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New Policy Approach to Sudan

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Past approaches for achieving peace in Sudan have failed. A new approach, in which a revitalized peace process is supported by new leverage developed through the expanded use of modernized financial pressure policy tools, could succeed. The focus would be to promote lasting peace and disrupt and ultimately dismantle the most enduring root cause of continuing conflict and dictatorship: the violent kleptocratic system constructed by President al-Bashir and his inner circle. To more effectively support peace, human rights, and good governance in Sudan, policymakers should construct a new policy approach that attempts to counter and ultimately dismantle Sudan's violent kleptocracy.

A More Comprehensive and Inclusive Peace Process and Constitutional Convention:

A credible constitutional convention and internationally-supported peace process can lead to lasting peace in Sudan. Current mediation efforts to end Sudan's armed conflicts and bring peace to the country have not succeeded. Instead of supporting processes that have failed, leaders should support a truly inclusive constitutional convention and peace process that progress in a sequence that is negotiated by Sudanese people.

Financial Pressure:

To build the necessary leverage for a revitalized peace process and constitutional convention, Sudan's violent kleptocracy must be confronted directly. In addition, this strategy can advance important U.S. national security goals, such as safeguarding the integrity of the global financial system, combating corruption, deterring future support for terrorism, and strengthening human rights.

The core components of this strategy are:

1. Stopping Illicit Financial Flows
 - Enhancing and enforcing anti-money laundering measures
 - Sharing information and supporting multilateral efforts
 - Recovering assets
2. Implementing Modernized Sanctions to Create Leverage to Support Accountability and Advance Human Rights
 - Targeting the assets of the individuals and entities most responsible for mass atrocities, serious human rights violations, & grand corruption
 - Placing sectoral sanctions and other sanctions on key regime institutions and entities
 - Making anti-corruption sanctions designations
 - Mitigating the unintended negative effects of sanctions
 - Transparency for business conducted in Sudan
3. Addressing Conflict-Affected Gold
4. Fighting Corruption Through Other Means
 - Prioritizing combating corruption in Sudan
 - Making criminal investigations and prosecutions
 - Supporting Sudanese civil society and media.
5. Engaging Sudan's Political and Financial Supporters

Disrupting the networks that allow illicit financial flows to enter the global financial system is crucial for bringing pressure to bear on Sudanese kleptocrats and for safeguarding the integrity of the U.S. and global financial systems...it is also essential for achieving peace, as war profiteers, enablers, and facilitators require access to the global economy to fund armed conflict.

Read the Report: eno.ug/2pf0aYJ

Overview:

“Sudan's Deep State: How Insiders Violently Privatized Sudan's Wealth, and How to Respond”

President al-Bashir and his ruling National Congress Party have transformed Sudan into a system of violent kleptocracy that has endured for almost three decades. Regime elites, along with their enablers and facilitators, have amassed personal fortunes by looting and corrupting the country's oil, gold, and land resources in particular, along with other natural resource wealth, productive sectors of the economy, state assets, and the governing institutions that had been in place and largely functioned before this regime took power.



Omar al-Bashir, President of Sudan, pictured during the inaugural ceremony of Sudan's Government of National Unity in Khartoum, July 9, 2005. Evan Schneider, UN

For nearly three decades, President al-Bashir has maintained his position at the pinnacle of Sudan's political order after seizing power through a military coup in 1989. During his rule, the government of Sudan has perhaps been best known for providing safe haven to Osama bin Laden and other Islamic militants in the 1990s, for committing genocide and mass atrocities against its citizens in Darfur, for the secession of South Sudan in 2011, and for ongoing armed conflict—marked by the regime's aerial bombardment of civilian targets and humanitarian aid blockade—in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states. Often portrayed as a country wracked by intractable violence and hampered by racial, religious, ethnic and social cleavages, Sudan ranks consistently among the most fragile or failed states.

At the same time, Sudan has considerable natural resource wealth and significant economic potential. Political standing and proximity to the country's ruling elites most often determines on which side of the poverty line a Sudanese citizen lives. The idea that Sudan is a classic failed state is not fully accurate. Sudan is a failed state for the millions of displaced people living in IDP camps in Darfur, for those living in conflict areas and cut off from humanitarian assistance in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, and for those struggling in marginalized communities in eastern Sudan or in the sprawling informal settlements outside Khartoum. However, Sudan is an incredibly successful state for a small group of ruling elites that have amassed great fortunes by looting the country's resources for personal gain. In that sense, Sudan is more of a hijacked state, working well for a small minority clique but failing by all other measures for the vast majority of the population.

To more effectively support peace, human rights, and good governance in Sudan, U.S. policymakers should work with a range of Sudanese and other international partners to construct a new policy approach to counter Sudan's system of violent kleptocracy.

“Unlike many other corrupt or repressive governments, President al-Bashir's regime is willing to engage in the most extreme tactics, including ethnic cleansing, the use of starvation as a method of war, and the indiscriminate bombardment of civilian populations. It is this combination of extreme violence, authoritarian rule, and massive self-enrichment that qualifies the current system as a violent kleptocracy where state capture and hijacked institutions are the purpose and the rule, rather than the exception.”

Omer Ismail, Enough Project
Senior Advisor

Read the Report: eno.ug/2pf0aYJ