



Article

**OPEN ACCESS**

# The Efficacy of United States Sanctions on the Republic of Sudan

Mohamed Malik\* and Malik Malik<sup>†</sup>

University of Southern California,  
Los Angeles, California, USA  
Email: \* mohamedm@usc.edu  
<sup>†</sup> malik.malik@usc.edu

## Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between the United States (US) and the Republic of Sudan (Sudan), the complicated nature of which is an end result of the US's ongoing sanctions on Sudan. The paper also provides a careful analysis of Sudan's relationship with terrorism and the role that relationship has played in the US's justification of economic sanctions. Additionally, the paper will examine the implications of the US sanctions on the livelihoods of everyday citizens in the country across a variety of different sectors, while also providing a glimpse into how the Sudanese government and its top officials have managed to thrive. The paper will then conclude by looking at alternative solutions, on the basis that the sanctions are an inherently ineffective tool of diplomacy.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5339/messa.2015.7>

Accepted: 1 March 2015  
© 2015, Malik, Malik, licensee  
Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation  
Journals. This is an open access  
article distributed under  
the terms of the Creative  
Commons Attribution license  
CC BY 4.0, which permits  
unrestricted use, distribution  
and reproduction in any  
medium, provided the original  
work is properly cited.

## Introduction

For over 15 years, US sanctions on Sudan – first imposed by the Clinton administration in 1997 due to the country’s perceived status as a sponsor of Islamist terrorism – have had a tremendous influence on Sudan’s political, economic, and social affairs. To the US, sanctions are a powerful and necessary tool in the fight against authoritarian and oppressive regimes around the world. But to many outside observers, the sanctions serve to compound and conflate an existing structure of inequality between the powerful elites and the average citizen.

This topic takes a place of particular importance when one remembers that sanctions are a form of diplomacy, and diplomacy is at the heart of international relations. The world does not operate in a vacuum. How one state actor engages and deals with another state actor leads to a global consequence on some part of the spectrum of effect. This is especially true in the case of the US – as a global superpower and the most influential country in the world, the actions the US undertakes cannot be overlooked. The country bears a major responsibility with regard to its international decision making, as its processes will not only directly affect how the nation is *perceived*, but it will most likely have a direct impact on the lives of millions of people inside a nation’s territorial borders. The case of US sanctions on Sudan is no different. Sanctions have had a tremendous effect on the country’s people – from economics to education. As such, it is essential that these sanctions be carefully examined in order to understand their true (and unintended) consequences, and question whether they represent the best possible plan of action for the US pursuit of a *better* Sudan.

## History of US-Sudan Relations

Since its independence in 1956, Sudan’s relationship with the United States can inarguably be described as ‘turbulent’ and ‘on-and-off.’ The two nations’ relationship took a sharp turn for the worse after the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and the US’s official support of Israel. In response to the US’s stance, Sudan ended all diplomatic ties with the superpower<sup>1</sup> and a multitude of Arab nations convened in Khartoum and drafted the *Khartoum Resolution (1967)*, which declared that participating bodies would not engage in direct negotiations with Israel, among other proclamations. Being the host location for such a polarizing summit pushed Sudan even further away from the realm of potential ‘on-again’ relations with the US.<sup>2</sup> Tensions began to ease after the 1971 failed coup on President Nimeri by the Sudanese Communist Party- Nimeri held suspicions that the USSR was behind the overthrow – and ties were re-established following the US’s assistance with the resettlement of refugees after the south (now the independent nation of South Sudan) and the north (the Republic of Sudan) reached a peace agreement that ended the first Sudanese Civil War.<sup>3</sup>

In 1973, the US was dealt a tragic blow with the deaths of the US Ambassador to Sudan, Cleo A. Noel, and Deputy Chief of Mission, Curtis G. Moore, in Khartoum. The terrorist-labeled Palestinian group known as Black September was responsible for their murders. The fringe group demanded the release of Palestinian prisoners held by Israel, and the release of Palestinian militants held by Jordan. President Richard Nixon refused to negotiate with the group.<sup>4</sup> As a result, Moore and Noel – who were taken hostage – were killed. Though those responsible for the murders were eventually arrested, charged, and tried by the Sudanese government, they were released in June of 1974 to the custody of Egypt. In response to what the US perceived as poor handling of the case, the US recalled their ambassador to Sudan and ceased diplomatic relations with the country for a period of four months.<sup>5</sup> Relations

<sup>1</sup>Embassy of the United States Khartoum, Sudan.” US-Sudan Relations. [http://sudan.usembassy.gov/ussudan\\_relations.html](http://sudan.usembassy.gov/ussudan_relations.html).

<sup>2</sup>Tristam, Pierre. “Khartoum Declaration (1967) - Full Text of the Khartoum Declaration in Arab-Israeli Conflict.” About.com. <http://middleeast.about.com/od/documents/qt/khartoum-declaration-1967.htm>.

<sup>3</sup>“US Relations With Sudan.” US Department of State. June 07, 2013. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5424.htm>.

<sup>4</sup>Chalk, Peter. Encyclopedia of Terrorism. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

between the two nations did not return to their previous full-fledged status until 1976, when Nimeri had a hand in convincing Eritrean insurgents in northern Ethiopia to release ten American hostages. Viewed as a sign of new-found goodwill, the US resumed the economic assistance component of their diplomatic relationship with the county.<sup>6</sup>

After decades of a tumultuous relationship and 'tit-for-tat' politics, the mid-1980s marked the beginning of the end of diplomatic relations between the US and Sudan. Libyan terrorists emigrated to and took permanent residence in Sudan, which compelled the US to reduce the number of US Embassy staff members in 1985. In 1986, Libyan terrorists bombed a discotheque in Berlin, causing the US to engage in an all-out air strike on Tripoli.<sup>7</sup> In the same year, a US embassy worker was shot in Sudan. Immediately "following this incident, all non-essential personnel and all dependents left for six months ... [3 years later], US development assistance to the country was suspended in 1989 in the wake of the military coup against the elected government". This began the 22 years and ongoing presidential career of National Islamist Front leader, General Omar Al-Bashir.<sup>8</sup>

The 1990s saw a rapid deterioration of relations between the US and Sudan, a direct result of actions undertaken by Sudan that were viewed as antithetical to US democratic and diplomatic values, namely the government's backing of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait; playing host to a number of terrorists, such as Carlos the Jackal and Osama Bin Laden; and organizing the Popular Arab and Islamic Congress conference in 1991, which sought to mobilize Arab leaders under an overarching Islamic banner. As a result of Sudan's perceived antagonism, in 1993 Sudan was designated as a state sponsor of terrorism, leading to "a suspension of US Embassy operations in 1996, and [finally] US imposed comprehensive economic, trade, and financial sanctions in October 1997."<sup>9</sup>

In 1997, the US destroyed the newly constructed Al-Shifa pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum, mistakenly believing that the developers had ties to Bin Laden and that the factory was being used to process chemical weapons.<sup>10</sup> Since then, political cooperation between the two countries has been existent but minimal. While Sudan has provided the US with "concrete cooperation against international terrorism since September 11th, 2011... they have criticized US strikes in Afghanistan and opposed a widening of the effort against international terrorism to other countries". Despite the heavy-handed economic sanctions placed on Sudan by the US, and their historically contentious relationship, the US became one of the biggest providers of humanitarian aid to the country.<sup>11</sup>

### **American Sanctions on Sudan in Detail**

On November 3 1997, President Bill Clinton issued Executive Order 13067, which imposed a trade embargo against the country while also freezing the government's assets, a result of Sudan's "continued support for international terrorism, ongoing efforts to destabilize neighboring governments, and the prevalence of human rights violations – including slavery and the denial of religious freedom, [which] constituted an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States."<sup>12</sup>

The executive action stated, "All property and interests in property of the Government of Sudan located in the US or within the control of a US person are blocked. This blocking includes individuals or entities that are owned or controlled by, or act on behalf of, the Government of Sudan anywhere in the world".<sup>13</sup> The goal of these sanctions, in essence,

<sup>6</sup>Embassy of the United States – Khartoum, Sudan

<sup>7</sup>"US Bombs Libya." History.com. <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/us-bombs-libya>.

<sup>8</sup>Embassy of the United States – Khartoum, Sudan

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Astill, James. "Strike One." The Guardian. October 2, 2011. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/oct/02/afghanistan-terrorism3>.

<sup>11</sup>Embassy of the United States – Khartoum, Sudan

<sup>12</sup>"US Department of the Treasury, Foreign Assets Control." Effectiveness of US Sanctions - With Respect to Sudan, January 2009. [http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Documents/sudan\\_report\\_030509.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Documents/sudan_report_030509.pdf).

<sup>13</sup>US Department of the Treasury

was to “restrict foreign investment, bad defense exports and sales, and terminate commercial activities between the two countries.”<sup>14</sup>

On top of US sanctions, Sudan later fell under the amplified scrutiny of the United Nations (UN) and its governing body. In 2004, “resolution 1556 imposed an arms embargo on all non-government entities operating in Darfur.”<sup>15</sup> Later, on March 20 2005, and April 25 2006, the UN Security Council passed Resolutions 1591 and 1672, respectively. As was the impetus for the US sanctions, this course of action was a direct response to “continued violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Sudan’s Darfur region and, in particular, the continuation of violence against civilians and sexual violence against women and girls”. These findings, however, were simply condemnations, which urged member states to take measures against those responsible for the egregious crises in the country.<sup>16</sup>

After the April 26 2006 resolution, President George W. Bush issued Executive Order 13400, which increased the provisions of Executive Order 13067 and “blocked the property and interests in property of certain persons connected with the conflict in Darfur.” Four months later, President Bush signed Executive Order 13412, upholding the provisions of 13067, but lifted most sanctions on trade and investment in regions of southern Sudan. It also ensured that transactions related to the petroleum industry – including southern Sudan – would be prohibited.<sup>17</sup> The resolution elevates the number of Sudanese companies blacklisted by the US government to 160, including “the Greater Nile Petroleum Oil Company, the consortium responsible for most of the oil production in Sudan.” Two members of al-Bashir’s government were singled out for personal sanctions – Ahmed Haroun, the state minister for humanitarian affairs, and Awad Ibn Auf, the country’s director of military intelligence.<sup>18</sup>

### **Sudan’s Label as a State Sponsor of Terrorism**

The 1996 UN Security Resolution 1054, the first UNSC resolution to stipulate that UN members had to impose diplomatic sanctions on Sudan, required Sudan to “desist from engaging in activities of assisting, supporting and facilitating terrorist activities.”<sup>19</sup> Shortly before, and since the passing of the resolution, Sudan made a significant effort to distance itself from its terrorist-supporting past - efforts that question the legitimacy of the label today.

For example, in August 1995, Sudan began to require all incoming visitors from the Arab world to obtain a visa prior to arrival, with the understanding that this strategy would help curb the alarmingly high number of foreign Islamic extremists migrating to the country.<sup>20</sup> The following year, Sudan escalated its fight against the Islamic extremism that had previously been fostered within its borders by forcing out known terrorists, most notably Osama bin Laden, who departed the country on May 18 1996. Furthermore, Egyptian Islamic extremists residing in Sudan were of grave concern to the Egyptian government, due to involvement of Sudanese-supported Egyptian militants in the attempted assassination of President Hosni Mubarak in the previous year. More than forty known extremists of Egyptian origin were forced out of Sudan throughout 1996.<sup>21</sup> Lastly, in the two years following the passing of Resolution 1054, Sudan was able to successfully repair its diplomatic relationships with the majority of nearby states, which had been significantly strained as a result of Sudan’s support

<sup>14</sup>“The Sanctions Regime.” Understanding Sudan. 2009. <http://understandingsudan.org/oil/OilResources/L2FS4-SanctionsRegime.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup>Understanding Sudan

<sup>16</sup>US Department of the Treasury

<sup>17</sup>Ibid

<sup>18</sup>Understanding Sudan.

<sup>19</sup>United Nations Security Council (SC). “Resolution 1054.” April 26, 1996. <http://www.un.org/documents/sc/res/1946/sres46.htm>.

<sup>20</sup>Niblock, Tim. Pariah States & Sanctions in the Middle East: Iraq, Libya, Sudan. Boulder, Co.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

of Islamic extremist groups that opposed the political leadership of many of the country's neighbors. Al-Bashir's regime regained friendly terms with nations like Libya, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Kuwait, after it apologized for siding with and supporting Iraq during the first Gulf War<sup>22</sup>

The progress Sudan had made in the years following their designation as a sponsor of terrorism culminated with their May 2004 removal from the US's list of countries that were "not fully cooperating" with American anti-terrorism efforts.<sup>23</sup> However, there has been no major milestone since - despite the fact Sudan is still very much active in counter-terrorism measures. The US government's 2012 and 2013 reports on terrorism paint a picture of a Sudan that is eager to support the US in the fight against global terrorism. The government has worked to "disrupt foreign fighters' use of Sudan as a logistics base and transit point to Mali and Afghanistan", along with dismantling terrorist training camps that had been discovered in Sudan's Diner National Park. The disruption of this site led to the deaths of 13 "violent extremists, and [the arrest] of another 25... [who] were planning to assassinate Sudanese government officials and ... target Western diplomatic missions in the country."<sup>24</sup> Additionally, Sudan has given its unconditional support towards curbing the financing of terrorist groups and individuals. The Central Bank of Sudan "circulates to financial institutions a list of individuals and entities that have been included on the consolidated list of the UNSC 1267/1989 (al-Qa'ida) Sanctions Committee, as well as the US-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations and E.O. lists." Most recently, in December 2013, as a member of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IAD), Sudan hosted a regional workshop on counter-terrorism measures, in order to work toward security reform in the region.<sup>25</sup>

Even in the face of 20 years of support in the fight against terrorism, Sudan is one of only four nations that the United States lists as a sponsor of terrorism - the other three being Iran, Cuba, and Syria. Former Envoy to Sudan, General J. Scott Gration, stated in a congressional hearing in 2009 that not only should US economic sanctions on Sudan be abolished, but also that Sudan's placement on the US State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism is baseless. Gration argues that there is no tangible evidence of Sudan's alleged active involvement in terrorism, and that the country's designation as a sponsor is purely political. He also references the Central Intelligence Agency's statement that Sudan has been a cooperative ally in the global fight against terrorism, and has saved American lives as a result. Gration believes that US sanctions have proven to be obstacles in Sudan's attempts to go down the US-approved path towards democracy and good governance and, most importantly, have damaged US interests in the region by adversely impacting the livelihoods of the citizens they purport to assist.<sup>26</sup>

### **Consequences of Sanctions on the Sudanese People**

The US claims that it aims to develop a better Sudan, one that is free of human rights violations, and is fully democratic and peaceful. However, the United States sanctions on Sudan keep the country in a state of economic despair, the kind of despair that has long been regarded as the source of the nation's violent past. The history of similar sanctions shows that they almost always have the same effect: the people at the lowest level of the socioeconomic ladder confront the biggest blows across a variety of different sectors.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Bhattacharji, Preeti. "State Sponsors: Sudan." Council on Foreign Relations. April 02, 2008. <http://www.cfr.org/sudan/state-sponsors-sudan/p9367>.

<sup>24</sup>United States Department of State. "Country Reports on Terrorism 2012 - State Sponsors of Terrorism: Sudan." May 30, 2013. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/51a86e5e18.html>.

<sup>25</sup>United States Department of State. "Country Reports on Terrorism 2013 - State Sponsors of Terrorism: Sudan." April 30, 2013. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/536229a3b.html>.

<sup>26</sup>Badawi, Ahmed. "Call to Lift US Sanctions from Sudan Deserves Praise Not Derision." African Arguments. August 13, 2009. <http://africanarguments.org/2009/08/13/call-to-lift-us-sanctions-from-sudan-deserves-praise-not-derision>.

Below are just some examples:

### **Social Entrepreneurship Initiatives**

The “Solar Energy for Villages” project was meant to take place in Sudan, with the purpose of teaching rural woman how to develop solar energy generators. After receiving instructional education, these women would return to their villages and use their new-found skills to help electrify their communities using solar energy. Due to the sanctions, however, the founders of the pilot program were unable to import the necessary equipment, effectively putting an indefinite halt to a project that would have vastly improved the energy situation of many villages.<sup>27</sup>

### **Domestic Education**

The impact of US sanctions on the domestic education sector of Sudan is characterized by a vicious cycle - sanctions negatively affect employment rates; families find themselves in worsened financial states; their children are forced to drop out of school and find ways to generate income so as to ease their parents’ economic woes.

People in Sudan are also prohibited from accessing certain online information databases, which poses a significant challenge and source of frustration for those involved in technology, civil society, and education. Crucial online software frequently used by schools and companies is also commonly inaccessible in the country. As a result, “regular citizens, as well as universities, rely heavily on pirated software that cannot be updated online automatically and is often ridden with malware”.<sup>28</sup> Another example of a partially closed off valuable resource is that of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC), which are provided by websites like Coursera, offering classes “by top universities in the US and around the world, [that] range from chemistry to theology and are praised for opening up access to education.”<sup>29</sup> Be it online or offline, economic sanctions have found a way to curb the personal growth of the citizens of Sudan.

### **Medical Industry**

Critical HIV-testing technology that allows doctors to determine a newborn baby’s HIV status is barred from import, leaving many families with no option but to wait until the baby is 18 months old before doctors are able to determine HIV status. Additionally, certain pharmaceutical drugs that are not available in the marketplace as a result of the sanctions are priced three times higher than the average market price.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, while health and humanitarian-related items imported from the US do not come with the burden of sanctions, the Department of the Treasury makes the bureaucratic process of Sudanese requests for hospital equipment an unnecessarily lengthy one, resulting in avoidable deaths.

### **Civil Infrastructure**

Prior to US sanctions, railroads were supplied by American conglomerate General Electric (GE). After the sanctions were imposed in 1997, China and South Africa filled the void left by GE, but their offerings failed to meet the quality and standards of GE’s superior product. Productivity decreased significantly: from 4 million tons in 1995 to 200,000 in 2004, rail freight experienced a sharp decline. Bear in mind that “there is no functioning train from Khartoum to Sudan’s major port on the Red Sea, Port Sudan, and the tracks have

<sup>27</sup>Mujahid, Mohammed “How Economic Sanctions Cause Destructive Effects on Employment, Health, and Education.” December 18, 2014.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Jeffries, Adrienne. “US Government Blocks Students in Iran, Cuba, and Sudan from Taking Free Online Classes.” The Verge. January 29, 2014. <http://www.theverge.com/2014/1/29/5358664/us-government-blocks-students-in-iran-cuba-and-sudan-from-taking-free-online-classes-coursera>.

<sup>30</sup>Freeman, Lawrence K. “Sudan at the Crossroads: Sanctions Are Killing Off Africa’s Breadbasket.” Executive Intelligence Review, July 11, 2014. [http://www.larouche.org/eiw/public/2014/eirv41n27-20140711/33-39\\_4127.pdf](http://www.larouche.org/eiw/public/2014/eirv41n27-20140711/33-39_4127.pdf).

been ripped up and sold off for scrap iron. In a huge country like Sudan, where roads are minimal at best, without extensive rail lines to move goods and people, the economy will never develop.”<sup>30</sup>

### **Science and Technology Space**

Africa’s City of Technology is a research center under the umbrella of Khartoum University, housing a super-computer that connects 40 universities around Africa. There are over one hundred researchers and students in the center, committed to advancing the technological growth of the continent. However, the required certifications necessary to advance careers and establish legitimacy are not available in Sudan - Google does not allow their certifications to be received in the country. As a result, researchers and students are forced to either work uncertified, or travel outside of the country to receive the certification.<sup>31</sup>

### **Personal and Family Finances**

Many Sudanese people rely heavily on allowances from family members and close friends who work in the US and whose financial support is often a matter of life or death. United States sanctions make it impossible for such people to gain access to these funds, resulting in a disastrous disruption to inflows of cash that fund medical and school fees, provide food security, and other vital necessities. The sanctions stipulate that the only ways in which someone in Sudan can receive their funds is for the remittances to be “1) ... routed to the recipient via regional money exchange bureaux; and 2) ... paid directly to the recipient by a local middleman, once the sender deposits the sum in the US bank account of the middleman.” Both methods are costly and time consuming, resulting in processing fees and extra income taxes – money that could otherwise go to sending another child to school. Adding to their difficulties, if someone in another Western nation were to send money directly to family members in Sudan, these transfers can face delays of up to 20 days, due to the US’s influence on the global payment system.<sup>32</sup>

### **Local Business**

Small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular, have all but lost access to short-term international trade finance, as most non-US banks are not willing to lend to the majority of Sudanese firms. Furthermore, “even local firms that can access trade finance incur a ‘sanctions premium’ on loans which, in turn, feeds through to ordinary Sudanese consumers in the form of higher costs for goods and services; in other words a regressive income tax.” In regards to the agricultural sector, farmers have also faced sanctions-induced challenges. They lack access to the US export market and essential American technology and the best environmental management practices to foster greater crop yields. Therefore, “US sanctions ... narrow the escape from poverty for nearly half of Sudan’s working population.”<sup>33</sup>

### **Anti-Government Sentiment**

Given the country’s state of economic turmoil, one might ask why the citizenry has not risen up against the government. After all, it can be argued that it is Sudan’s actions, which are antithetical to the idea of a harmonious and cooperative global community, which forced the US’s hand. While there have not been widespread protests specifically directed at the policies that lead to US sanctions, there have been demonstrations in response to the country’s general economic situation, which itself is a consequence of US sanctions and Sudan losing three quarters of its oil production after its 2011 split from South Sudan. Protests erupted in Khartoum shortly after the government implemented austerity measures in September 2013, leading to a sharp increase in food and fuel prices.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Badawi.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

Thousands took the streets, demanding that Omar al-Bashir resign. Voices grew stronger after police officers reportedly responded to the protests with excessive force, leading to the death of dozens of protesters. While these protests ultimately lost momentum, a combination of Sudan's lack of successful economic policies to deal with life without its southern neighbor and consistent US sanctions may create a very fertile environment for protests in the future.

### **The Survival of Sudan's Government and Top Officials**

While the Sudanese people have shouldered a heavy economic and personal burden as a direct result of US sanctions, the effect of these on the most senior levels of government is less apparent. Upon careful examination, it appears that the government and its officials have found ways to circumvent the intended consequences of the sanctions and continue to prosper.

For example, an important aspect of the sanctions has been the freezing of assets of Sudanese officials. On April 26 2006, George Bush issued an executive order that blocked the personal assets of a number of people connected to the crisis in Darfur. Additionally, it froze Sudanese companies out of US financial institutions, blocking their access to revenue. Despite these extensive measures, ultimately they were not the proverbial punch to the stomach that the US government would have hoped. While a headache at first, the "Sudanese elite moved their assets out of Western countries and into Asia and the Middle East over time. The impact of US efforts to freeze assets decreased over time because fewer and fewer Sudanese assets were under US control."<sup>34</sup> Financial institutional support in the Eastern part of the globe helps the Sudanese in their fight for survival under potentially crippling sanctions.

Another important factor to consider is the exemption of gum arabic from US sanctions. Gum arabic is found primarily in Sudan. Sudan is estimated to export 40-70% of the world's supply of gum arabic.<sup>35</sup> The commodity has been vital to the US and Europe for decades, as it is an integral ingredient in products such as Coca Cola and Pepsi. Naturally, due to its high demand, gum Arabic has provided the Sudanese government with a lucrative revenue stream. Prices are currently between \$2,800 and \$3,200 per ton, with exports at \$134.1 million, due to demand from the US and Europe.<sup>36</sup> While not quite the revenue generator that oil represents, the exemption of gum arabic nevertheless affords the government a major opportunity to counteract the impairment brought on by US sanctions.

Finally, and arguably most important, Sudan's economic relationship with other state actors is what has allowed the Sudanese government to mitigate the injury of sanctions. The vacuum left by the US provided an opportunity for other countries, such as China and India, to step in, essentially just "transferring business from American firms to foreign competitors in the same market. MNCs operating in [the developing world] move in swiftly with the blessings of the target regime to replace Western trade and investment. Ultimately, the MNCs take advantage of the target regimes' strategic decision to invite foreign investment in a way to cope with intensified Western pressure."<sup>37</sup> For example, China's presence has played a tremendous role in compensating for the business opportunities lost as a result of the economic sanctions; the Chinese government has invested billions of US dollars into

<sup>34</sup>Bose, Peter A. "US Foreign Policy and Genocide in Sudan." Georgetown University - Program of Security Studies, November 16, 2009. <https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/bitstream/handle/10822/553453/bosePeter.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

<sup>35</sup>Allison, Simon. "Why Sudanese Rebel Advances Spell Trouble for Coca Cola." The Guardian. April 13, 2013. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/apr/30/sudan-rebel-coca-cola>.

<sup>36</sup>"Sudan Courts Gum-Arabic Farmers to Satisfy Demand for Soda." Bloomberg.com. February 21, 2014. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-02-20/sudan-courts-gum-arabic-farmers-to-sate-west-s-demand-for-soda>.

<sup>37</sup>Chingono, Heather, Mediel Hove, and Steven J. Danda. "Sanctions Effectiveness in a Globalized World." International Journal of Humanities and Social Science 3, no. 21 (December 2013). [http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol\\_3\\_No\\_21\\_\[Special\\_Issue\\_December\\_2013\]/33.pdf](http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_3_No_21_[Special_Issue_December_2013]/33.pdf).



Sudan, from jump-starting the country's petroleum industry, to developing the region's infrastructure, to introducing the nation to the latest technological developments.

The above implications are important to keep in mind when discussing the effectiveness of US sanctions on Sudan. If the Sudanese government can still identify and seize opportunities to make major financial returns, while the people of Sudan suffer under crippling sanctions, then it is quite evident that the efficacy of US sanctions on Sudan must be re-evaluated.

### **Potential Solutions**

Considering the disparity between the effect of US sanctions on Sudan's citizens and on governmental officials, and that the intended purpose of the sanctions in forcing the hand of the Sudanese government is not materializing, a different approach should be considered in terms of an effective diplomatic strategy for US-Sudan relations. As this paper illustrates, the evidence tells a story of ineffective and misguided sanctions, making it all the more critical that different strategic and diplomatic avenues be explored.

If US sanctions on Sudan are to continue, then the US should consider working with Sudan's allies and economic partners. Since the government has found ways to cope and thrive without US economic support, there are now other nations who play a more influential role in Sudan's state of affairs than the US. While China's relationship with the US is not entirely warm, China can become a major ally in the US's effort to reform Sudan. Additionally, as a member of both the African Union and the Arab League, Sudan has economic and political ties with a number of Middle Eastern and African nations. The US can engage these nations in their pursuit of Sudan's reform. If the US can provide an appealing and strong set of incentives to these countries to act on its behalf, it is possible that Sudan's government would be more willing to cooperate with the US and satisfy their requests and expectations.

One potential compromise that the US and Sudan can make is to give Sudan smaller milestones to achieve in order that sanctions be lifted incrementally. For the past two decades, the US has demanded that Sudan identify solutions to major domestic conflicts, such as their civil war with South Sudan, the conflict in Darfur and, mostly recently, rebellions in the states of Blue Nile and South Kordofan. While Sudan has made major strides in establishing peace with South Sudan and rebels in Darfur, and the US has praised the Sudanese government for achieving such important steps, sanctions still persist as the US has consistently conveyed a lack of satisfaction with the current state of affairs. From Sudan's perspective, the US appears not to be holding up to their end of the deal and, as a result, the government of Sudan has become less confident that the US is genuine in their diplomatic promises. Giving Sudan more manageable pre-conditions, rather than demanding that Sudan simply eradicate deep-rooted and complex conflicts in one fell swoop, will lead to a more productive relationship; Sudan will be given the incentive to continue making progress as they see their hard work pay off through the incremental loosening of sanctions.

The simplest solution to the inefficacy of US sanctions on Sudan, however, is their complete removal. If the US wants to transform Sudan into a truly democratic and free member of the international community, then it needs to acknowledge the challenges of that transformation and the positive role it can play in helping make it happen. No government can "ever be expected to feel comfortable about embarking full speed towards whole scale political transformation when its back is against the wall - especially one with justifiable paranoia like Khartoum." Sudan needs breathing space, in addition to feeling as if the international community is on its side, if it is to embark on political and economic reform. Of course, the mere suggestion of the idea may receive tremendous backlash and anger in the American political sphere. Sudan's reputation as a pariah state - particularly with regard to its deplorable human rights track record in Darfur and beyond - has not done the country any favors. But what US politicians should understand is that removing sanctions is about

“recognizing the severe price ordinary Sudanese ... keep paying for the maintenance of the sanctions,” and understanding that sanctions can play a detrimental role to the establishment of a healthy, fruitful, and sustainable democracy.<sup>38</sup>

### Conclusion

The situation in Sudan is one wherein the citizens of the country are carrying a heavy burden as a result of ongoing US sanctions, while the government of Sudan and its leaders - a wealthy few - are able to circumvent these limitations through large-scale investments from countries like China and revenue streams from natural resources. Though the US provides evidence of Sudan’s willingness to satisfy the conditions of the sanctions,<sup>39</sup> the sanctions have nonetheless had a severely adverse impact on the livelihoods of the country’s citizenry, and have impeded operations of domestic businesses. Because of the questions surrounding the efficacy of the sanctions in achieving their inherent goals, it is critical for the sake of the people of Sudan that the sanctions, at the very least, be fully evaluated by the US government.

### Bibliography

- Allison, Simon. “Why Sudanese Rebel Advances Spell Trouble for Coca Cola.” *The Guardian*. April 13, 2013. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/apr/30/sudan-rebel-coca-cola>.
- Astill, James. “Strike One.” *The Guardian*. October 2, 2001. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/oct/02/afghanistan.terrorism3>.
- Badawi, Ahmed. “Call to Lift US Sanctions from Sudan Deserves Praise Not Derision.” *African Arguments*. August 13, 2009. <http://africanarguments.org/2009/08/13/call-to-lift-us-sanctions-from-sudan-deserves-praise-not-derision>.
- Bhattacharji, Preeti. “State Sponsors: Sudan.” *CFR.org*. April 2, 2008. <http://www.cfr.org/sudan/state-sponsors-sudan/p9367>.
- Bhattacharji, Preeti. “State Sponsors: Sudan.” *Council on Foreign Relations*. April 02, 2008. <http://www.cfr.org/sudan/state-sponsors-sudan/p9367>.
- Bose, Peter A. “US Foreign Policy and Genocide in Sudan.” *Georgetown University - Program of Security Studies*, November 16, 2009. <https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/bitstream/handle/10822/553453/bosePeter.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.
- Chalk, Peter. *Encyclopedia of Terrorism*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013.
- Chingono, Heather, Mediel Hove, and Steven J. Danda. “Sanctions Effectiveness in a Globalized World.” *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 3, no. 21 (December 2013). [http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol\\_3\\_No\\_21\\_\[Special\\_Issue\\_December\\_2013\]/33.pdf](http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_3_No_21_[Special_Issue_December_2013]/33.pdf).
- “Embassy of the United States Khartoum, Sudan.” *US-Sudan Relations*. [http://sudan.usembassy.gov/ussudan\\_relations.html](http://sudan.usembassy.gov/ussudan_relations.html).
- Freeman, Lawrence K. “Sudan at the Crossroads: Sanctions Are Killing Off Africa’s Breadbasket.” *Executive Intelligence Review*, July 11, 2014. [http://www.larouchepub.com/eiw/public/2014/eirv41n27-20140711/33-39\\_4127.pdf](http://www.larouchepub.com/eiw/public/2014/eirv41n27-20140711/33-39_4127.pdf).
- Jeffries, Adrienne. “US Government Blocks Students in Iran, Cuba, and Sudan from Taking Free Online Classes.” *The Verge*. January 29, 2014. <http://www.theverge.com/2014/1/29/5358664/us-government-blocks-students-in-iran-cuba-and-sudan-from-taking-free-online-classes-coursera>.
- Mujahid, Mohamed. “How Economic Sanctions Cause Destructive Effects on Employment, Health, and Education.” December 18, 2014.

<sup>38</sup> Badawi.

<sup>39</sup>US Department of Treasury

- Niblock, Tim. *Pariah States & Sanctions in the Middle East: Iraq, Libya, Sudan*. Boulder, Co.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001.
- "The Sanctions Regime." Understanding Sudan. 2009. <http://understandingsudan.org/oil/OilResources/L2FS4-SanctionsRegime.pdf>.
- "Sudan Courts Gum-Arabic Farmers to Satisfy Demand for Soda." Bloomberg.com. February 21, 2014. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-02-20/sudan-courts-gum-arabic-farmers-to-sate-west-s-demand-for-soda>.
- Tristam, Pierre. "Khartoum Declaration (1967) - Full Text of the Khartoum Declaration in Arab-Israeli Conflict." About.com. <http://middleeast.about.com/od/documents/qt/khartoum-declaration-1967.htm>.
- United Nations Security Council (SC). "Resolution 1054." April 26, 1996. <http://www.un.org/documents/sc/res/1946/scres46.htm>.
- United States Department of State. "Country Reports on Terrorism 2012 - State Sponsors of Terrorism: Sudan." May 30, 2013. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/51a86e5e18.html>.
- United States Department of State. "Country Reports on Terrorism 2013 - State Sponsors of Terrorism: Sudan." April 30, 2013. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/536229a3b.html>.
- "US Bombs Libya." History.com. <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/us-bombs-libya>.
- "US Department of the Treasury, Foreign Assets Control." *Effectiveness of US Sanctions - With Respect to Sudan*, January 2009. [http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Documents/sudan\\_report\\_030509.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Documents/sudan_report_030509.pdf).
- "US Relations With Sudan." US Department of State. May 30, 2014. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5424.htm>.