



Sudanese Church Leaders' Advocacy Visit to UN

11th - 21st October 2010

His Grace Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul, Anglican Primate of Sudan

His Lordship Bishop Emeritus Paride Taban

His Lordship Bishop Daniel Adwok Kur, Auxiliary Bishop of Catholic Archdiocese of Khartoum

Rev Ramadan Chan, Secretary General of Sudan Council of Churches

His Excellency Dr Sam Kobia, Ecumenical Special Envoy to Sudan

John Ashworth, Advisor to Sudan Ecumenical Forum

Rocco Blume, Christian Aid

1. The people of southern Sudan expect to fulfil their right of self-determination on 9th January 2011. Denial of this right, for whatever reason, represents a fundamental denial of their human dignity. Unity has not been made attractive and the causes of almost five decades of civil war have not been addressed and cannot be papered over. People in the south see the referendum as their opportunity to choose freedom. Cancellation or postponement of the referendum, or a perception that the referendum outcome does not match the will of the people, will not be understood by the people and will create a dangerous vacuum which could be filled by violence and even a return to war. The international community must be ready for a disputed referendum result. There is a moral imperative over and above legal technicalities and political compromises. Recognition of the right of self-determination must be a guiding principle in avoiding war; a return to war will represent a moral failure on the part of all those charged with implementing the CPA, including the CPA guarantors and the international community.
2. The aspirations of much of the population of the transitional areas of Abyei, Nuba Mountains (Southern Kordofan) and Blue Nile may not be met. The Abyei referendum is far behind schedule and is the subject of disputes and attempts to renegotiate prior agreements. The popular consultations in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan are not exercises in self-determination. Decisions will be made by legislators who, in the case of Blue Nile, were chosen in flawed elections in April 2010, and in Southern Kordofan have still not been elected. There is serious doubt as to whether they truly represent the will of the people. The failure to offer the people of these areas the chance to determine their own future could lead to instability and violence which could soon draw in the rest of the country and spread to full-scale civil war in Sudan.

(continued on reverse)

3. The safety and human rights (including the right to freedom of religion) of southerners living in northern Sudan are in jeopardy before, during and after the referendum. Threats and intimidation are already taking place and there is a climate of fear. Some southerners wish to return to the south but do not have the resources to do so. Others have been in the north for generations and would find it very difficult to return to the south. The international community and the UN must be prepared logistically and financially to deal with the humanitarian consequences of large scale migration, particularly in the case of forced migration.

Calls to the UN and the international community:

- We hold all parties and guarantors of the CPA accountable. The international community must accept that if there is a new war in Sudan, or widespread violence against civilians, then the UN and the international community must bear responsibility for a failure to fulfil their obligations to guarantee the implementation of the CPA and to bring peace to Sudan.
- Be prepared to deal with the inevitable dispute over the outcome of the referenda in the south and Abyei, and recognise the need for a moral imperative which upholds human dignity and the right to self-determination over and above legal technicalities and political compromises, bringing peace with justice.
- Explore as a matter of priority creative ways of meeting the aspirations of the people of the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile. Even full implementation of the CPA will not necessarily meet the aspirations of all the people of these areas. The international community must rise to the challenge and respect the right of self-determination and the human dignity of the populations of these areas.
- Hold accountable those who abuse the human rights of southern civilians in northern Sudan; support those southerners who wish to return to the south; prepare for the potential humanitarian disaster if mass migration takes place.
- Listen to and respect the voice of the voiceless, the voice of the suffering people of southern Sudan and the transitional areas, as expressed by the Church.

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