

The people of Southern Sudan have a date with destiny. This Sunday, 9 January 2011, the people of Southern Sudan will vote in an historic Referendum, whether to remain part of a united Sudan or to secede.

### **Comprehensive Peace Agreement**

This Referendum is a core requirement of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that ended decades of conflict between the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the National Islamic Front (NIF), now renamed the National Congress Party (NCP).

### **Southern Independence**

As the vast majority of citizens in Southern Sudan voted for President Salva Kiir Mayardit of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army/Movement who stands for the full independence of Southern Sudan, the results of this Referendum remains a foregone conclusion.

### **Date with Destiny**

This Referendum on 9 January, which promises to result in an independent Southern Sudan, will be unprecedented in the history of Independent Africa. All attempts to break up colonial borders have either been achieved through war (such as the Independence of Eritrea from Ethiopia) or suppressed by overwhelming military force (such as in the Nigerian Civil War when the independent state of Biafra was crushed with massive loss of life).

### **Shadow Embassies**

Southern Sudan already has shadow embassies in Juba, among them from the United States of America, India, Norway, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and South Africa. Southern Sudan already

has in turn established shadow embassies in each of these countries and also in the United Kingdom, Canada and Belgium.

### **Delaying Tactics**

In recent weeks there have been calls from Khartoum and Cairo to delay the Referendum of 9 January, to “iron out differences.” President Salva Kiir Mayarditof Southern Sudan has declared that the Referendum date is sacrosanct to Southerners and he would not agree to any delay. “There is without question a real risk of a return to violence on a massive scale if the Referendum does not go ahead as scheduled. To us the timing of the Referendum is sacrosanct.”

### **Fraud and Farce**

One of the requirements of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed in January 2005, between the National Islamic Front government of Sudan and the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army, was free and fair elections in 2010. In April 2010 the citizens of Sudan were granted their first opportunity for voting for government representatives. Observers and participants alike condemned the Sudan elections as a fraud and a farce.

### **Electoral Jihad**

The NIF/NCP declared themselves to be involved in a “*Holy War*” with the rest of the world and with the Sudanese people themselves. From their own speeches and writings they declared that they were justified in any crimes they committed. Even the election itself was described by the NCP as a *Jihad against infidel* s , in which any deception and intimidation were justified.

### **Overwhelming Failure**

The Electoral Commission appeared to act as a puppet for the ruling NCP and was incompetent in managing the elections. The sheer scale of technical, logistical and administrative failures were overwhelming. Many of the errors could have been accidental, but most had to be the result of deliberate fraud to rig the elections in favour of the ruling NCP.

### **Irregularities**

Some of the candidates, including those for the presidency, could not find their electoral symbols anywhere on the ballot papers. Many of the voters arrived at polling stations to find that other people had voted on their behalf! Secret ballot stations existed and different versions of the electoral register were circulated. Irregularities abounded, such as unregistered voters dipping their fingers in non-permanent ink. On one occasion an individual had registered over 120 times in the same constituency! The sheer scale of irregularities, discrepancies and fraud were staggering.

### **Immense Fraud**

The Sudan Tribune described the elections as “immense fraud.” The BBC World service reported “widespread evidence of vote rigging.” Fox News reported that international monitors declared that Sudan’s first multi-party elections “failed to meet international standards.” Associated Press reported “fears that a fraudulent vote could fuel violence in the conflict-strewn country, where some opposition parties challenged the fairness of the process boycotted all, or some of, the local and national races.”

### **Voter Intimidation**

A Monitoring Team from the European Union concluded: “key aspects of the election process were undermined. Names were missing from voter registries, election resources were not evenly spread to all parts of the vast country and there were cases of voter intimidation.”

### **Intimidation on all Levels**

Even the Carter Institute observed: “It is obvious that the elections fall short of international standards, but the people’s expectations have not been met.” The Carter Institute reported intimidation in many states and security agents interfering with the electoral process, particularly in the South. “Voters, candidates, polling staff, party agents and observers were the target of much intimidation.”

### **Blatant Fraud**

The opposition Islamic Popular Congress Party refused to accept the election results, declaring them marred by “shameful fraud and blatant forgery.”

### **Threats Against the Observers**

The incumbent, General Omar Ahamed el-Bashir, who came to power through a bloody Revolution in 1989, and who has been charged in the International Court of Justice with war crimes and crimes against humanity, publically expressed anger at the negative reports and declared that critical observers would be dismissed. If they tried to interfere in Sudan’s domestic affairs, he would crush them and amputate their hands, noses and necks!

### **Entrenched Corruption**

The 2009 report from Transparency International listed Sudan under the NCP dictatorship as “one of the world’s least transparent countries”. “Corruption has been described as the norm in Sudanese public life.” And the NCP and its supporters have a complete monopoly over the Sudanese economy and media. The blatant buying and selling of votes by the NCP kleptocrats has been exposed by numerous studies. The ruling NCP leaders offered jobs and political offices to their opponents who dropped out of the elections.

### **Defective Beyond Repair**

The Sudan Tribune described the Sudan elections as: “Defective beyond repair.” and “a pure formality that can only keep in power a corrupt dictatorship.”

### **Border Disputes**

Some of the key issues that will need to be negotiated over the next year include border areas. There are five major border areas that are in dispute. The most explosive is around the oil producing region of Abyei. This region is to decide in a separate Referendum whether to join the North or the South. Northern troops have been waging a scorched earth campaign to racially cleanse these areas of black Christians.

The Northernmost border separating Renk County in Upper Nile from the North White Nile State and the border line running North-South between the South’s Unity State and the North’s South Kordofan will determine who controls the Heglig Oil Field. There are also disputes between the South’s Bahr el-Ghazal and Darfur in the North and which river forms the exact westernmost dividing line between West Bahr el-Ghazal and South Darfur.

### **Oil Revenue**

Dividing the oil revenue from the oil fields, which are mostly in the South, will also be a major point of contention. The sole oil export route for the landlocked South is a pipeline running to the North to Port Sudan on the Red Sea.

### **Water Rights and Control**

Water will also be a concern, as, under a 1959 agreement between Egypt and Sudan, 90% of the water of the Nile (the longest river in the world – 6,600km), belongs to Egypt. The question is whether Southern Sudan will recognise these old treaties, or negotiate new accords remains to be seen.

### **National Debt and Assets**

In the event of the South choosing independence, the NCP wants to apportion a high percentage of the national debt to the South. The SPLA rejects such suggestions, accusing the North of using that borrowed money to wage a genocidal war against the South. Also to be discussed are national assets and properties of state-owned companies in the South.

### **A Long Overdue Redrawing of the Map**

Many Southerners are pointing out that these matters should have been settled over 55 years ago. Many missionaries and national leaders from Southern Sudan pleaded with the British authorities not to condemn the Black South of Sudan to living in servitude under the Arab North in a unitary state. Many pleaded for a re-drawing of the map as the North and South were culturally, linguistically, religiously, and in every other way, separate nations. The Black South has a different alphabet, language, calendar, religion, culture and history from the North and forcing them to be part of a unitary state was to condemn them to being second class citizens under Arab domination and exploitation. More than 2 million Sudanese have died, and many millions more have lost their homes, some being scattered throughout the world as refugees, as a result of the failure to re-draw the map before Independence 1 January 1956.

### **America's Involvement**

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 would not have been completed without the determination of the Bush administration of the USA to bring the opposing delegations to the negotiation table and to force them to stay there until the Comprehensive Peace Agreement had been signed. The United States paid the hotel bills, air fares and other expenses involved in bringing about the historic CPA 2005. When various negotiators seemed to lack the authority to make decisions, the Americans insisted on bringing to the table the top leaders who could make those decisions.

### **Overcoming Opposition**

At one point when negotiations came to a standstill the Americans forced the leaders to stay put until they reached an agreement. General Bashir of the NIF/NCP and Dr. John Garang of the SPLA signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Nairobi, Kenya, on 9 January 2005, after three long years of negotiations.

### **The Comprehensive Peace Agreement**

The CPA gave Southerners the right to vote for unity or secession following an interim period of six years. Abyei, a part of the South which was administered from the North, was given the right to decide in a separate Referendum, whether to remain with the North or rejoin the South. Two other territories in the North, the Nuba Mountains and Southern Blue Nile were also granted the right to decide through their parliaments whether to closely associate with the North or the South at the end of the interim period. A Government of National Unity (GNU) was to be set up in Khartoum while the Government of the Southern Sudan (GOSS) would be set up in Juba. While Sharia law would remain part of government in the North, the South would be governed by its own laws. The South's oil would be shared equally between the North and South during the interim period. Banks in the North would remain under the Islamic law, while banking practice in the South would follow their own conventions. The CPA also granted the South the right to equip and train their own standing army.

### **Playing for Time**

Many Southerners were concerned that the Northern negotiators were merely playing for time and would sooner or later find ways to dishonor the agreement. They pointed to the Abbas Abbaba Agreement of 1972 which was violated 10 years later by the Khartoum government.

### **Bashir's Predictions**

General Bashir confidently predicted unity between North and South as a result of the CPA. Bashier declared to his Northern supporters that the South was "under-educated and under-developed." Southern Sudan would lack the capacity to rule itself. The government of Southern Sudan was led by "inexperienced" and "divided tribal warlords." "Southern tribesman"

would either rebel against the SPLA or vote for unity with the North Bashir confidently predicted!

### **The Death of John Garang**

The Death of Yet when Dr. John Garang returned to Khartoum in July 2005 for the first time, after more than 20 years of war, the public turnout was estimated at over 3 million! This shocked the dictatorship of el-Bashir. By 29 July 2005 President John Garang of South Sudan died in suspicious circumstances in a helicopter “accident”.

### **Uniting for Southern Independence**

John Garang’s longtime deputy, Lieutenant General Salva Kiir Mayardit became the new president of Southern Sudan. Since then many Southern politicians have come to Juba and made a show of unprecedented unity by agreeing to lay aside all their previous differences and unite for a successful Referendum.

### **The Fruit of Freedom**

By God’s grace, the culminative effect of many years of intense prayer, worldwide publicity, international pressure and missionary partnership with courageous persecuted Christians in Southern Sudan will bear fruit in 2011.

### **Faith and Freedom**

The longest war, in the largest country in Africa, is about to be concluded with an historic Referendum which may well result in an independent and free Southern Sudan. By God’s grace, we stood with our beleaguered brethren through some of the worst days of vicious persecution, and we helped them – not only to survive – but to thrive, in spite of the *Jihad*.



## A Call for Prayer and Action

Now we need to pray for and work alongside the Christians in Southern Sudan and the Nuba Mountains to entrench and protect these freedoms for future generations. May Christians continue to invest in educating the next generations of students, teachers, evangelists and pastors. Your partnership will enable us to be more effective in re-building the destroyed school buildings and in providing the textbooks and training programmes needed.

**“Cush will submit to God.”** Psalm 68:31

*Dr. Peter Hammond is the author of **Faith Under Fire in Sudan**. For 29 years Peter has been a missionary to restricted access areas. He has pioneered missionary outreaches throughout the war zones of Mozambique, Angola and Sudan. During the war in Sudan he flew far behind enemy lines to the beleaguered Nuba Mountains with tonnes of Bibles, school books, agricultural tools and seed and other relief aid. Peter delivered some of the largest shipments of Bibles ever flown into an officially Islamic state and came under aerial and artillery bombardments while preaching in churches in Sudan. For the whole incredible story of Christian courage amidst Islamic Jihad obtain the*

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