of the African Union, but in order to achieve this it's essential a continuous pressure on both Sudans by the neighbouring countries, especially Kenya, Egypt and Ethiopia. The economic gains resulting from peace should then be a cause for self-reciprocating peace and that could help

43 The whole corridor is prospected to cost around 24 bn usd.

African Development Bank finances Lamu road corridor project, Sudan Tribune 8 May 2012, available at <http://www.sudantribune.com/African-Development-Bank-finances,42520>

44 South Sudan says new oil pipeline on final planning stage, Afriquejet, 2 March 2012 available at <http://www.afriquejet.com/south-sudan-says-new-oil-pipeline-on-final-planning-stage-2012030234474.html>

heal the wounds left by a never-ending conflict in a land that since independence has known more years of being at war than at peace with itself.

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