

A Benchmarks Report Card for Sudan

April 2010

In its initial Sudan policy review, the Obama administration pledged that it would regularly evaluate the progress of peace in Sudan—or lack thereof. The administration’s approach was clear:

“Assessment of progress and decisions regarding incentives and disincentives will be based on verifiable changes in conditions on the ground. Backsliding by any party will be met with credible pressure in the form of disincentives leveraged by our government and our international partners.”

– Secretary of State Clinton, October 19, 2009¹

“There will be no rewards for the status quo, no incentives without concrete and tangible progress. There will be significant consequences for parties that backslide or simply stand still. All parties will be held to account.”

– Ambassador Susan E. Rice, October 19, 2009²

Because the administration had not publicly disclosed the precise benchmarks it is applying to assess developments, nine leading Sudan advocacy organizations co-authored the report “[Clear Benchmarks for Sudan](#)” in January 2010.

Based upon the rigorous analysis of leading indicators across nine overarching categories of benchmarks, the Enough Project, the Save Darfur Coalition, and partners developed the following assessment of the **amount of change or improvement** that has been observed in key areas over the last six months. A more detailed examination of the factors driving each of these criteria is spelled out on the following page.

The absence of improvement during the past six months is a significant cause for concern. All parties, including the National Congress Party, the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement, rebel groups, and others, should be held accountable. As President Obama stated, “If the Government of Sudan acts to improve the situation on the ground and to advance peace, there will be incentives; if it does not, then there will be increased pressure imposed by the United States and the international community.”³

President Obama and Secretary Clinton must own Sudan policy far more directly, and actually implement pressures and incentives where appropriate or face growing risk that violence in Sudan will spiral out of control.

Progress report on Sudan benchmarks, April 2010

- ↑ Indicates that the situation has improved
- ↔ Indicates that there has been no change in the past six months
- ↓ Indicates that the situation has worsened

Issue	Progress
1. National reforms	↓
2. Security	↓
3. Humanitarian access	↓
4. Darfur peace process	↔
5. Elections	↓
6. Abyei	↔
7. Popular consultations	↔
8. Southern referendum	↔
9. Accountability	↓

Endnotes

¹ State Department, Remarks on the Sudan Strategy, October 19, 2009.

² Ibid.

³ The White House, Statement of President Barack Obama on Sudan Strategy, October 19, 2009.

Benchmarks



Indicates that the situation has improved



Indicates that there has been no change in recent months



Indicates that the situation has worsened

ISSUE AND PROGRESS

EXPLANATION

1. National Reforms

Respect freedoms of assembly and association	↓	No progress has been made on substantive national reforms critical to addressing some of the root causes of conflict in Sudan. The leadership of the National Congress Party, or NCP, in the Presidency and the National Assembly has allowed it to stymie the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, or SPLM, and northern opposition efforts to press for these reforms. Acts of arbitrary arrests, detention, and violence, as well as violations of freedoms of assembly, association, and press are being committed by both ruling parties to curb political opposition and dissent.
Respect freedoms of press and expression	↓	
Reform national security law	↓	

2. Security

Respect Darfur arms embargo and ceasefires	↓	Although significant progress has been made in deescalating Sudan-Chad tensions, the Sudanese government has exacerbated the security situation in Darfur through renewed military offensive against rebels affecting civilians. Aerial bombardments, support to militant groups (including some nomadic tribes), violations of the U.N. arms embargo, and obstruction of peacekeepers' movement continue to happen at the hands of Khartoum. Darfuri rebel commanders also continue to commit human rights abuses, violate the arms embargo and obstruct the movement of UN/AU peacekeepers. In the South, violence has risen in 2010, stemming from a multitude of factors, including flawed civilian disarmament campaigns conducted by the South Sudanese army and the failure to demarcate border regions.
Cease support to militias	↔	
Cooperate with and allow access for peacekeepers	↓	
Support disarmament and other peace-building efforts in the South	↓	

3. Humanitarian Access

Create a secure operational environment	↓	United Nations and international humanitarian organizations have little to no access to, or limited information about, certain areas of need in Darfur, due to high insecurity, or claims of high insecurity, largely perpetrated by the Sudanese government, and no freedom to report honestly on conditions in Darfur, for fear of expulsion by the government. Aid workers operate under increasing threat of hijackings, kidnappings, and harassment by armed actors while gaps in "non-essential" services, such as those for survivors of sexual violence, remain.
Allow for freedom of movement for UN and other aid groups and freedom to report on conditions on the ground	↓	
Allow for access to vulnerable groups	↓	

4. Darfur Peace Process

Establish an inclusive peace process	↔	Though progress has been made in the Darfur peace talks, with the Sudanese government signing two framework agreements with rebel groups, Khartoum's continued military actions on the ground, the lack of transparency in the peace process thus far, and the continued intransigence of and divisions between Darfuri rebel leaders suggest that a concrete and sustainable peace agreement will not emerge at the talk's end.
Ensure peace and security on the ground	↓	
Ensure accountability	↓	

5. Elections

Respect freedoms of expression and assembly	↓	The overall security and human rights environment in Sudan did not allow free and fair elections to take place in April. Both ruling parties failed to create an environment that allowed for significant political opposition while elections in Darfur were set up to consolidate NCP control. The media environment in the North and South is also a serious source of concern. The technical irregularities and flaws that defined the actual voting period had a tendency to favor some groups over others and neutral observers who attempted to report on these irregularities were frequently threatened. With the opposition parties' decision to withdraw from the presidential race, President Omer al-Bashir's illegitimate re-election was certain.
Remain open to oversight by both international and domestic actors	↔	
Work to prevent electoral violence	↓	
Prepare for elections, including voter education and logistical planning	↓	

6. Abyei

Form Abyei Referendum Commission	↔	The situation in Abyei remains largely unchanged, with no progress made in setting up the Abyei Referendum Commission or demarcating the area's borders. The SPLM has made efforts to push demarcation forward, but the NCP has not provided equipment and security support. Funds for the Abyei Area Administration are still lacking, continuing to undermine security for Misseriya and Dinka populations in the area. Tensions have been fueled by the SPLM's failure to make good on its promises to respect the rights of the Misseriya and other nomadic tribes.
Demarcate borders and monitor sharing of oil revenues	↔	
Improve stability of area	↓	

7. Popular consultations

Demarcate North-South border	↔	The popular consultation process will officially begin after state legislature elections in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan states. A compromise was struck between the ruling parties to postpone Southern Kordofan's state-level elections until a new census is completed. Little progress integrating the Joint Integrated Units and other security services in these areas.
Improve integration of security services	↓	
Prepare for popular consultations	↔	

8. Southern referendum

Form Southern Sudan Referendum Commission and adequately prepare for the referendum	↔	The influential South Sudan Referendum Commission has yet to be formed by the President and a number of issues related to the South's possible secession have yet to be discussed, including most importantly, oil-sharing arrangements, citizenship rights postreferendum, and arrangements for the referendum itself. The North-South border also remains undemarcated.
Negotiate on postreferendum issues	↔	
Demarcate North-South border	↔	

9. Accountability

Cooperate with ICC	↓	The Sudanese government continues to not cooperate with the International Criminal Court arrest warrant for President Bashir, and President Bashir has been openly defiant of the court. No movement has been made on the accountability measures recommended by the African Union High Level Implementation Panel on Darfur.
Put in place national accountability mechanisms	↔	

Enough is a project of the Center for American Progress to end genocide and crimes against humanity. Founded in 2007, Enough focuses on the crises in Sudan, eastern Congo, areas affected by the Lord's Resistance Army, and Somalia. Enough's strategy papers and briefings provide sharp field analysis and targeted policy recommendations based on a "3P" crisis response strategy: promoting durable peace, providing civilian protection, and punishing perpetrators of atrocities. Enough works with concerned citizens, advocates, and policy makers to prevent, mitigate, and resolve these crises. To learn more about Enough and what you can do to help, go to www.enoughproject.org.

