

International Conference on INDIA-SUDAN: LESSONS FROM NATION BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Both India and Sudan suffered British colonial rule which had a policy of divide and rule. The historical and civilization assimilation that had emerged over a long period were subjected to this divisive policy. The long and intrusive colonial rules created several lasting divisions among its people based on religion, ethnicity, region, language and resources. Soon after independence colonial territories started the arduous task of nation building. It needed concentrated effort to overcome the centrifugal forces unleashed during the colonial regime. But the cold war period saw the subtle as well as overt interference by international powers in countries like India and Sudan to keep them weak and submissive. Third World countries were not allowed a free hand or were supported in the task of their nation building. Countries like India and Sudan found it to be a protracted and difficult problem. They are still struggling to overcome them. India succeeded in some area where as Sudan moved more effectively in some other areas. There is a need to share and learn from the experiences of others. Within the context of nation building issues like democratic governance- both at federal as well as local level, regional and gender disparity, religious, ethnic and linguistic tensions are common concerns of both countries. The divisive and cessionist forces are still posing challenges to these states to the extent that they as used as alibi by major powers to pressurize them to serve their interests.

While striving for nation building there is an urgent need for economic development. Under globalization the ruthless market mechanism and the overwhelming dominance of developed countries under such mechanism, leads to an eschewed and externally prioritized growth process. Even if there is growth, there is little development. And development remains one of the major antidotes to the challenges of nation building. The ideals of collective self reliance and benign horizontal South-South cooperation are getting pushed to back burner. Countries like India and Sudan had been strong advocates of South-South cooperation. They have taken initiatives to effect South-South cooperation in several sectors setting examples of horizontal cooperation. There are now non-traditional sectors like energy, which used to operate exclusively under North-South framework. Sudan has gone out of way thwarting pressures of established major oil lobbies to facilitate India's involvement in oil production and transportation. Similarly, India has gone for its ever largest investment overseas in single sector. Besides this there are several sectors in which India and Sudan have complementarities for development cooperation. Given India's experience in nation building and emergence as soft power based on knowledge economy and Sudan's strength in strategic resources and its will to command its resources in its own best interest, the potential for development cooperation is immense.

With this perspective the seminar was jointly organized by **Centre for West Asian and African Studies, SIS, JNU & African Studies Association of India (ASA) on 29 & 30 November 2007.**

The inaugural session was chaired by **Mr. Shashank**, Former Foreign Secretary Government of India & Chairman, African Studies Association of India (ASA). He spoke about the importance of the seminar in the relations between India and Sudan and also expected that the seminar would prove to be landmark in the relations between the two countries. Welcome address was given by the Dean of SIS, **Prof. Pushpesh Pant**. He drew the attention towards having a new and fresh look at Sudan with the help of this seminar. He said that we tend to fall prisoners to the Darfur crisis while talking of Sudan while in reality Sudan is much more than conflicts. While making the initial remarks **Prof Ajay Dubey**, Chairperson, CWAAS, SIS called the seminar as part of the process that had started way back in 2003. He gave importance to the big partnerships taking place between Sudan and India in different areas of economic and global cooperation. **Prof R. Kumar's** (Rector, JNU) brief introduction to Sudan as a country its main languages, towns, tribes, ethnicity, politics etc. has also been quite enriching. He also talked about the common problems being faced by India and Sudan which was helpful in understanding the need for cooperation between the countries. **Shri Virendra Gupta's** (Joint Secretary, MEA, GoI) special observation on Cooperation in the energy sector between India and Sudan focused on how India is looking for partnership with Sudan not only in Gas and Oil sector but also in Community development projects. Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Sudan, **His Excellency Abdel Rahman Mohammad Bekhiet** had been extremely generous in throwing light on the various projects to promote cooperation between India and Sudan. He also gave huge importance to the Abuja agreement and former President of India A P J Abdul Kalam's visit to Sudan which had been a major landmark in the relations between the two countries.

1st Session: Issues of Nation Building was chaired by Prof Partha Ghosh. **Prof Sanjukta Bhattacharya** presented a paper on "*Nation Building in Sudan*". The paper started by comparing the diversities of Sudan with that of India from economic, religious and linguistic point of view. The paper then tried to analyze how cooperation with India can help in Nation building in Sudan. **Prof. Manju Verma and Jasveer Singh**, presented a paper on "*A study of Nation-Building Process in India and Sudan*". The paper tried to trace the relationship between Institution and Nation building. This paper also made a comparison between the nation building process in both India and Sudan. **Dr. Jamal Md. Moosa**, presented a paper on "*Reconciliation and Challenge of Nation Building in Sudan*". His paper emphasized on the definition of nation in which we tend to include certain factors and exclude others. Nation, which means a sense of belonging, has also been given importance. According to him it also, indicates a sense of exclusion. He suggested that Sudan should understand the potentiality and the importance of natural resources that exist and should take a step forward in overcoming the various challenges. **Prof. Ajay K. Dubey**, presented a paper on "*Issues and Problems of Nation Building in Sudan: A Comparative Perspective from India*". He started by questioning whether oil is a blessing or a curse. He said that in terms of conflict rising, because of the difference in region or religion, Sudan is able to deal with such type of situation in a much better way than India. He also threw light on the various projects and negotiations undertaken by the African Union at the ground level but also admitted that domestic efforts are necessary to solve the problem of Sudan.

2nd Session: Issues of Nation Building was chaired by Prof Sanjukta Bhattacharya. **Dr. Bijay Ketan Partihari**, presented a paper on *“Darfur Crisis: Problems for Nation Building in Sudan”* In his paper he firstly gave a background to the general problems of Sudan then he gave the main causes of the crisis and lastly he suggested the solutions, both domestic as well as external solution. **Dr. Yarungam Awungshi**, presented a paper on *“State Formation in Sudan and India: A comparative view of North-East India and South-East Sudan”*. He started by giving a definition of Nation. In the paper he compared the situation of Sudan with that of the North-East India. According to him understanding the problem at the beginning is essential, as there is a need to understand the gravity of the problems that exist in both the regions. He compared Northeast problems as a whole in India especially in Nagaland where NSCN continues to exist because of the loop holes of the Indian government policies. **Mr. Khalid**, presented a paper on *“Issues of Nation Building and Peace Process in Sudan”*. Firstly he explores the problems facing the current Sudan in which he talks about the crisis of Darfur and the various reasons that led to it and the reasons that are continuing it forward. Secondly, he bases the new democratic Sudan on certain factors like evolving a Sudanese identity, unity on a new basis, restructuring of power, decentralization of power, democratic governance and human rights and even and sustainable development. The way forward according to him is a call for a new democratic Sudan which is built by all the Sudanese and not a group of people on their behalf. **Mr. Umeshwar Pandey**, presented a paper on *“Social ecological and political impacts of Darfur crisis: problems of nation building in Sudan”*. His paper focused on the Social and ecological facets of the Darfur crisis as these are the main factors which have got backward and forward linkages with the crisis. The paper also emphasized on the deteriorating ecological conditions and its effect in intensifying the crisis. **Mr. Jashobanta Pan**, presented a paper on *“Population Displacement: An Issue of ethnicity in Sudan”*. His paper focused on three broad aspects related to the Internally Displaced People, first, how and why displacement in Sudan is closely linked with the identity of a person. Secondly, a general assessment of plight of displaced persons spreading over all the regions of Sudan and their pattern of its distribution and thirdly, on the conditions of those who became displaced as a result of war, famine and pressure from the government and who are now living in Khartoum.

3rd session: Development Cooperation was chaired by Prof Ajay Dubey. **Prof R R Ramchandani**, presented a paper on *“India-Sudan Economic Relations: Emerging Paradigm shift in development cooperation”*. He brought his paper to some very relevant conclusions that merit attention: India is devising a new role model in forging inter-regional economic and technical co-operation, territorial colonization has been rendered irrelevant, world system has moved away from compulsive exploitative colonial policy syndrome, nation building and poverty alleviation exercises are collective public-private undertakings and countries like Sudan are experiencing annual growth rates of 5-6% more so as South-South development cooperation is highly effective. Therefore, he emphasized on the increasing role of development cooperation reaping rich dividends. **Prof Aparajita Biswas**, presented a paper on *“Oil as a factor in India’s Foreign Policy: the case study of India and Sudan”*. Her paper focused on the importance of oil in the 21st century and on how it is acting a major catalyst of change. She emphasized largely on

Energy Diplomacy talking about the energy needs of India (India being fifth larger consumer of energy in the world). After giving an overview of the Sudan's oil situation and India's oil diplomacy, it is evident that Sudan has benefited a lot from its oil and this oil has played a huge importance in fulfilling India's need for oil. **Prof S N Malakar**, presented a paper on "*Potential Agricultural Cooperation between Sudan and India*". His paper looked at the similarities between two agrarian economies- India and Sudan- which are also geographically two largest continents contributing immensely to the world agricultural production system. After making a survey of the agricultural scenarios of the two countries, he tried to explore the potential areas of their cooperation in the wider context of Afro-Asian interdependence that is based on economic reciprocity in the present post cold war world order.

4th Session: Development Cooperation was chaired by Prof Manju Verma. **H. E. Abdalla Yahia Adam**, presented a paper on "Initiative and Potential for Development Cooperation between India and Sudan: Special Focus on Agricultural and Rural Development". His paper emphasized the importance of agricultural sector and a number of challenges being faced by agriculture like competition, productivity, environmental changes, high demands etc. He also gave huge importance to the notion of South-South cooperation which could be very helpful in improving the relations between the two countries. However, he also gave insights about the development process between India and Sudan of not being a smooth one. **Dr. Anishur Rehman**, presented a paper on "Cooperation in Higher Education between India and Sudan". Higher education between these two countries has always been an unexplored area. However, much importance to this area has been given in the Xth Plan. He has also given information regarding the issues and problems of higher education in Sudan which include lack of planning, policy and faculty development. However, it is very important to know that since the last 10-15 years there has been a kind of education revolution going on in Sudan and cooperation in the sense of large number of Sudanese students studying in India is being seen. **Dr. A. Ramanathan**, presented a paper on "*Developing Cooperation in Water Resource Management between India and Sudan*". In the paper he cited water as major cause of conflict. He also focused on the increasing need of water in industrial towns because of the growing industrialization. The paper stressed on the requirement of Indo-Sudan cooperation in the management of water, which will facilitate growth process of both the countries.

5th Session: Development Cooperation was chaired by Prof. Aparajita Biswas. **Mr. Sandipni Das**, presented a paper on "*Policy and issues of cooperation between India and Sudan: The Hydrocarbon Sector*". His paper looked at the Indo-Sudan engagement in the hydrocarbon sector. The paper studies the Indo-Sudan partnership under the broader framework of globalization of oil. The focus of his paper was on the potential areas of expansion of cooperation in the Hydrocarbon sector between the two countries. The main highlight was that oil is changing the scenario of international relations in the 21st century. **Mr. Pranav Kumar**, presented a paper on "*India Sudan Economic Cooperation*". His paper was divided into four parts. The first part dealt with the theoretical background as to why Indo-Sudan economic co-operation is necessary and how Indian Ocean served as a bridge for establishing such relationship. The second part

dealt with the historical background while the third analyzed the economic co-operation. The fourth is about the opportunities and challenges.

The valedictory session was chaired by Prof Z M Khan. The seminar report was presented by Ankita Bhattacharjee and Sushmita Rajwar. **Prof R R Ramchandani** concluded by saying that the time has come when the African development dynamics is increasingly related to such Big Emerging Markets which are most cost effective and more relevant to their grass root development as well as more manpower empowerment friendly. For instance, if the African state has to relieve itself of the “European Enclave” dependency syndrome, it has now an irrefutable alternative to widen the net of its alignments and seek new frontier technologies and other relevant technologies from the Big Emerging Markets, not only from countries such as India or China but also from South Africa and the like. As the global churning surfaces new opportunities, it is time the dynamics of African dilemma quickly adapts to the unfolding global panorama. The vote of thanks was given by Prof S. N. Malakar.