ARMED CONFLICT AND POPULATION DISPLACEMENT,
A STUDY OF SUDAN CRISIS:

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ABSTRACT

The growing numbers of incidents of armed conflicts in Africa has become alarming and a source of worry to all as it has caused serious loss of lives and properties and among other things, led to massive exodus of people from their homes and to different African countries to another. Using the Sudan conflict as a focal point, this study examined the armed conflict and its consequent population displacement in Africa. The study observed that the conflict which has its origin in the recorded history of Sudan was heightened by the subsequent cry of marginalization by some sections of Sudan. The conflict has led to adverse upsurge of population displacement which invariably produced child mortality issues, diseases, illiteracy and child soldiery among other issues. The study also looked at the impact of population displacement on the Sudanese and investigated the role of the government in the conflict. Using qualitative methods of data collection, the study concludes that; first, the government played an encouraging role in the sustenance of the conflict; second, the conflict has displaced over four million people including the children and women (vulnerable). Finally, the study takes a position that until the government rise up to the challenges facing it to objectively solve the problem, and looking the condition of the displaced and see to their subsequent reintegration, peace might be elusive in Sudan and indeed the total destruction of the fabric of the country might be emergent and imminent.

Key Words: Armed Conflict, Population Displacement, Peace Building and Conflict Resolution.

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INTRODUCTION

Armed conflicts in Africa have left populations vulnerable to appalling forms of violence, including, abduction, amputation, mutilation, genocide, systematic rape, sexual

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exploitation and leaves girls vulnerable to unwanted pregnancy and threatens all children with separation from their families, orphaning, increased risk of sexually transmitted infections, disability and serious longtime psychosocial consequences.

The armed conflict in Southern Sudan erupted soon after Sudan's independence, ended in 1972 (1956). In 1983, civil war resumed between the government in Khartoum and the Sudan's People Liberation Army (SPLA) and was caused by raising allegation of marginalization, transformation of southern (Christian dominated) into Muslim (by application of Sharia law on Christian dominated south), the northern desire to control the natural resources (oil) in the south and the unequal relevance which was an imbalance created by the colonialist (British) when they left Sudan (Okoye, 2011). That second civil war was brought to an end by the comprehensive peace over agreement (CPA) of January 2005, which set out detailed transitional arrangements for six-year term period. It also addressed a number of other issues, including power and wealth sharing, security arrangements and resolutions of the conflicts in Abeyi, Southern Kordofan and the Blue Nile states. It provided for an autonomous southern government, nationwide democratic elections that were held in April 2010 and referendum to be held in 2011 in Southern Sudan on self Determination for the South Sudan (Tribune, 7th March 2010).

A new conflict eructed in early 2003, as loosely allied rebel groups in Darfur, the Sudan Liberation Movernment/Army (SLM/A_ and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) took up arms against the Government of Sudan (GOS). As with Sudan's other conflicts, the cause of the war in Darfur lay in the central government's neglect and failure to share resources and wealth equitably. After months of negotiations and pressure from the international community, the GOS and a fraction of SLM/A under the rebel leader Minni Minnawi Signed the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) in May 2006 (Okoye, 2011). However, the DPA failed to bring peace and stability to the regions as several rebel groups opposed the agreement. Instead, it led to the fragmentation of rebel groups and sparked new waves of violence (women's commission, December 2008). The intractable conflicts in Sudan is basically premised on the deeply-rooted tension between the centre and the peripheral regions characterized by a highly inequitable division of power and wealth and the regions unwillingness to manage the country's diverse ethnic and religious make-up after.

Basically, when conflicts erupt, it leaves at its trail an unimaginable record of consequences. Today in Africa, armed conflict has led many into fleeing from their homes and consequently getting displaced which invariably has produced an added negative effects to the conflicting countries in Africa like, Algeria, Angola, Burundi, Congo, Brazzaville, democratic republic of Congo, Liberia, Sudan and Sierra Leone.

As of May 2010 at least 4.9 million people were internally displaced in Darfur, the greater Khartoum area, South Kordofan and the ten states of Southern Sudan, with unknown numbers of internally displaced people in the other Northern and Eastern states (IDMC 2010), while some of them fled into southern cities, such as Juba, others trekked far north as Khartoum and even into Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Egypt and other neigbouring countries. These people were unable to grow food or earn money to feed

themselves, malnutrition and starvation became widespread (see Sudan Famine 2010). The lack of investment in the south for two decades resulted as well in what international humanitarian organization call a "lost generation" and has equally led to a weak economy in that region. Indeed, alongside Colombia, Sudan makes one large internal displacement situations in the world and as depicted in the reports above, some people have been displaced for more than two decades, while others were newly displaced in 2009 and 2010 (IDMC 2010).

This paper tries to look into the conflict in Sudan especially to find out its implication on displacement of high number of Sudanese population as well as ascertain the implication of such displacement on the Sudanese state. To achieve this, we shall be guided by the specific challenges of finding the level of relationship between armed conflict and population displacement in Sudan; and the possible effects of sustenance of such level of displaced population of Sudanese on building the peaceful atmosphere for resolving the Sudanese conflict.

Conceptual and Theoretical Discourses

Literature Expositions

Armed conflicts carry various effects; direct and indirect which strongly impact on living conditions of a population at the time of the conflict and many years thereafter. Civil wars and violent insurrections kill, displaces and injures millions of people every year. They destroy infrastructure, services, assets and livelihood, displace populations, break social coalitions, institutions and norms and create dislocations in countries where they occur. As Nwanegbo (2002, 2006, 2008) avers, that civil wars have resulted in more deaths than international wars. Indeed, it has resulted in three times as many deaths as inter-state wars between states since World War II. Most people affected by armed conflict live in poor countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America (Fearon and Laitin 2003, Stalwart et al 2001), in conditions of extreme destitution, which in turn may lead into future outbreak of violence even after the initial conflict has subsided (Justino, 2009). As Nwanegbo (2008) explained the improperly resolved conflict situation always experience resurgence once the weak base is founded collapses.

Individuals and households in developing countries face socio-economic risks even in the absence of armed conflict (Dercon 2004), insecure socio-economic risks even force vulnerable people into depression and distress (Justino 2009). Therefore, outbreak of armed conflicts further increases insecurity. These are typically associated with destruction of essential infrastructure and social reductions in public and private investment. Agreeing with Dercon (2004), Justino (2009) argues that armed conflict kill and displace population, often limiting the access of people to employment and earning (due for instance, to death or recruitment of young adult males) and increasing levels of instability and lots of trust. According to Kalyvas (2006), the situation can be aggravated once displaced and refugee population and demobilized combatants return to their communities in post-conflict situations, particularly when aid and medical help (at least for those that were in refugee camps) may no longer be available. Conflict and

137

subsequently times of insecurity and fear may impact on the ability of individuals and households to fall back on known survival strategies (Justino 2009).

Armed conflicts are typically accompanied by large population movement. Civilian population are often targets for both armies and rebel groups fighting to expand their territorial control, weaken population support for opponent groups, increase their own support base and/or add to their resource through looting and appropriation of valuables, assets and sites (Kalyvas 2006, Vargas 2007). This leads to population flights from areas of known intense fighting or areas where the outbreak of violence is expected. In 2002, almost 34.8 million people across the world were forced to seek asylum in another country or within the national borders due to violent conflicts: 25 million people were displaced in 2004 (UNCR 2005) many within its own country (IDMC 2006). This was done through cutting off large numbers of people from economic opportunities. Internal conflicts can lead to vicious cycle of displacement and population poverty from which it is difficult to escape. This is made worse by the destruction of social networks and the consequent depleting of important elements of the several economic and political aspect of the vulnerable (weak). Refugee from conflicts areas and displaced populations are counted amongst those living under the most difficult forms of socio-economic exclusion and deprivation. Asylum seekers and forced migrants are to a large extent, young economically active population (Justiono 2009). These have always been traditionally the most likely members in society to migrate. In conflict settings, this forced recruitment by the fact that they are also most probably targets for violence and forced recruitment into armies or rebel groups (see Czaika and Kis-katos, 2007) other displaced groups such as the elderly, women and children are over represented amongst refugees from conflict areas (Justino 2009).

Ibanez and Moya (2006) analyzed empirically the cost of displacement. They used household level data for 2322 Columbia displaced people to estimate welfare issues for displaced household, to understand how displaced population sought for what they consume and to analyze the strategies they adopt to survive. Their results indicated that forced displacement entails significant assets losses or limits of the ability of people to generate new sources of income, disrupt risk-sharing mechanism amongst effected communities and forced population to rely on cost strategies in order to smooth consumption.

In the context, displaced Bosnians during the 1992 – 1995 war, kondylis (2007) shows that displaced population are less likely to work in the post-conflict period, during that time displaced men and women were likely to be in work by 7 and 5 percentage points respectively, in relation to the remaining population.

Indeed there was a consensus among scholars in war studies, peace and conflict resolution that the level of violence present in Africa today, and explained that the continent claimed millions, involving women and children (Akpulu-Aja, 1999). Millions died of malaria and tuberculosis due to unhealthy exposures. The total number of payable adults endangered by HIV/AIDS even after some of the conflicts in Africa is resolved stood to about 23.3 million (Akpulu-Aja 2007).

The foregoing points to one massage, an endless conflict in Africa has not only effected development adversely, but compounded a host of health, environmental, economic, financial and political ills (see Nwanegbo, 2005, 2006, 2008). Emerging research on peace and conflict resolution reveals that among that plethora of conflicts in Africa today, the most intractable wars are found in Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and Sudan (Akpuru-Aja, 2007), with its consequences in that region and that justifies our work in its search to expose the level and consequences of displacement arising from that in Sudan.

Theoretical Discourses

This study was based on the frame of Structural Conflict Theory. The main argument of the structuralists is that conflict is built into the particular ways societies are structured and organized. The theory looks at social problem like political and economic exclusion, injustice, poverty, diseases, exploitation, and inequity etc as sources of conflict (Ademola in Shedrack, 2007). Structuralist maintains that conflicts occur because of the exploitative and unjust nature of human societies, which manifests in the domination of one class by another. This theory has two main sub-orientations. The first is the radical structural theory represented by the Marxist exponents like Karl Marx and Engels, V.I. Lenin, etc, while the second is the liberal structuralism represented liberal structuralism represented by Ross (1993), Scarborough (1998) and in the famous work of Johan Galtung (1990) on structural violence.

Liberal structualist like Johan Galtung propounded the theory of "Negative Peace" and "Positive Peace" to buttress how structuralist conflict can occur in society. The solution to this conflict according to the Marxist is revolution, civil war or some form of violence leading to the overthrow of the exploitative system. While the liberal structuralist call for the evaluation of structural defects with policy reforms (Ademola in Shedracks 2007.

The study adopts Structural Conflict Theory, more especially the Liberal Structural position because of its relevance to the cause of Sudan crisis and the relative peace since 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan Southern was made. The Sudan conflict came as a result of inequality and the consequent domination of the Southern Sudan by Northern Sudan which culminated into social injustice and exploitation of Southern Sudan. Following the position of the Radical Structuralist, civil war was fought to correct the imbalance but it could not solve the problem rather what it produced for the relative peace in southern regions, (is the series of peace agreement), which adheres to the policy reform position of the liberal structuralists.

The structuralist also believes that resource is a major cause of conflict between individuals and groups within political systems and nations (Ross, 1993) Scarborough (1998). This position can also account for Sudan conflict as natural resources positioned in the southern Christian dominated area is a major factor that re-ignited the second conflict of Sudan. Ross (1993:4) noted that in situation where economic and political discrimination and weak, kinship ties are the defining characteristics of the society, the

changes that negative forms of conflict will results are higher than in situation where the conditions are the exact opposite.

It should also noted that from the serialization from the literature, we hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between the prolonged armed conflict and the unquantifiable number of displacement of population of Sudanese citizens from their country and their base and secondly, the armed conflict and consequent displacement has spiral effect on Sudan and the Sudanese.

Armed Conflict and Population Displacement in Sudan

The protracted conflict between the Northern and Southern Sudan has produced over four (4) million people who were displaced for over two decades. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) brought relative peace in the region, though people still always flee from their homes at any slight spark of conflict even when it is not within their region.

With the quake 2003 the Darfur crisis started, a new twist and dynamics surrounded the displacement of Sudanese. From 2003 to 2007 the new displacement was 187,000 people, but rose exponentially immediately International Court of Justice (ICC) indicted AL-Bashir as rebel groups who agree to negotiate with Al-Bashir stopped the negotiation accusing him (Al-Bashir) of being a criminal.

In May 2008, renewed fighting in Abeyi and other border areas resulted in mass displacement of the people. Since the beginning of 2009 more than 200,000 people have been displaced by inter-tribal fighting and LRA incursions (Lord's / Resistance Army, a Ugandan rebel group known for its brutal attacks on civilians and who regularly capture children and use them as soldiers), And heavy fighting on Northern Bahrel, Ghazal Warrap, Lakes, Unity, Upper Nile and Jonglei states made thousands more people vulnerable to displacement. A new feature of the violence in 2009 was the deliberate targeting of women and children, who were often, shot at water points, in the fields or while collecting firewood (see IDMC report 2010).

In southern Sudan over 390,000 people were displaced in 2009 twice as many as 2008 and other 60,000 during the first four months of 2010. The increase of new displacement is a consequence of heightened inter and intra-tribal violence attacks by the Lord's resistance army (LRA) and conflicts between pastoralist communities, poor governance, the proliferation of fire arms and land disputes between returning IDPS refugees and residents, all exacerbated by drought and food shortages.

Five years after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) over two million IDPS had returned to southern Sudan by the end of 2009 but ten percent of returns had led to secondary displacement. The achievement of durable solution remains difficult, due to rising, increasing and limited access to services, livelihood and infrastructures. Out of Darfur's population of 6 million, about 2.7 were internally displaced in 2009 because of the sporadic conflict in the region.

As of May 2010, at least 4.9 million people are internally displaced in Darfur the greater Khartoum area, South Kordofan and the ten states of Southern Sudan, with

unknown numbers of internally displaced people in the Northern and Eastern States. They make up one of the two largest internally displaced populations in the world, alongside that of Colombia. Some people have been displaced in 2009 and 2010 (IDMC 2010).

Government Role and Armed Conflicts in Sudan

Two situations are considered in this part. The first a historical consistency of oppressive regime from Khartoum discriminating and exploiting the South is believed to have initiated grievances by the South (Johnson, 2003, as cited in Haile, 2012). Though it seems difficult to determine the root causes of conflicts in Sudan owing to the nature and complexity of the crisis, Haile (2012) observed that various scholarly commentaries suggest that exclusion of South Sudan from political power and development, along with the racial and ethnic divide between the North and South since colonial times, are considered major causes of civil war. With the end of the first phase of the civil war in the early 1970s, vast population of Southern Sudanese anticipated increased economic transformation and development but had their hopes dashed. According to Kebbede (1997:21), the central government planned a number of development projects for the South but failed to implement most of them. For instance, some of the unrealized projects included Nzara and Mongalla textiles, Malakal paper industry, Wau brewery, Tonj Kenaf, Melut and Mongalla sugar projects, Kapoeta cement factory, and Beden electric plant (Garang, 1984, cited in Kebbede 1997:21), were actually meant to be situated in the Southern territory and could have helped to increase the economic situation of the areas. These projects were hanged by the government of Sudan.

Following to this, Tar (2006:1) posited clearly that the conflict in Sudan was not an isolated phenomena but one deeply rooted in the political economy of unequal regional development in Sudan. This inequality seems to have persistently changed the nature of crisis in Sudan from ethno-religious cum communal based conflict to mainly the struggle for resources and state power especially during the second phase that commenced in 1983. It is important to state that political segregation and denial, spearheaded by the North Sudanese elites seems to have sustained the long years of conflict. Various government and regimes in Khartoum waged war and denied the South Sudanese equality, social justice, freedom and effective participation in the running of the state (Teny-Dhurgon, 1995). It would therefore be right to state that it was indeed the government's inability to share power and wealth equitably that has caused and has continued to fuel the crisis in Sudan.

Secondly, there were also records of the support by government of Sudan to a section of the country (North) in their militia struggle to suppress the other section (South) in the country. Specifically, since 2003, at least 300,000 civilians have died in Darfur and millions have been displaced from their houses, many of them at the hands of militia nick named the "Janjaweed" (Devil on Horseback) (see Okoye, 2011).

Time after time, survivors stated to internationally observers confirming that as they murdered, raped, looted and burnt village after village, the Janjaweed was backed by the Sudanese army and air force. Yet the Sudanese government has consistently denied

responsibility for atrocities in Darfur and to this day, has maintained that it has nothing to do with the Janjaweed (Okoye, 2011).

However, a senior army, finance officer (defector) a Janjaweed commander, soldier and fighter explained why and how the Sudanese government created and launched the Janjaweed militia, how they disguised the militia, when atrocities in Darfur came to world attention, how it armed and paid the Janjaweed and how they worked with the Sudanese regular army and air force and how rape has been used as a weapon against civilian population (see www.vimco.com) The witness implicated Sudanese government figures at the highest level including Ahmed Haran (minister of humanitarian affairs), Ali Osman Mohammed Jaha (second vice president) and even Omar Al-Bashir (the president).

The International Criminal Court (ICC) in May 2007 issued arrest warrant for minister of Humanitarian Affairs and a Janjaweed leader on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity in 2003 and 2004, but Sudanese government refused to cooperate. The ICC formerly requested the arrest of the President on 15th July 2008 but the effort was futile (Nytimes. Com) and on the 12th of July 2010 ICC issued a second arrest warrant on Bashir on three counts of genocide (CNN.com) Though, some analysts thinks that ICC indictment and the consequent arrest warrant of Al-Bashir is counterproductive and will hinder peace and process in Sudan, it still set to prove that indeed the government of Al-Bashir was deeply involved in some complexities that deepened the conflict in Sudan with the enormous consequence on population displacement (Wikipedia).

Population Displacement and Government Policies in Sudan

It is estimated that approximately 2 million people died and over 4 million were displaced during the 20 years war of the south with the North (IDMC report 2009). In the last five years, since after southern Sudan gained the right to govern itself in 2005 around 2 million people have returned to their homes and were going home to areas that were completely destroyed during the fighting with no basic services and limited opportunities to earn a living, which has caused land disputes between Internally Displaced Population (IDSP), refugees and residents all exacerbated by drought and food shortages.

The global economic recession has pushed up prices of basic goods and pushed down the price of oil. Meaning that the state revenue was likely to diminish. The lack of instrument in the south resulted as well in what international humanitarian organization called a "lost generation" who lack educational opportunities, access to basic health care services and low prospects of productive employment in the small and weak economy of the south and even the north (Wikipedia).

The security situation remains fragile in many areas. Abduction of children and women, cattle raids and inter-tribal rivalries are regular's occurrence and poses a serious threat to communities that are already vulnerable. A new feature of the violence in 2009 was the deliberate targeting of women and children who were often shot at water points, in the fields or while collecting fire woods (IDMC 2010).

During the April, 2010 election, many IDPS was unable to register and was thus widely excluded from the elections. Children and young people make up more than half the 10 million population of southern Sudan. Child and infant mortality rate are high (out of every 1,000 live births, 135 children died before their fifth birthday). Most children do not go to school and cannot get medical treatment when they are ill. Many do not have enough to eat (www.savethechildren.Com). In January 2010, the excess number of deaths increased exponentially with 80% of these due to diseases (Okoye, 2010).

Sudan has a population of 36.9 million people and more than half is directly or indirectly affected by the conflict. The 2007/2008 human development index categorized Sudan as low income, food deficit country and ranks 147 of 177 countries and territories in the world, with life expectancy at 58 years for both women and men. United Nations Officials estimate that at least half of the estimated one million refugees in Chad would die from lack of food, clean water and medical attention (USCR 2006).

Almost, half of Sudan's women 48% are illiterate and 29% for the men (Wikipedia) and this is a fallout of the prolonged conflict and the avalanche of population displacement it has produced as no nations economy grows when over 4 million people are displaced (a number which greater than some countries).

As a response to the outrageous number of people that were displaced by the conflict in Sudan and the criticism against the government over its serial indictments of sponsoring and supporting militia groups, the government adopted a number of policies which among them includes a national internal displaced policy in January 2009. This policy set out internally displaced policy rights during phases of displacement and the required responses to their needs. As a result of this, 13 international NGO's in March 2009 were expelled, and Sudanese government began taking responsibilities for all the operations that were previously carried out by the expelled NGO's and managed to avert a complete food crisis. Nonetheless, serious gaps remain in the provision of health care and support for victims of gender-based violence (IDMC 2009).

However, Sudan is yet to sign and ratify the African Union convention for the protection and assistance of internally displaced people in Africa (IDMC 2010). And this convention takes care of property right of the displaced population which has been on the increase (Wikipedia).

CONCLUSION

Armed conflict depletes physical, economic and human resources and leads to displacement of populations. This displacement disrupts children's education, leads to the death of people and exposes them to diseases and leads to the collapse of economy of region where people run away from their homes.

In Sudan more than half of the populations are directly affected by the conflict that has destroyed Sudanese infrastructure, caused a breakdown of trade and markets, food production was hampered by population displacement as well as the recurrent droughts. Malnutrition rates are consistently above emergency level, cases of diseases infections are high and the humanitarian crisis shows no sign of abating insecurity worsening as population displacement grows in bounds.

The state which is supposed to protect the vulnerable during armed conflict has been indicted with genocide and crime against humanity in Sudan. And the government has not done enough in improving the lots of the displaced populations. Even the returning IDPS in the southern Sudan has faced re-integrated problems and conflict among the returnees has lead to secondary displacement.

Unless the state stops supporting the militia and taking sides with any part in Sudan but address squarely issues that surrounds the crisis like the under-representation of some section and cry for self government in southern Sudan. Peace mighty by elusive and further displacement will increase exponentially.

However, the government has not been committed to her displacement policies and this has lead to further population in Sudan.

RECOMMNDATION

The beleaguered history of Sudan conflict which has produced the second highest incidence of population displacement makes it imperative for a permanent solution. Accordingly, this work recommends the following as the panacea to the crisis and improvement on the conditions of the displaced which are not exhaustive.

1) The government should be committed and improve their capacity in protecting and assisting the displaced, recognizing that displaced people including children have the right to receive the same level public services as others.

2) Essential services including prevention, recovery and reintegration programme for the displaced in their possession, tracing and reintegration programme for children who have been separated from their families. Assistance to survivors of sexual violence as well as people who have been disabled, education services for children prevention of HIV infection, and care for children orphaned or made vulnerable by displacement.

3) International humanitarian organization should be encouraged and protected by the government and peace keeping operation both from AU, EU and UN.

4) Legislation and enforcement of international treaties must be respected and enforced by those in charge, including state and non-state entities, and criminal legislation should be reviewed to ensure that grave breaches of international humanitarian law are recognized as crimes.

5) The concreted effort of re-establishing peace in Sudan should more serious and participatory of all parties, especially the proposed referendum of the independence of southern Sudan which has assumed contestation in 2010 and issues of proper representation of sections that against under-presentation.

6) Efforts should be made by the government to monitor the activities and areas of the returning displaced population, so as to avoid or rather reduced any rise of tension that that could lead to secondary displacement.

7) The Sudanese should be made to know through re-orientation that Sudan is their country and those who have been displaced for decades should return, for it is only Sudanese can developed the economy of Sudan and this can only happen when people are in Sudan.

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