

# What to Do about Sudan Now?

## Enough Project Activist Brief

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The situation in Sudan has not improved since the Obama administration's policy review was released more than a month ago. In Darfur and in southern Sudan, violence continues, with attacks on civilians and proxy militia activity threatening the elections and displacing thousands from their homes. Intercommunal violence in the South has resurfaced and the ruling National Congress Party's, or NCP, sponsored militia-attacks against the South mirror past strategies used against Darfur and southern Sudan. The NCP uses these disturbances and divisions, as it has in the past, to portray an independent South as ungovernable. Inevitably, these practices undermine peace in Sudan.

The new United States policy elaborated an approach of deep diplomatic engagement supported by a balanced set of pressures and incentives that can be triggered according to benchmarks that are as yet unrevealed. With national elections only months away and parties currently locked in a dispute over the legislation governing the referendum on the future of southern Sudan, now is the time to act.

In Enough's latest strategy paper, John Prendergast argues that the Obama administration must recognize that it is time to utilize these pressures and begin applying consequences against the NCP. The situation today is urgent, and a number of the NCP's recent actions should have already tripped the wires and triggered specific actions:

- An information black-out in Darfur
- No conditions in place for free and fair elections scheduled for April 2010
- Undermining the referendum in southern Sudan scheduled for February 2011
- A dramatic increase in attacks against civilians in the South that is consistent with previous NCP-sponsored violence

The conclusion drawn from these trends is that without a firm response from the international community, full-scale nationwide war is inevitable. The United States must, then, organize and lead a multilateral diplomatic surge in Sudan aimed at negotiating and consolidating national peace. Knowing that the NCP has a tradition of only responding to an escalating series of pressures in order to change their behavior, the time is now to begin to apply these tactics so the opportunity to avert war is not lost.

*ACTION: Contact the Obama administration and demand that the Sudan regime's undermining of the North South peace deal should incur serious consequences. Tell the president it is time to use some of the pressures his policy calls for.*