

**SUDAN**

Sudan’s 19-year-old war has ravaged the lives of untold numbers of children, including adolescents. Now the prospects for peace in Sudan appear better than they have in many years. (See *Peace Initiatives* below.) The Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict (Watchlist) commends the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) for their recent, important steps to seek peace in Sudan, which could lead to dramatic improvements in young people’s lives.

This report is a call for the security and rights of young people to be included as a high priority in the ongoing peace process. The UN Security Council consistently highlights the harmful impact of armed conflict on children and the long-term consequences this has for durable peace, security and development. Priority attention to young people’s security, rights and place in society as future leaders is essential to the sustainability of Sudan’s encouraging peace process.

<b>INDICATORS<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>SUDAN</b>	<b>HIGH-VULNERABILITY AREAS<sup>2</sup></b>										
<b>Population</b>	Estimated 31,095,000 total Estimated 14,478,000 under age 18	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Bahr el Ghazal</td> <td>1,141,735 under age 18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eastern Equatoria</td> <td>527,702 under age 18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Western Equatoria</td> <td>367,510 under age 18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Upper Nile</td> <td>527,479 under age 18</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL</b></td> <td><b>2,564,426 under age 18</b></td> </tr> </table> <p>(2000)</p> <p>58% of the southern Sudanese population is under age 18.</p> <p>Statistics from other vulnerable areas, such as southern Blue Nile, Abyei Ingessana Hills and Western Darfur, are not available.</p>	Bahr el Ghazal	1,141,735 under age 18	Eastern Equatoria	527,702 under age 18	Western Equatoria	367,510 under age 18	Upper Nile	527,479 under age 18	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,564,426 under age 18</b>
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<b>Voting Age (Government Elections)</b>	Age 17	No elections have been held in southern Sudan in recent years.										

For security reasons not all sources will be attributed to an author.

<b>GNP per Capita</b>	US\$290	Unknown												
<b>Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)</b>	<p>Estimated 4.4 million uprooted Sudanese.<sup>3</sup>  —Estimated 442,500 refugees.  —Up to 4 million IDPs.</p> <p>Number of refugee and IDP children unknown.</p> <p>Several thousand IDPs have spontaneously returned to southern Sudan, primarily from Khartoum. Limited numbers of refugees have spontaneously returned. (2002)</p>	Approximately 1.8 million civilians, mostly women and children, have been displaced from southern Sudan. Many others have been displaced from vulnerable areas, such as Nuba, Blue Nile, Western Darfur and other regions.												
<b>Infant Mortality</b>	86/1,000 (1995–2000) 68/1,000 (2000, northern sector only)	Unknown												
<b>HIV Rates</b>	Estimated 450,000 total. Estimated 30,000 children (ages 0–15). Estimated 62,000 orphans <sup>4</sup> currently living (2001). Estimated 2.6% national adult prevalence rate (based on four surveillance sites). <sup>5</sup>	No concrete data is available. NGOs and UN agencies suspect the prevalence rate in southern Sudan, especially on border areas, to be much higher than the national prevalence rate and likely to be increasing quickly.												
<b>Education</b>	<p>Approximately 1 in 3 children attends school. 43% male and 37% female net primary school enrollment ratio. Figures vary among regions. Girls are underrepresented in the educational system.</p> <p>Estimated 7,446,000 adult (age 15 and older) illiterates (64% of females are illiterate).</p>	<p>Total gross enrollment, Grade 1:</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td>Bahr el Ghazal</td><td>43%</td></tr> <tr><td>Equatoria</td><td>31%</td></tr> <tr><td>Upper Nile</td><td>48%</td></tr> </table> <p>Total gross enrollment, Grade 8:</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td>Bahr el Ghazal</td><td>1%</td></tr> <tr><td>Equatoria</td><td>2%</td></tr> <tr><td>Upper Nile</td><td>0%</td></tr> </table> <p>Less than 30% of school-age children in southern Sudan are enrolled; this number may be as low as 15%.</p> <p>There are significant variations in enrollment levels between regions, with the highest enrollment rates in Equatoria. Day-to-day attendance rates in all regions are even lower.</p> <p>There is an estimated 60 to 75% gender gap for girls in high-vulnerability areas, widening with age. (2002)</p>	Bahr el Ghazal	43%	Equatoria	31%	Upper Nile	48%	Bahr el Ghazal	1%	Equatoria	2%	Upper Nile	0%
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<b>Compulsory and Voluntary Recruitment</b>	<p>Universal conscription in government military at age 18.</p> <p>Conscription in government and government-aligned forces may be forced and may be conducted without regard to age.</p>	<p>Same conditions in government-controlled garrison towns in these areas.</p> <p>The SPLA and other opposition forces forcibly recruit children under age 18.</p>
<b>Child Soldiers</b>	<p>Indicated in government forces, rebel forces, government-backed militias and tribal militias—including those backed by the GoS that operate in GoS territory. All groups are known to forcibly recruit children under age 18.</p>	<p>Thousands of child soldiers in opposition forces in southern Sudan, including SPLA forces in western Upper Nile. Children also serve in government and government-backed forces in the South.</p>
<b>Gender-Based Violence<sup>6</sup></b>	<p>Data on gender-based violence (GBV) are rarely collected. GBV connected to conflict, including sexual slavery of women and children, rape by military forces, forced prostitution and forced marriage, is known to be a widespread problem in Sudan.</p>	<p>No statistics are available. Abductions leading to GBV are reported to be most common in Bahr el Ghazal. Children, especially girls from these areas, are victims of sexual exploitation, sexual slavery, forced marriage, rape and other forms of violence after abduction by government-backed militias and opposition groups.</p>
<b>Landmines and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)</b>	<p>Between 500,000 and 3 million mines and UXO in Sudan.</p>	<p>Landmine and UXO contamination is known. Statistics are not available.</p>
<b>Small Arms</b>	<p>One of the largest build-ups of small arms in the world.</p>	<p>Young people, especially males, are heavily armed for military and other purposes. In recent years, young men in SPLA-controlled areas of Bahr el Ghazal have become armed to repel attacks by GoS-backed tribal militias—particularly on cattle camps. In other areas of the South, the GoS has armed tribes feuding with the SPLA.</p>
<b>Abduction and Slavery<sup>7</sup></b>	<p>Estimates range from 10,000 to 17,000 women and children abducted since 1983, primarily from high-vulnerability areas. Some 6,000 of these cases remain active.</p>	<p>No statistics are available. Abductions frequently occur in Bahr el Ghazal. Many abductees are held in Southern Darfur and Western Kordofan.</p> <p>Abductions have also been reported in western Upper Nile in 2002.</p>

(Note: Statistics are based on reports from various organizations that have conducted research in Sudan and among Sudanese refugees in other areas. See sources below.)

## INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS:

	<b>Government of Sudan</b>	<b>Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A)</b>
<b>Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict</li> <li>• Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography</li> </ul>	Ratified (1990) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed (2002)</li> <li>• Not Signed</li> </ul>	Endorsed 1995 <sup>8</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endorsed</li> <li>• Endorsed</li> </ul>
<b>Other Treaties Ratified</b>	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and Protocol; Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (signed); Mine Ban Treaty (signed)	
<b>Recent UN Security Council Resolutions</b>	The Security Council has not debated the situation in Sudan in recent years.	

## SUMMARY

Recent peace initiatives are significant and should focus on children’s security and rights and include civil society and women and children’s groups. At the same time, all parties must act immediately to bring an end to the wide array of violations against Sudanese children and adolescents documented in this report. The end of armed conflict alone will not halt many of the abuses, nor will it provide a remedy for the abuses already committed, without further action. These widespread rights abuses—most often committed with impunity against children and adolescents—include assault; rape; abduction; forced displacement; forced starvation; forced underage recruitment; slavery; killing; burning and destruction of villages, schools, churches, and hospitals; and other violations by both the GoS and armed opposition groups. The principal opposition group is the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A).

In October 2002, the UN Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan, Gerhart Baum, reported that the GoS, SPLA and other armed groups continued to perpetrate numerous serious violations of human rights and

international humanitarian law. In addition, in some instances, international corporate entities and foreign states have also played a role in the perpetration of rights violations.

International policymakers and aid officials generally agree that humanitarian conditions for children and all civilians in Sudan are among the worst in the world. Complicating efforts to improve these conditions, no comprehensive system for humanitarian or human rights data collection exists, and the parties responsible for these abuses are rarely held accountable for their actions. The vast, difficult landscape and the poor infrastructure of roads and transportation also complicate data collection. Until recently, data collection has also been hampered by persistent flight bans by the GoS, which prevented access to hundreds of thousands of civilians in southern Sudan and Nuba. War and insecurity have caused a near-complete breakdown of infrastructure in southern Sudan; the little infrastructure that does exist is primarily supported by international assistance agencies.

#### *Protection of Civilians and Access to Humanitarian Assistance*

In March 2002, the main parties to conflict agreed not to target civilians or civilian objects and to permit international monitors to evaluate their adherence to this agreement as a result of an initiative of the U.S. Special Envoy for Peace in Sudan, John Danforth. In September 2002, as part of this initiative, the United States, Britain, Italy and Norway launched the Civilian Protection Monitoring Team (CPMT) to investigate allegations of intentional military attacks on civilian targets by all parties to conflict. Monitoring has been slow to commence. Some NGOs and civil society groups have raised concerns about the CPMT, such as the limited scope of its mandate, which does not include monitoring of abductions, rape, recruitment of children and other abuses against civilians.<sup>9</sup> On February 9, 2003, the CPMT issued a preliminary report stating that the GoS and allied militia groups have targeted civilians, including women and children, in western Upper Nile in a series of attacks.

Denial of food and medical treatment, along with other war tactics, has endangered children's physical and mental well-being. Through militia attacks, bombing raids and mass evictions, parties to conflict have created an environment of chronic insecurity and poverty, leading to massive dependence on international assistance, which has often been inaccessible. These tactics have been consistently used, particularly during periods of drought and seasons when aid is most necessary.

According to the 2002 International Crisis Group report, *Ending Starvation As a Weapon of War in Sudan*, "humanitarian assistance has been manipulated cynically and devastatingly as a war strategy by both sides in Sudan, though overwhelmingly by the government, throughout the nineteen-year conflict." On average, the GoS had denied access to approximately 25 locations in southern Sudan per month, in violation of international law, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Geneva Conventions, which call for the special protection of civilians and children during armed conflict. In a breakthrough agreement signed on October 26, 2002, the GoS and SPLM/A allowed unimpeded humanitarian access to all parts of Sudan; the agreement has been extended until March 31, 2003. In another encouraging opening of access to vulnerable populations, the United Nations announced on January 22, 2003 a separate bilateral agreement with the GoS and SPLM/A to allow Operation Lifeline Sudan (see below) to provide humanitarian aid in Kassala State and southern Blue Nile.

### *High-Vulnerability Areas*

Children in southern and central Sudan are among the most vulnerable populations in the world. This is increasingly true in oil exploration areas.<sup>10</sup> Many of the children and adolescents living in the South and other marginalized areas of Sudan are forced to flee their homes, separated from their families, and are killed or injured due to the conflict. Other children succumb to infection by treatable diseases and malnutrition, because the health infrastructure in these areas has been destroyed in the war. Furthermore, trained health personnel and medicine are not available, with the exception of international medical emergency teams. Militaries and militias are known to recruit young people living in oil regions and other vulnerable areas. More than 30,000 children live unaccompanied and unprotected on the streets of Khartoum; many are from southern and central Sudan. Approximately 4,600 are girls. Approximately 80 percent of these children are believed to be working street children.

In 2000, UN agencies<sup>11</sup> estimated that more than 50,000 children in the South had lost both their parents as a consequence of the civil war and another 170,000 had no information about their biological parents. These children were likely isolated from their communities and families. Hundreds of children are unaccompanied; some are orphaned by war or famine and others are sent alone to seek food and safety. Commonly considered as a source of wealth due to the tradition of bride price, girls who are orphaned are particularly at risk of being exploited. They may be subject to abduction, slavery and forced marriage. Girls in the South are generally expected to submit to arranged marriages as a matter of custom. Many children have witnessed some form of severe trauma, leading in some cases to stress, nightmares, illness and anti-social behavior.

Children living in enclosed garrison towns in the South that are under the control of the GoS suffer similar violations of their rights and security. Bahr el Ghazal is the site of most documented abductions. Upper Nile is identified as increasingly vulnerable due to the population displacement caused by oil industry development.

Many children in the north, especially those in IDP camps, live on the streets and in shantytowns, with little or no access to medical care, education, clean water and other important services. They are vulnerable to HIV infection, abduction, trafficking and a wide range of other threats and abuses. Recent reports from Khartoum indicate that adolescent boys are abducted and forcibly recruited by government armed forces. In 1996, Human Rights Watch estimated that approximately 2 million IDPs were living in and near Khartoum.

Statistics about GoS-controlled areas that are available, such as UNICEF's (United Nations Children's Fund) Multiple Cluster Index Survey 2000, indicate enormous disparities between the central Nile Valley and other GoS-controlled areas. However, data about violations of the security and rights of children in the northern sector is generally limited. The Watchlist has made vigorous attempts during the course of several months to collect data on the impact of conflict on children in the north, with limited success. Although much of the heavy fighting has taken place in conflict zones in southern Sudan, children in the northern sector and GoS-controlled garrison towns suffer a "secondary" impact of conflict, as education, health, clean water and sanitation have degenerated due to serious underfunding and attrition of skilled personnel. According to children's experts based in Khartoum, the lack of information on children in the northern sector

in this report may point to a wider gap in the collection, compilation and dissemination of data about children in this sector.

## CONTEXT

Children in Sudan have never known peace. Sudan's 19-year-old civil war, waged mostly in the south of the country, is one of the world's longest-running wars; the conflict spread in 1986 to the central Nuba mountains and in 1995 to the east of Sudan. It is estimated that the war has caused over 2 million deaths either directly or indirectly by famine, illness and other threatening situations. Sudanese people comprise the largest population of displaced persons in the world. Like other displaced populations, it is estimated that more than 75 percent of the displaced Sudanese people are women and children.

The war encompasses north-south hostilities and various localized conflicts within different regions. Religion, ethnic identity, colonial history, land, food and desire for control over natural resources, particularly oil, water and grazing land, all play a role in the outbreak and perpetuation of the conflict. The government has often employed strategies of pitting different groups against each other, manipulating allegiances and enlisting proxies against the main rebel group. Parties to conflict and arms traders have increasingly armed young boys with modern automatic weapons, intended to help the boys protect themselves or their villages from traditional conflicts or to engage them as proxies for one side or another. There is little accountability for the use of these weapons.

Hundreds of thousands of young people have been born and raised surrounded by this violence. Policies that exploit civilians by denying them access to food and basic social services or hope for peace and security in the future leave children with little opportunity to escape the conflict or stop the cycles of violence when they grow into leadership positions. In addition, children are suffering the loss of their diverse ethnic identities, as displaced ethnic groups find themselves living on the periphery of their new communities. These children and their families have limited options to make a living and are forced to adapt to the dominant culture and lifestyle in order to survive. In contrast, in some instances the government has encouraged sharpening certain ethnic identities in the South to prevent unity against the central government.

Sudanese children,<sup>12</sup> particularly refugee children in northern Uganda, are also subject to massive abuses of their security and rights by the Lord's Resistance Army, which has operated in northern Uganda and southern Sudan (see below for details).

### *Natural Resources*

The battle over Sudan's rich natural resources, particularly oil, is one root cause and central component of the long-running civil war. UN officials and agencies, NGOs and others directly correlate human rights abuses, especially displacement, with oil development in Sudan. For example, the *Interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan (A/57/326)* points to "the continuation of grave human rights abuses linked to oil exploitation, aimed at depopulating oil-rich areas to ensure their control." According to a recent interagency NGO paper on Sudan, *The Key to Peace: Unlocking the Human Potential of Sudan*,<sup>13</sup> the oil fields themselves are a strategic target in the war and are the scenes of increased fighting, bombing raids, helicopter gunship attacks and human rights abuses, including against children, by all parties.

UN officials and agencies, NGOs and others have also blamed oil companies for complicity in the perpetuation of human rights abuses in oil exploration areas. The UN Special Rapporteur on Sudan has met with international oil companies operating in Sudan to highlight the importance of corporate social responsibility in the region. In 2001, an independent fact-finding mission to Sudan, commissioned by British and Canadian NGOs, alleged that oil companies are “knowingly or unknowingly” involved in GoS counterinsurgency strategies. For example, government helicopter gunships have been based at oil facilities, and some groups allege that the air force has actually launched bombing raids on civilian targets from oil field airstrips. In addition, some groups have criticized oil companies for failing to require transparency from the GoS on the use of oil-related revenues for such purposes as the purchase of heavy weaponry.

Following are recent examples of abuses against civilians, including young people, in oil exploration areas:

Amnesty International and others charge the Sudanese air force with attacks on civilian populations, explaining that the air force carries out “indiscriminate or deliberate bombing and shelling of civilians living and civilian institutions in the oil-rich western Upper Nile,” in violation of international law. Several attacks on schools are documented. The Sudan Catholic Bishops Conference documented an attack by the GoS on a primary school in Nuba in February 2000 that killed 20 students and their teacher. In another attack, in August 2000, a bomb fell near an open-air school where pupils were learning with a priest in Tonj in Bahr el Ghazal.

In September 2002, GoS warplanes wounded dozens of people in three areas of southern Sudan, including an attack on a displaced people’s camp at Amadi in Western Equatoria, which killed seven children in one family. In Wonrok in northern Bahr el Ghazal, the attack killed two boys aged three and 13. In February 2002, in the remote town of Bieh, GoS warplanes hit a World Food Program site coinciding with a planned food distribution. The attack killed at least 24 people, primarily women and children.

Analysts regularly report that extensive displacement in oil-rich areas is the result of a direct effort to redistribute the population in those areas to make way for oil exploitation. Christian Aid’s report, *Scorched Earth*, quoted an official of Operation Lifeline Sudan as saying that the government’s aim is “to depopulate the oilfields so oil surveys can be done in peace.”

Young southern Sudanese boys living in oil regions and the slums of Khartoum have been recruited by the GoS and its southern militias and trained in a military camp, forced to defend oilfields and in some cases ordered to attack their neighbors or relatives.<sup>14</sup>

Given that fighting occurs in oil-rich areas, it must be noted that the SPLA is also known to commit violations against civilians and young people in these areas. SPLA abuses were rampant throughout the 1990s and have continued to some degree in recent years. The SPLA has directed attacks on civilian health centers and other infrastructures that support children. For example, in 2001, the SPLA raided and burned a settlement housing 5,000 to 10,000 IDPs in Paboung. SPLA forces have raped, killed and injured young people and other civilians. They are also known to loot humanitarian stations, intimidate and attack healthcare workers and use children as soldiers.

In addition to control over oil, disputes regarding other natural resources like agricultural land, water and cattle play a role in perpetuation of armed conflict in Sudan. In his report to the



President of the United States, John Danforth stated, “any peace process should address the oil issue in order to resolve a major cause of conflict and to serve as the basis for a just peace.” Resource-sharing discussions regarding these other natural resources will also be key to the success of a just and sustainable agreement.

### *Peace Initiatives*

The GoS controls northern Sudan and the larger garrison towns in the South. The principal political and military faction in southern Sudan is the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), led by John Garang. In 1995, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) was formed in Eritrea as a broad political alliance that includes the SPLA and other mostly northern-dominated insurgent forces.<sup>15</sup> Sudanese armed groups have a long history of alignments and realignments.

Until last year, various peace initiatives in Sudan have made little progress. July 20, 2002 marked a promising new step in a multinational initiative to reach a peace settlement between the two principal warring parties, with the signing of the Machakos Protocol by the GoS and the SPLM/A. This was the result of negotiations held in Kenya under Kenyan leadership and under the sponsorship of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a regional association consisting of the governments of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. Donor countries have also played an important role in the process.

The Machakos Protocol provides for a six-year interim period (and a six-month, pre-interim period) with a view to improving the institutions and arrangements to make the unity of Sudan attractive to the people of South Sudan, to be followed by a southern referendum vote to confirm or reject the unity of Sudan. The interim period has not yet started because the parties have not reached agreement on outstanding issues, including power and resource-sharing arrangements and the status of marginalized areas outside of the traditional south.

Prospects for peace under the Machakos initiative are better than they have been in many years. In December 2002, during workshops regarding power-sharing, the GoS and SPLM/A reaffirmed their strong commitment to achieving a peace settlement as quickly as possible. Despite a resumption of violence in western Upper Nile in January 2003, peace negotiations between the parties are ongoing. In February 2003, the parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) reaffirming their commitment to the total cessation of hostilities. An addendum to the MoU announces the formation of a Verification Monitoring Team (VMT), which will incorporate certain elements of the CPMT. The International Crisis Group and others explain that strong international engagement remains the key to buttressing the still-fragile peace process.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to these developments, last month the GOS agreed to establish an International Humanitarian Commission responsible for ensuring that the various conventions and protocols signed by the GOS are translated into Sudanese law and implemented.

Both the GoS and the SPLM have made commitments to the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict that the protection and well-being of children will be on the IGAD peace agenda. However, this matter has not yet appeared on the agenda. Some civil society groups have voiced concerns that the Machakos process has not provided for broader participation or discussion on the full range of issues impacting the civilian

population and have raised questions about the sustainability of a settlement resulting from this process.

Other recent peace initiatives have also demonstrated promise. In his January 2003 report to the UN Human Rights Commission (E/CN.4/2003/42), the UN Special Rapporteur on Sudan notes that grassroots, people-to-people initiatives have helped pave the way for peace. The New Sudan Council of Churches' People to People Peace Process has successfully brought together various ethnic groups in the South. In some instances, the climate of confidence established by this initiative has encouraged the return of displaced people to their homes. In some areas of western Sudan, including Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile, traditional dispute resolution systems have proven effective for managing intercommunity problems.

In January 2002, the GoS and leaders of the SPLM/A from the Nuba region in Southern Kordofan signed a cease-fire agreement for the purpose of facilitating humanitarian assistance to areas of the Nuba Mountains where the GoS had blocked access for many years. The agreement provides for international monitors from western Europe and North America to assure compliance and document breaches of the agreement. In June 2002, the GoS and SPLM/A leaders agreed to an extension of the cease-fire. However, humanitarian agencies and others have cautioned that bureaucratic issues and delays in implementing some aspects of the agreement have eroded confidence in the cease-fire. Recent reports indicate that the Nuba population is losing hope in the sustainability of the agreement.

#### *Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS)*

In 1989, after famine in northern Bahr el Ghazal killed an estimated 250,000 people, the GoS and SPLM/A made an agreement with the United Nations, which worked with over 40 international and local NGOs to establish Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS). OLS is still an extensive relief operation serving thousands of Sudanese, with targeted programs to assist young people. However, the trend of denying humanitarian access has limited OLS operations and constitutes a breach of the Geneva Conventions. For example, in Eastern and Western Equatoria 800,000 people were directly affected by the suspension of all aid activities due to GoS bans on humanitarian assistance flights into southern Sudan during nine days in September 2002. At that time, 791,000 children under age five in 26 counties of southern Sudan were unable to receive polio immunization. In some instances NGOs that operate in Sudan, but are not part of OLS, have had better access to some populations than OLS itself.

## **HEALTH**

At least one child in 10 in Sudan dies before the age of five, including many who succumb to preventable diseases. This figure is nearer to one in five in the South. The health situation for children and the entire population in southern Sudan is grim. Food shortages, destruction of health services, killing and dispersal of trained personnel, high rates of infectious diseases and lack of access to humanitarian assistance are fundamental and endemic problems.

#### *Destruction of Health Infrastructure*

International laws call for the protection of children and civilians during armed conflict. In Sudan, particularly in high-vulnerability areas, these laws are consistently violated as warring parties deliberately destroy health facilities, loot medical goods and kill and intimidate health workers, thereby severely restricting children's and adolescents' access to health services.

The GoS is known to use aerial attacks on hospitals and other civilian targets, such as feeding centers and sanitation facilities, particularly in Equatoria. In February 2002, the GoS bombed the village of Nimne in the western Upper Nile region in southern Sudan. A health worker from the international organization Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) was killed, along with three other civilians. The bombing occurred days after the entire village, including the MSF medical center, was ransacked and looted, destroying personal possessions, food stocks, medication, laboratory materials and other goods. On the same day as the Nimne bombing, two children were killed when the GoS bombed a World Food Program food distribution center in Akuem in the southern state of Bahr el Ghazal. NGOs have catalogued a consistent pattern of such attacks.

The SPLA has also played a role in the destruction of Sudan's infrastructure by carrying out ground attacks, burning buildings and arresting health workers. In March 2001, the SPLA destroyed OLS facilities in Nyal in western Upper Nile. In March 2002, the SPLA assaulted and arrested 14 health workers who were deployed from the northern sector to carry out polio vaccination activities, which significantly interrupted the campaign to eradicate polio in Sudanese children.

#### *Food Security and Malnutrition*

Approximately 2.5 million people in Sudan are in dire need of food and other emergency supplies. Women and children are the hardest hit by widespread hunger and malnutrition, caused by the increasing manipulation and destruction of food supplies and exacerbated by recent droughts and floods. Thousands of children suffer from marasmus, the most severe degree of malnutrition.

According to OLS, in northern areas, malnutrition rates of up to 50 percent have been recorded during specific periods. In 2000, UNICEF reported that 11 percent of children under age five in the northern sector showed wasting (too thin for their height). The worst cases of severe wasting were recorded in Western Kordofan, North Darfur and Blue Nile states. UNICEF also reported that, in the northern sector, children whose mothers have secondary or higher education are least likely to be underweight compared to children of mothers with less education.

In July 2002, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported global malnutrition rates between 23 and 39.9 percent in most areas surveyed in southern Sudan. In Bentiu and Rob Kona in Upper Nile, global malnutrition rates among children under five years were 21 and 24.3 percent respectively, according to Action Against Hunger in 2002. While forecasts predicted an overall increase in food production in 2001–2002, in June 2002, the U.S. Agency for International Development reported that food security in southern Sudan had worsened from the previous year, largely as a result of fighting.

MSF's recent study, *Violence, Health and Access to Aid*, notes that destruction and looting of cattle, a key component of Sudan's food economy, also exacerbates the threat to children's survival. In May 2002, nine humanitarian aid agencies operating in Sudan as part of OLS had cautioned that the humanitarian crisis could grow more severe as a result of both increased insecurity and flight bans, cutting off access to hundreds of thousands of people in need of assistance. This was prior to the October 2002 agreement providing for unimpeded humanitarian access to all parts of Sudan and the January 2003 agreement on access in Blue Nile area. The World Food Program anticipated providing food to an additional 558,000 people under the October agreement.

### *Disease*

Sudanese people suffer from and are at risk of contracting many diseases that can be deadly if left untreated and which have been eradicated from most other parts of the world. Children and others with weakened immune systems are generally among the most susceptible to these diseases, which include trachoma, malaria, cholera, measles, onchocerciasis (river blindness) and tuberculosis. The lack of health care and malnutrition exacerbate the impact of infectious diseases on children. Violence and insecurity also prevent inoculations, treatments and health education campaigns that are necessary for controlling the diseases.

Approximately 60,000 people, especially children, risk infection of trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness) and another 9,000 to 12,000 are in immediate need of treatment. Sudan is one of 13 countries where dracunculiasis (guinea worm disease) occurs. Eighty percent of the world's reported cases occur in southern Sudan. MSF "guesstimates" that 350,000 people in western Upper Nile are struck by the kala azar (visceral leishmaniasis) epidemic.

Diarrhea is also a severe problem that goes largely untreated. In 2000, 45 percent of children under age five participating in a UNICEF survey in southern Sudan were reported to have had diarrhea in the 15 days prior to the survey. In a similar UNICEF survey the same year, 28 percent of children under age 5 in the north, and 25 percent of children in garrison towns in the South, reported diarrhea in the prior two weeks.

As part of the global effort to eradicate polio, intense efforts in southern Sudan brought the nation close to this goal in 2002. In 2001, one case of polio was confirmed, down from 23 cases in 2000. In March 2002, the polio vaccine had reached nearly all children throughout the country within a period of several days. However, the SPLA's attack on health workers who were conducting vaccination activities caused a major setback for the effort. Flight bans in September 2002 further hampered progress. The October 2002 agreement on unfettered humanitarian access included a provision to reinstate the polio immunization campaign. In 2000, UNICEF reported that slightly over half of children in northern Sudan who were in the first 12 months of life had received all eight recommended vaccinations.

### *Maternal and Newborn Services*

Maternal and infant health statistics for southern Sudan are outdated. Collection of such statistics is hampered by lack of access to large segments of the population. Southern Sudan does not have sustainable maternal and newborn services. The maternal mortality ratio in Sudan is 550 deaths per 100,000 live births (1995). According to UNICEF, Sudan has one of the highest maternal mortality ratios in the world. Extremely limited emergency obstetrics programs aggravate the high level of maternal mortality, particularly for adolescent mothers.

In 2000, approximately 78 percent of women in southern Sudan did not receive antenatal care during their last pregnancy. The same year, 30 percent of women in northern Sudan did not receive antenatal care from skilled personnel. In 2002, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the GoS signed an agreement to help reduce maternal mortality through improved reproductive health services and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment by establishing a fund to contribute to such programs from 2002 to 2006. The fund is mandated to direct particular attention to improving quality of services for youth, refugees and displaced persons.

### *Water*

Less than 35 percent of people in the South have access to adequate sanitation. A 2000 UNICEF study found that only 26 percent of households in southern Sudan had access to safe drinking water during the dry season. A UNICEF study in northern Sudan the same year found that roughly 40 percent of the population did not have access to an improved source of drinking water, with the worst situation reported in West Darfur State.<sup>17</sup> Lack of safe water and inadequate sanitation are underlying causes of high infant and child mortality rates in Sudan.

### **HIV/AIDS**

The estimated national adult HIV/AIDS prevalence rate is 2.6 percent according to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization (WHO). UNAIDS and WHO also estimate that in Sudan approximately 450,000 people, including 30,000 children of ages 15 and under, had HIV/AIDS at the end of 2001, and 62,000 children had lost either a mother or both parents to AIDS. In 2001, an estimated 23,000 people died of HIV/AIDS. The Sudan National AIDS Programme (SNAP) estimates the national prevalence rate in northern Sudan at approximately 1.6 percent, with significant regional variations. Estimates of the prevalence rate in the southern sector range from three to 20 percent.

Little is known about the extent of HIV/AIDS infection in Sudan, especially among children and adolescents. Anecdotal evidence suggests that prevalence rates are likely to be far higher than the national estimate, especially along war-torn border zones. Increased traffic of military personnel, commercial transporters and prostitutes in southern Sudan, as well as the breakdown of social norms as a result of the conflict, all compound the population's vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Increased incidence of rape and sexual violence as a result of conflict also increases the threat of HIV/AIDS, especially for women and girls.

HIV/AIDS is likely to be increasing rapidly in Sudan, particularly in war-torn areas, in areas like Khartoum with large IDP populations and in areas where military personnel return after being in the conflict zones. NGOs also report that refugee populations returning from high prevalence areas are likely contributing to the infection's spread in southern Sudanese communities.

Information and knowledge about HIV/AIDS is extremely limited in southern and northern Sudan, especially among children and adolescents and rural populations. A UNICEF study conducted in 2000 confirmed that 75 percent of people in Bahr el Ghazal and Jongeli had never heard of HIV/AIDS. In Upper Nile this figure was 82 percent. In northern Sudan only 9 percent of women aged 15 to 49 knew of the two main ways to prevent HIV transmission in 2000, with the least knowledge in rural areas.

In some areas, sickness and disease, including HIV/AIDS, are associated with witchcraft and curses, indicating little understanding about methods for prevention and treatment. In 2000, in the northern sector, only 6 percent of women correctly identified three misconceptions about HIV/AIDS—including that it can be transmitted through supernatural means. Condoms are reportedly present in large population centers and refugee camps; however, their use is often stigmatized.

Rudimentary healthcare is reportedly available for some children affected by HIV/AIDS. However, many do not have access to such facilities, and social support for children is negligible. Prevention programs for mother-to-child transmission do not currently exist.

The SPLM established the New Sudan National AIDS Council in 2001, and the GoS runs SNAP to raise HIV/AIDS awareness in areas it controls. In 1999, the national primary school curriculum included a chapter on reproductive health that addressed HIV/AIDS. Also, a national teacher-training program has been underway for several years. The impact of these programs has not been documented.

## **REFUGEES AND IDPS**

There are approximately 4.4 million uprooted Sudanese people, including an estimated 4 million internally displaced persons, the largest internally displaced population in the world. As a result of three recent workshops in Sudan on IDPs, both the SPLM and the GoS recently issued formal policies on IDPs that are largely rooted in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. The United Nations also created a north-south IDP Task Force, in which NGOs will also participate. Both parties emphasize the principles of voluntary return and the rights of displaced persons to choose when and where to return.

Approximately 440,000 Sudanese are refugees and asylum seekers in other countries, including Uganda (155,400), Ethiopia (84,200), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (70,000), Kenya (68,200), Central African Republic, Chad and Eritrea. A large population of Sudanese exiles lives in Egypt. While many of these Sudanese consider themselves to be refugees, many are not officially recognized as such by the host government. Further attention should be given to the degree to which children in this community are protected. Sudan hosts nearly 310,000 refugees, primarily from Eritrea, Uganda and Ethiopia.

During 2001, more than 250,000 Sudanese became newly uprooted as a result of rebel and military attacks, abduction, poverty and food shortages. An estimated 25,000 of these uprooted people, primarily from Bahr el Ghazal, fled to neighboring countries, while the others became internally displaced.

In many instances, people are repeatedly displaced. They may remain within their own region, moving from place to place due to limited alternatives; others move to displaced persons camps, Khartoum and other urban areas. In desperate situations, displaced people may move toward neighboring countries. According to the 2001 *Report of an Investigation into Oil Development, Conflict and Displacement in Western Upper Nile, Sudan*,<sup>18</sup> the GoS appears to be depopulating large areas of western Upper Nile in order to redistribute the population into the vicinity of government garrison towns or out of the state. The report explains that displacement is often forcible and violent.

An estimated 80 percent of southern Sudan's 5 million people have been displaced at least once during the latest phase of the war. In 2002, tens of thousands of people became newly displaced in the oil-rich border area between western Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal due to an offensive by the GoS and government-backed militias following the signing of the Machakos Protocol. A survey among new IDPs in Bahr el Ghazal found that child mortality rates are five times higher among newly displaced families than other residents of the province.

According to the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT), orphaned and unaccompanied refugee and IDP girls are particularly vulnerable, as in other displaced populations. Boys living in camps are often kept together as a group, living in villages within the camp. The girls are often placed with guardians for protection, but due to rampant poverty girls are often viewed as valuable commodities that can be sold off for a bride price. Sexual abuse, forced marriages and beatings are reportedly widespread, even among girls living with "guardians."

### *IDP Children*

The number of IDP children in Sudan is unknown. In most IDP populations, women and children comprise over 75 percent of the population. Approximately 75 percent of IDPs in Mabilia camp are children. This number cannot be extrapolated for the entire population.

Most IDP children live in extreme poverty in urban and rural settings and are indistinguishable from other impoverished residents; few live in camps or have access to humanitarian assistance. Often Sudanese IDP children are not afforded basic protections and in some instances are targets of violent attacks. Among other abuses, GoS planes have bombed IDP camps and relief operations in southern and central Sudan. GoS forces and government-backed militias are known to recruit IDP children into their ranks, abduct, rape and commit other abuses against IDP children. In 1998, the GoS forcibly displaced the Burun community in eastern Upper Nile by calling for all residents to evacuate the area and resettle in government-held territory. The SPLA has systematically diverted and taxed food intended for displaced persons, raped IDP women and girls, recruited IDP children as soldiers and committed other abuses.

In the mid-1990s, the Human Rights Watch (HRW) report, *Sudan: In the Name of God, Repression Continues in Northern Sudan*, stated that the government rounded up hundreds of boys displaced by the war, mostly southerners, in markets and on the streets. The boys were summarily dispatched to religious camps. They were beaten for small breaches of discipline and given a religious (Islamic) education, regardless of their or their families' beliefs. At age 15 the boys were reportedly incorporated into the government militia. HRW notes that this was done under the pretext of taking care of street children; however, no attempts were made to contact the boys' families or to follow the Juvenile Welfare Act's procedure for removing a child from his or her family.

Comprehensive surveys on internally displaced persons' health and related conditions, especially with specific information for children, are complicated and difficult to conduct. Anecdotal evidence demonstrates that health and nutritional conditions for IDP children both inside and outside of camps are extremely poor, as is access to water and sanitation. In 2001, Aweil IDP camp in Northern Bahr el Ghazal recorded a dramatic prevalence of under-age-five mortality (6.5 per 10,000 per day). Unconfirmed reports indicate that the prevalence of HIV is higher among IDPs than other segments of the population.

Between 1.5 and 2 million IDPs live in Khartoum. Approximately 220,000 live in official camps in the capital, while most others live with the northern Sudanese urban poor in dilapidated, squatter neighborhoods primarily in mud houses in and around Khartoum. Many are child laborers. Male children sell plastic bags or water, shine shoes or work as waiters. They work after school or drop out to work as many hours as possible. Female children are often involved in domestic activities in the city, returning to camps on weekends. Many drop out of school.

At least 34,000 street children are estimated to live in Khartoum; most come from displaced families from high-vulnerability areas. These children are often homeless, sleep on the streets and beg for food. They are commonly called “Shamassa,” meaning “children of the sun.” Lack of protection for street children and IDP children makes them particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation by soldiers, militias and others. In one example in 2001, an 11-year-old internally displaced girl reported having been raped while in police custody.

Displacement camps generally offer primary schooling, but not secondary schooling. Approximately one-third of the population of displaced children in Khartoum attends school. In the Nuba Mountain area, many IDP children have not had access to school for over a decade.

### *Refugee Children*

The majority of Sudanese refugees in Uganda live in 25 designated settlements. The LRA and other rebels regularly attack refugee sites. During raids, the LRA injures, abducts and kills children and adolescents. Women and girls are raped and subject to forced pregnancy and other forms of sexual violence. Attacks increased dramatically in 2002, since the LRA scattered in northern Uganda as a result of Uganda’s Operation Iron Fist. In August 2002, the LRA attacked the Achol-pii refugee camp in northern Uganda, killing approximately 50 refugees, abducting children to join their ranks, looting and burning the camp and sending nearly 24,000 refugees from their homes. Five humanitarian aid workers were also abducted and later released. Many of the Achol-pii refugees were subsequently relocated to the Kiryandongo refugee settlement in Masindi district. Others have sought shelter in Kitgum town. In early October 2002, the LRA attacked Sudanese refugees in the Maaji refugee settlement in northern Adjumani District. An estimated 81,000 Sudanese refugees are housed in Maaji. (See below for more information on LRA abuses against Sudanese children.)

In an adolescent-conducted research survey led by the Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children, Sudanese refugee children and adolescents and their Ugandan peers in northern Uganda identified insecurity, abductions, murder, lack of access to education and being orphaned as their most urgent concerns. Approximately 55,000 Sudanese refugee children — more boys than girls—in Uganda attend school.

Sudanese refugee children living in Kampala, the Ugandan capital, often have inadequate access to food, material assistance, housing and medical care. They may also be subject to sexual violence and other forms of torture. They lack general protections that should be afforded to refugees according to the 1951 Refugee Convention and the Organization of African Unity Refugee Convention, to which Uganda is a party. These conditions are well documented in the 2002 Human Rights Watch report, *Hidden in Plain View: Refugees Living Without Protection in Nairobi and Kampala*.



Most Sudanese refugees in Kenya live in three camps in northwest Kenya. Females in these camps greatly outnumber males. The situation in these Kakuma camps is described as a chronic emergency due to extreme poverty in the region (exacerbated by harsh rains) and ongoing tensions between the refugees and host communities. In January 2003, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) announced that more than 230,00 refugees in Kenya, many of who are Sudanese, are facing starvation, and food stocks are expected to dry up by early February 2003.

Because females are considered lucrative resources that can be traded in marriage for cattle, women and girls in the camps are subject to abduction by male family members who come to take them back to Sudan to marry them off. Classrooms in the camps are overcrowded, with nearly 20,000 students in 21 primary schools. UNHCR operates three secondary schools and three vocational training schools, as well as a new classroom designated for girls intended to target the high female dropout rate.

The squalid living conditions and lack of protection for Sudanese refugees living in Nairobi, Kenya, has been documented in the Human Rights Watch report, *Hidden in Plain View*.

Following the Machakos agreement, on July 27, 2002, UNHCR, Kenya and Sudan—involving both the GoS and the SPLM/A—announced a tripartite agreement to repatriate an estimated 60,000 Sudanese refugees over the course of the six-month Machakos transition period.

#### *Unaccompanied Minors in Kakuma—The Lost Children*

Approximately 17,000–25,000 young Sudanese, “the lost boys,” fled bombing of villages in southern Sudan in the late 1980s. At that time, southern Sudanese communities were concerned about the loss of a generation of potential leaders, because so many children were being killed in the war. Some communities sent their children to other countries for education to return later to lead the liberation movement. The children were chased from refugee camps in Ethiopia in 1991. Nearly 12,000 Sudanese boys arrived in Kakuma camp in Kenya between 1992 and 1994. Many of the young boys were able to stay together during their journey to Kenya and once in the refugee camps. As these minors lived together with only a handful of elderly caretakers, they were visible to the international community, and the United States offered them a resettlement program. A total of 3,276 Sudanese boys and young men have been resettled in the United States since 2000, along with 89 girls. Approximately 7,000 boys remain in Kakuma refugee camp awaiting resettlement since the United States tightened its policies following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States.

Unaccompanied girls, who arrived in Kakuma with their brothers, were separated from each other and taken in by foster families upon arrival, a cultural necessity as well as an advantage to the foster families. Girls are considered a source of wealth and foster families with the incentive of a bride price often force girls into marriage. As in many refugee settings, some unaccompanied girls in Kakuma are treated like commodities and forced into slave-like conditions and used as domestic servants. Most unaccompanied girls do not have access to education. Refugees International names the girls in Kakuma “the lost girls,” explaining that they have been “lost” twice—first upon arrival, they were not included in official camp records, and second they were not included in the U.S. resettlement program. UN camp authorities state there is nothing they can do to “find” and protect the girls, even though the United States has offered them top-priority visa status for resettlement.

In early October 2002, 17,000 Sudanese refugees from the Biringi refugee camp in northern DRC went into hiding after fleeing ethnic violence and subsequently had no access to humanitarian assistance. By late October, reports indicated that the refugees had begun to trickle back to the refugee settlement. In DRC, nearly half of the Sudanese refugees do not receive humanitarian assistance nor do they live in camps. Those living in camps are reportedly subject to recruitment by Sudanese armed groups that enter the camps. Because of the war in DRC, many of the refugees are unable to access assistance programs. According to UNHCR, the health and nutritional status of Sudanese refugees in DRC is comparable to that of local Congolese; malaria and respiratory infections were the main health problems reported in 2001. About 4,000 Sudanese refugee students attended schools in DRC in 2001.

In Ethiopia, Sudanese refugees live in four long-established camps and one newly created camp. Women and children are the primary residents. Over 50 percent of children in the camps are enrolled in school. Many young boys from southeastern Sudan go to Ethiopia as refugees, seeking an education. In December 2002, hundreds of Sudanese refugees sought safety at UNHCR offices outside the Fugnido refugee camp after 41 refugees were killed in ethnic clashes there. According to a report from OCHA's Integrated Regional Information Network, aid workers identified 46 children who lost one or both parents in the clashes.

Approximately 91,000 Eritrean refugees live in camps in Sudan and approximately 280,000 live in urban areas. According to estimates, over 50 percent of these refugees are likely to be under age 18. Many of the young people of Eritrean origin were born in Sudan to parents who fled Eritrea as a result of the war of independence or the border conflict in 1998–2000 between Eritrea and Ethiopia. UNHCR has facilitated the repatriation of approximately 50,000 Eritrean refugees. However, most young people of Eritrean origin in Sudan do not want to return to Eritrea and express fear of recruitment upon return. In Sudan, young people of Eritrean origin, particularly those who are unable to establish their Eritrean nationality and separated children, are at risk of sexual harassment and abuse. No documentation of the extent of this violence exists.

## **LANDMINES AND UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE**

Women and children are particularly vulnerable to injury and death from landmines because they are often performing domestic duties in contaminated areas, such as forests, waterpoints and fields. Landmine contamination also limits children's access to medical facilities, schools, vaccination programs, safe drinking water and other important goods and services.

Data about contamination is extremely limited because no comprehensive survey on the landmine situation in Sudan exists. The GoS estimates between 2 and 3 million mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) in 32 percent of the country, while the UN and NGOs estimate between 500,000 and 2 million.

In September 2002, the GoS and the SPLM/A signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which they agreed to support UN efforts to remove landmines from the country. According to the agreement, the parties will work with the UN to develop a national mine action strategy, including establishing mine action offices in the capital, Khartoum, and Rumbek in the South.

Both GoS forces and armed opposition groups have used landmines in the conflict for the past 40 years. There are strong indications that both continue to use mines in the South, although both the GoS and armed opposition groups deny continued use. The GoS and SPLM have made commitments to the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict that they would not use anti-personnel landmines in the southern conflict zone. The GoS signed the Mine Ban Treaty and has signaled intention to move toward ratification. The SPLM/A signed a Non-State Actor declaration in 2001.

Reported casualties due to landmines are low in Sudan because most victims do not survive long enough to make it to the hospital due to scarcity of medical facilities and poor roads. The GoS claims that landmine incidents account for more than 700,000 deaths and an equal number of amputees. Rehabilitation centers and programs and trained medical personnel to assist the injured are limited. In the Nuba Mountain region, the Nuba Relief Rehabilitation and Development Organization claims 110 documented injuries, including 25 children, since September 1999.

UNICEF is working with OLS NGOs to collect comprehensive data on landmine-related incidents. UNICEF is also working with the GoS, SPLM and civil society to deliver Mines Risk Education, with particular attention to the IDP population.

## **SMALL ARMS**

Rights abuses against children and other Sudanese civilians facilitated by the proliferation of small arms include killings, “disappearances,” denial of humanitarian assistance, forced displacement, abduction of women and children and looting of civilian property. The prevalence of small arms has led to the abandonment of traditional means of fighting in favor of more violent raiding and banditry. The protracted war has also led to the circulation of massive amounts of small arms, causing heavy arming of civilian populations, with little or no accountability.

In 1995, Sudan was said to have experienced the biggest relative arms build-up in the world. Despite sanctions against the GoS by a number of states, small arms continue to flow into the country and are used by and against children. Young people, especially boys of the Nuer tribe in central Upper Nile and other parts of southern Sudan, are heavily armed. UNICEF and the Sudan People’s Democratic Front (SPDF) have initiated discussions on programs to disarm this population.

Trafficking in small arms and light weapons along the borders with Kenya and Uganda is rampant. The price of small arms and light weapons in Sudan is very low. Oxfam GB reported in 2001 that in Sudan an AK-47 costs the same as a chicken. China, Malaysia, Iran and South Africa are known as primary sources of arms for the GoS. France, Iraq and other states are also suppliers.

The GoS is known to supply small arms to some armed opposition groups in the South—pitting the forces against each other. Several reports document the government use of revenue from oil development to fund this practice. The arming of militia forces goes against the general tenor of the UN Convention against the Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Small Arms, which Sudan has ratified. Other alleged sources of arms for the armed opposition groups include Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea, among others.

International attention to the massive flow of small arms, and to the Sudan conflict in general, is limited. Human rights groups have accused the international community of compounding the war's impact on civilians, especially children, by fueling the country with weapons and passively permitting small arms trafficking to spread instability in Sudan and around the region.

## **EDUCATION**

In northern Sudan, only 48 percent of school-age children are enrolled in school, with a 3 to 5 percent gender gap. In the northern urban areas the rate is as high as 63 percent, while in northern rural areas it is as low as 37 percent. In garrison towns in the South, the school enrollment rate is 57.8 percent. In the northern sector in general, the dropout rate between grades one and eight is approximately 50 percent. An estimated 27 percent of teachers are not trained and only 38 percent of the population in the northern sector is literate.

Less than 30 percent of school-age children in southern Sudan are enrolled in school, with a 60 to 75 percent gender gap. Day-to-day attendance rates are even lower than the estimated enrollment levels. According to the UNICEF Multiple Cluster Index Survey, Southern Sector 2000 (MICS), lack of access to schools is the single most important factor causing these low rates. Massive displacement of families and communities and prohibitively high enrollment fees also limit educational opportunities, especially for girls. The traditional notion that formal education is primarily for boys, as well as the custom of marrying girls at an early age, is such that parents limited funds for boys' education rather than that of girls. Household chores and domestic responsibilities further limit educational opportunities for girls. Lack of clothing is a factor in school dropout rates.

Military operations by the GoS and opposition forces have targeted schools, destroying and looting educational materials. Trained teachers and educational materials are in short supply due to limited funds for purchasing materials and paying wages. UNICEF/OLS and the African Educational Trust (AET) have been working on a school baseline assessment for southern Sudan since 1998. Findings indicate that there are a total of 1,500 schools in southern Sudan, with approximately 48 students present in each classroom. Many are open-air classrooms, with inadequate supplies and infrastructure. In grades one to two there is an estimated 50 percent dropout rate, with another 30 percent dropping out in grades two and three. Forty-five percent of classrooms are open-air classrooms, less than 30 percent have latrines and less than 50 percent have health services nearby. Forty-two percent have potable water sources. Forty-four percent of teachers are not trained. Schools are generally run on a voluntary basis, and teachers in southern Sudan do not receive a salary. AET estimates that 45 percent of teachers in southern Sudan are completely untrained. Seven percent of teachers have received at least one year of pre-service college training, while 48 percent have received some in-service training. In Upper Nile only 2 percent of teachers have at least one year of pre-service college training; this is the lowest figure for all southern regions.

Poor conditions, as well as the high level of trauma and stress due to the conflict, impact students' behavior and ability to learn. One teacher in southern Sudan reports that boys and girls show high levels of anger and aggressiveness inside and outside the classroom. He explains that this is often a reaction to extreme trauma, such as witnessing violence.

## **TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION**

According to the U.S. Department of State, Sudan is both a destination country for trafficked persons and a country in which internal trafficking in persons is widespread. Trafficking is closely, but not exclusively, related to the ongoing conflict. The government of Sudan estimates that 14,000 southern Sudanese women and children have been abducted in recent years in connection to the conflict. The NGO report, *Key to Peace*, estimates that at least 6,000 women and children were abducted since 1983. UNICEF and Save the Children estimate that between 10,000 and 17,000 women and children have been abducted.

Information about the extent and details of abduction and slavery in Sudan is limited, primarily due to the GoS's history of obstructing efforts to gather data. The SPLM/A is also known to obstruct data collection on this topic. The 2002 Report of the International Eminent Persons Group, *Slavery, Abduction and Forced Servitude in Sudan*, verifies a significant number of cases that fall under the international legal definitions of slavery. The report links the problems of abduction and slavery to the war as an effort by some Sudanese to reshape the relationship between those from different cultures and faiths in Sudan.

In 1999, the GoS created the Committee for the Elimination of Abduction of Women and Children (CEAWC). Despite the creation of the CEAWC, the GoS continues to knowingly arm, transport and assist in slave-raiding militias by providing compensation to raiders, protecting troops and disrupting and terrorizing southern communities. Government-backed armed militias of the Baggara tribes, known as *murahaleen*, carry out raids in southern Sudan, primarily against the Dinka tribe in Bahr el Ghazal, where they capture women and children and force them into slavery in Bahr el Ghazal and elsewhere.

The GoS has failed to uphold international standards against slavery and related practices and fails to enforce its own laws against kidnapping, assault and forced labor. Article 20 of the Constitution of Sudan makes slavery and forced labor criminal offenses. Article 161 of the Criminal Code of 1991 prohibits the abduction of any person below puberty. Even the CEAWC does not address the government's own role in the problem. There are many legitimate questions about the CEAWC initiative, such as lack of transparency and professionalism, slack financial management, partial commitment and other fundamental flaws, according to the Eminent Persons Report on slavery.

Many raids are carried out while the tribes are accompanying and guarding troop and supply trains to the southern garrison town of Wau. Local populations often evacuate the area when they know that the train is making the trip to Wau. This frequently occurs during busy cultivation and harvesting times, which perpetuates the population's dependence on international assistance. In 2002, the UN Special Rapporteur on Sudan confirmed that the *murahaleen* are deeply implicated in abductions and targeting of civilians. Most recently, the intensification of fighting in new oil development areas has led to abductions in western areas of Upper Nile.

When abducted, women and children are often held for domestic servitude, forced labor or as slaves, including for sexual slavery. Abducted and enslaved children suffer physical and sexual abuse and are punished if they fail to perform duties. According to OMCT, girls are known to be gang raped and tortured, forced into prostitution, beaten, denied food and subject to prolonged exposure to the sun with their hands and feet tied together. Some adolescent girls and young women are forced into early marriages, mentally brutalized, raped, genitally mutilated and forced

to bear children. Many women and children who are abducted and enslaved remain with their abductors in the areas of South Darfur or Western Kordofan. Some reports indicate that girls are trafficked to destinations in the Middle East, Europe and elsewhere.

The SPLM/A has also been known to abduct children primarily for conscription into the armed forces and for forced labor. Women and young boys are held in captivity and used for forced labor, often as porters. Tribal militias also carry out abductions in relation to tribal disputes in the regions. The SPLM has taken no action to end this problem.

(See below for details on child abductions by the Lord's Resistance Army.)

## **GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

Gender-based violence (GBV) connected to conflict is known to be a widespread problem in Sudan. However, statistics are rarely collected and few details are known. According to OMCT, social stigma attached to rape discourages girls and women from lodging complaints. The report of the Interagency Mission to Sudan (November 2002)<sup>19</sup> explains that gender-based violence often goes unreported due to lack of police presence, fear of the perpetrators or because women have little confidence in remedial action being taken. In addition, in some areas women and girls can run the risk of being prosecuted or punished for adultery if they fail to prove rape<sup>20</sup>—according to the Criminal Act of 1991 (article 149)—while the perpetrator goes unpunished. As a result, most perpetrators enjoy impunity for their actions and most cases of GBV go unreported.

In the northern states, women have abandoned babies from unwanted pregnancies in order to avoid punishment for adultery. According to one report, some women travel to Khartoum to give birth and then leave the baby in the care of a friend, relative, care center or elsewhere. One orphanage, the GoS-run Mygoma orphanage, in Khartoum is specifically designed to receive abandoned babies. However, staffing, training and resourcing are seriously inadequate. In 2000, 516 abandoned infants were admitted into Mygoma, of who 433 died. One family-planning shelter reported receiving 30 to 50 babies per month. The number of abandoned babies is likely to be much higher.

In Western Equatoria and other areas, government security forces and associated militias and SPLA forces are known to rape, sexually exploit and abuse girls and women. According to one report, some soldiers deliberately rape when transfer is imminent, knowing that they will escape punishment, as they cannot be traced. Since the outset of the civil war, rape has become more frequent and brutal. Gang rape is also reported. The heavy presence of soldiers as a result of the conflict has also led to an increased prevalence of prostitution, especially among adolescent girls in parts of southern Sudan. Girls starting at age 15 have been known to participate in commercial sex work. Some girls are forced into prostitution. Increased prostitution is also attributed to extreme poverty and expensive school fees, which are direct consequences of ongoing conflict. Statistics on these situations are not available.

Government-backed militias, armed opposition groups and tribal gangs are known to sexually exploit, rape and use children, especially girls, as sex slaves. (See trafficking and exploitation above.) In addition, those girls chosen as sexual slaves and concubines by their captors have often been subject to female genital mutilation (FGM), a harmful traditional practice that has not commonly been followed in the areas where the abducted girls are from.

FGM, which is known to be a widespread practice in many areas of Sudan, is spreading around the country due to the massive population movement. A study in the mid-1990s estimated that 10 to 30 percent of Sudanese girls (from northern and southern Sudan) who are subject to this practice die as a result, especially in areas where antibiotics and medical treatment are not available.<sup>21</sup> Medical complications from FGM include pain, prolonged bleeding, hemorrhaging, urinary retention, infections, obstetric complications and psychological trauma.

*Throwing the Stick Forward: the impact of war on southern Sudanese women*, a study funded by UNICEF and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), reports that in many places marriage patterns are changing because of insecurity and scarcity of men. Girls tend to be getting married at earlier ages to avoid pervasive sexual violence. One girl said she married at age 17 to a man over 60 to escape rape. Girls from the Nuer tribe generally marry at ages 15 to 17; however, in some cases they are marrying as young as age 13 in hopes of protection from GBV. The study explains that early marriage is likely to lead to a lifetime of sexual and domestic subservience and is linked to health hazards. It causes pregnancies among girls whose bodies may not be fully developed and are therefore at greater risk of death during childbirth. Adolescents are more susceptible than older women to the transmission of HIV and other STIs.

## **CHILD SOLDIERS**

The use of child soldiers by both GoS and opposition forces, including some children as young as age 10, is extensive. On April 19, 2002, the UN Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution expressing deep concern at the use of children as soldiers in Sudan. This followed a 2002 report by the UN Special Rapporteur on Sudan, which specifically notes continued recruitment by GoS and opposition-backed militias.

Reports also indicate a trend of children seeking protection, food, shelter or other items by voluntarily enlisting with armed forces. According to UNICEF, one child soldier said he enlisted because he had no other option. He said there was no food, the houses had all been burnt and the school was closed.

### *Government and Allied Armed Groups*

A 1997 government decree requires all boys ages 17 to 19 to perform compulsory military service in order to receive a certificate, which is required for entry into a university. In 2002, the government army and allied militia forces continued to abduct and forcibly recruit women and children, according to Human Rights Watch. In addition, the GoS has been known to provide military support to the LRA, which abducts and forcibly recruits children. The GoS has made repeated commitments to the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict not to recruit and deploy children under age 18, as a matter of policy and law.

Paramilitaries and armed groups aligned with the GoS have a long history of forced recruitment, including of children under age 18. The Popular Defense Forces (PDF), a militia with a formal relationship to the authorities, has recruited, often forcibly, thousands of children. Pro-government militias, including Paulino Matip's government-armed militias, in southern Sudan are also reported to use children as soldiers.

In cases documented in 2000, children in their early teens were forcibly conscripted into the GoS-armed forces and trained at a military camp near the Heglig oil facility in Greater Nile. They were then assigned to provide security in the oil development area, where they were ordered to carry out human rights abuses against their neighbors and relatives, including killing people, burning villages and looting food. Some of these individuals are among the forces currently believed to be providing security in oilfields. The GoS has not denied these allegations. Talisman Energy Inc. of Canada acknowledged the use of “irregular Sudanese military forces for oilfield protection” in its 2001 social responsibility report. On October 30, 2002, Talisman announced the sale of its oil interests in Sudan. In Bentiu, in Unity State, the GoS-backed militias the South Sudan Unity Movement (SSUM) has engaged in a vigorous recruitment campaign, forcibly conscripting hundreds of children, including some as young as age 10.

In October 2002, a parent in Khartoum reported that adolescent boys are at risk of abduction from schools, parks and other public places by government armed forces. After being abducted, the boys are reportedly given brief training on military tactics and then deployed for active combat duty. In some cases, parents restrict their children’s movement for fear of abduction, limiting their access to school and other daily activities. Other reports confirm that abductions of boys in Khartoum, especially displaced southerners, have been occurring for many years.

In 1997, UNICEF, Save the Children-Sweden (Rädda Barnen) and the Southern Sudan Independence Movement/Army (SSIM/A),<sup>22</sup> began a program of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of child soldiers from the SSIM/A in Upper Nile. However, renewed fighting disrupted the demobilization process, and many children were scattered or remobilized by the factions. In 2000, some 200 were re-demobilized and an additional 88 demobilized for the first time.

### *Opposition Armed Forces*

In May 2002, the Interagency NGO report, *Key to Peace*, noted that there are at least 17,000 child soldiers in southern Sudan; the SPLM/A had admitted to having 13,500 child soldiers, while the former SPDF was believed to have at least 3,500. Since that time, UNICEF has announced the demobilization of thousands of child soldiers. On November 26, 2002, the UN Secretary-General stated in his report to the Security Council on children and armed conflict that the number of children remaining in SPLA ranks is unknown. The SPLA forcibly recruits children under age 18. This is generally done in advance of a particular offensive, as the SPLA does not maintain a large standing army.

Representatives of the SPLA have repeatedly provided assurances to the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Executive Director of UNICEF and the UN Special Rapporteur on Sudan that they would discontinue the use of child soldiers. Human Rights Watch and the U.S. State Department have reported the continued use of children under the age of 18 by SPLA forces. In his report to the 56th session of the Commission on Human Rights, the UN Special Rapporteur on Sudan reported that the SPLA was responsible for forcibly recruiting children from the villages of Narus and Nimule in Eastern Equatoria in December 1999.

Since 2001, the SPLA has cooperated with UNICEF and other organizations in the demobilization of child soldiers. During the first phase of demobilization, which began in February 2001, 3,551 children were demobilized, many of who were released to UNICEF and



then airlifted to reception centers in the Lakes area. The GoS formally protested the evacuation, claiming that the airlift was conducted secretly, in violation of agreements between the UN and GoS, and that the children, aged eight to 18, should have been reunited with their families. Questions have been raised by NGOs about how many of the children released were actually child soldiers. In September 2001, UNICEF and the SPLM reunified the children with their families in northern Bahr el Ghazal and elsewhere.

According to local officials, during the second phase, as many as 11,500 children may have been demobilized in Eastern and Western Equatoria, Upper Nile, Nuba Mountains, Leech State, Latjor State and Bieh State. Many of these children were serving as community guards, protecting villages.

Communities that receive the demobilized child soldiers have few resources to consistently follow up with children once they are reunited with their families or move on to independent lives elsewhere. No data is available regarding the numbers of demobilized child soldiers who may be re-recruited into armed forces.

#### *Cross-Border Exploitation—The Lord's Resistance Army*

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is a northern Ugandan rebel group, which has committed countless atrocities against civilians in northern Uganda and southern Sudan. The LRA is estimated to have abducted 16,000 Ugandan and Sudanese refugee children. Both adult and children abductees are taken as war booty and forced to commit acts of brutality against other children and adults. At least 85 percent of the LRA's forces are thought to be abducted men, women and children.

Over 5,000 children have managed to escape the LRA. However, the rebels are still believed to hold at least 6,000 Ugandan and Sudanese boys and girls. Some estimates place the number significantly lower, due to possible deaths from war, disease and brutal treatment. These children are forced to become child soldiers, laborers and sex slaves for the rebels. The girls are often held as concubines of the LRA fighters. They are forced into unwanted pregnancies and infected with HIV/AIDS and other STIs. Many of the girls die from childbirth complications. Children who attempt to escape are killed with clubs and other weapons in front of the others to discourage future attempts.

Until recently, the GoS was a longtime supporter the LRA. At the same time, the government of Uganda has been known to support the SPLA. In some instances, the LRA was also known to cooperate with the SPLM/A. During the 1990s, the national political and military agendas connected to these alliances overshadowed the plight of the abducted children and diverted attention away from policies that might have secured their release.

In 2001, under international pressure the GoS disavowed its support for the LRA and pledged to seek the release of the abducted children. The GoS has assisted child protection agencies in repatriating a small number of Ugandans who had managed to escape to a UN facility inside Juba. In November 2002, the Ugandan government accused the GoS of resuming its support for the LRA. The GoS has denied these reports; however, reports indicated that the LRA leader, Kony, has returned to southern Sudan.

The government of Uganda has also pledged to secure the release of the children. In the summer of 2002, the GoS allowed the Ugandan military (UPDF) into southern Sudan to “root out” the LRA. The UPDF committed a division of 10,000 soldiers to “Operation Iron Fist.” Humanitarian agencies had planned for an influx of children. However, rather than releasing the children, “Operation Iron Fist” drove the LRA into northern Uganda and scattered the rebels into small bands in the mountainous terrain, where they have increased their brutal attacks.

Since May 2002, the LRA has increased its abductions in northern Uganda. According to local NGOs, between June and October 2002 the LRA abducted approximately 4,000 children, an estimated 10 abductions every day, including Sudanese refugees. The LRA has also increased its violent attacks on Sudanese refugee camps in northern Uganda.

Reports describe the rebels forcing child captives to kill, cook and eat human flesh and sew infants into the bellies of cows to suffocate them. While parents in northern Uganda, including Sudanese refugees, anticipated the return of thousands of abducted children, few captives were released. In October, the UPDF reportedly captured 154 LRA rebels and rescued 178 civilians who were being held by the LRA. The Pan-African News Agency (PANA) reported that children were among 40 of the LRA fighters captured by the Ugandan government who were paraded in the Gulu town of northern Uganda. Nothing concrete is known about the fate of the other abducted children.

The United Nations Security Council has not deliberated on the situation in northern Uganda.

### **UN SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION**

The United Nations Security Council has repeatedly called the protection of children in situations of armed conflict a matter of international peace and security and made commitments to protect children in these situations (UN Security Council resolutions 1261, 1314 and 1379). However, the Security Council has not debated the war in Sudan nor taken direct action to monitor or protect the rights of Sudanese children in the context of commitments to protect children in armed conflict. In addition, the Security Council and other UN bodies have taken minimal actions to respond to the reports of various UN Special Rapporteurs on Sudan that have detailed extensive human rights violations.

In 2001, the Security Council terminated sanctions against Sudan (Res. 1372) following steps taken by the GoS to comply with Security Council Resolutions 1044 and 1070<sup>23</sup> and recognizing the accession of Sudan to international conventions on the elimination of terrorism.

The Security Council and the UN Secretary-General have issued statements welcoming the signing of the Machokos agreement and urging the GoS and SPLA to continue negotiations to reach a complete cease-fire agreement.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS TO UN SECURITY COUNCIL**

The report of the Interagency Mission to Sudan explains that a peace agreement is essential for lasting peace in Sudan. Yet, such an agreement will not necessarily end insecurity in many parts of the country. The protection and promotion of human rights and an end to the humanitarian crisis must be the base for achieving a just and durable peace. Efforts to end the human rights violations and insecurity must be included in all peace negotiations and peace-building initiatives. Children are a particularly vulnerable population and the key to any hope for Sudan’s

peaceful future. As such, the protection of children's security and rights must be a top priority in all such initiatives. To assist in the achievement of these goals and fulfill commitments to protect children in this armed conflict, the UN Security Council should take the following actions:

### **Urgent Action**

- Ensure that vulnerable children and other populations in Sudan have unimpeded and sustained access to humanitarian assistance, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1379 (para. 5), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and other international legal instruments. The Security Council should establish a monitoring mechanism to oversee implementation of the recent agreement on unhindered humanitarian access, including in the Blue Nile region, and regularly review the humanitarian situation in Sudan.
- Urge the GoS, SPLA and other non-state actors to immediately halt all policies and programs of violence against Sudanese civilians, including children and adolescents, in accordance with international human rights and humanitarian laws.
- Ensure that the international community supports the peace process in Sudan, including the eventual deployment of military observers, civilian police and international human rights monitors.
- Support deployment of neutral human rights monitors under the authority of the UN, with a clear mandate to monitor violations and abuses against children, including adolescents, such as rape, abduction and recruitment of children. Monitors should also cover attacks on villages, medical facilities, health workers, feeding centers, schools and other civilian institutions, as well as any new occurrences of abductions and slave taking. This body of monitors should regularly report to the Security Council. All reports should be published and made publicly available and should encourage accountability for perpetrators of human rights abuses.
- Call for the immediate release of all abducted women and children who are being held in conditions of forced servitude, including sexual slavery, and urge the GoS to enact new criminal legislation and military regulations and support programs to trace and return victims. To this end, the structure and authority of the CEAWC should be vigorously reformed to ensure independence and accountability.
- Call on negotiators in Machakos, and all actors in this and other initiatives, to build a just and lasting peace in Sudan; to make protection of Sudanese children's security and rights a top priority in discussions and agreements; and to involve civil society and women and children's groups, as set out by UN Security Council Resolutions 1261, 1314, 1325 and 1379. Actively support the participation of women and children in cease-fire negotiations and all reconciliation efforts to create a durable peace in Sudan. Include human rights as a key component of all peace negotiations.
- Ensure that all resource-sharing negotiations give top priority to the allocation of revenues from oil development and other natural resources to protect the security and rights of children in northern and southern sectors and to services, including food, healthcare and education

throughout Sudan. The right of children to safe water should also be a priority issue for resource-sharing discussions.

- Call on UN agencies and NGOs operating in Sudan to improve coordination between their northern and southern sector operations in addressing gaps in protection and essential services for the internally displaced population, with particular emphasis on the security and rights of IDP children and adolescents.
- Call on UNICEF and other operational agencies to continue and expand DDR programs for boys and girls, even before any final peace settlement is achieved. Encourage these agencies to strengthen systems to maintain contact with former child soldiers, monitor any re-recruitment of these children by armed groups and emphasize community rehabilitation. DDR programs should also ensure that children from all factions are treated in an equitable fashion; these programs should include psychosocial support and education and last long enough to ensure successful transition.

### **Immediate Action**

- Call on the GoS to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child prohibiting the participation of young people under age 18 in armed forces, and take immediate measures to uphold this standard. Call on non-state armies to officially endorse the standards set by the Protocol. Urge the GoS and all armed groups to take immediate measures to uphold this standard by immediately ending all recruitment of children under the age of 18 and demobilizing all children.
- Call on donor governments and agencies to fund a broad spectrum of programs to improve conditions for Sudanese children, including development-oriented sustainability programs.
- Call on donor governments and agencies to fund initiatives to provide basic medical care and immunizations for Sudanese children. This would include such services as an emergency obstetrics referral system to ensure that emergency services are available to improve the health of mothers and newborns.
- Call on donor governments and agencies to support educational programs, with special attention on children and youth who have missed opportunities to go to school during the conflict and young people with limited alternatives who may otherwise join armed forces.
- Call on the UN Country Team and others working with displaced people to actively plan for the return and reintegration of all displaced people in cooperation with GoS and SPLM authorities and ensure that special programs and policies are established to protect the security and rights of children and adolescents.
- Call on the LRA and the government of Uganda to negotiate a cease-fire and clear the way for the safe release of the abducted Ugandan and Sudanese children. This includes the continued cessation of all support for the LRA by the GoS and full cooperation of the GoS in securing the release and disarmament of children and adolescents held by the LRA.
- Call on member states to take measures to discourage corporate actors within their jurisdiction that operate in Sudan from maintaining commercial relations with parties to the

conflict (UN Res. 1379, para. 9c). Member states should ensure that the operations of these corporate actors are in no way complicit with the perpetuation of human rights abuses and that they cause no further harm to children, adolescents and local communities. This includes the violent displacement of women and children and recruitment of child soldiers in and near oil fields.

- Call on the negotiators in Machakos to include collection of small arms as an immediate priority in a peace settlement, to avoid a possible “second tier” conflict in the future.

### **Ongoing Action**

- Encourage the GoS and donors to improve HIV/AIDS education and prevention programs, which address the special vulnerabilities of girls and adolescents. Special programs providing medical, psychological and social programs for HIV/AIDS orphans should also be made a priority.
- Call on OCHA to coordinate improved data collection, collation and dissemination on the security and rights of Sudanese children in the northern and southern sectors, with special attention to incidents of gender-based violence. This includes the generation of awareness and educational programs about GBV. Special focus should be paid to the vulnerabilities of girls.
- Encourage UN agencies engaged in Sudan to prioritize income-generation programs for women and adolescents, with the ultimate goal of enhancing women’s and children’s access to health services and school.
- Encourage UNCHR, other UN agencies and NGOs working with Sudanese refugees in camps and urban settings to immediately implement greater protections for refugee girls to avoid instances of forced marriage, forced prostitution and similar situations. This includes action to locate and protect “the lost girls.”
- Support commitments by the GoS and SPLM to uphold the principle of voluntary return and the right of displaced people to choose where and when to return. Encourage the establishment of projects that support displaced women and children.
- Encourage donors to support mine-risk education for children and adolescents, even before a peace agreement. These programs should particularly target displaced young people who may be part of a massive population movement in the event of a peace agreement.
- Call on the UN country team and NGOs working in northern and southern Sudan to strengthen programming, including family reunification programs, to protect orphaned children, street children and other unaccompanied minors.

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## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Sudan has not had a national census since 1983. Many of the statistics in this chart are estimates of UN agencies, NGOs and others based surveys in select regions. As a result, some of the statistics may be limited to government controlled areas and therefore may exclude large segments of the population. Statistics related to specific regions are noted as such. However, large disparities often exist between the northern and southern areas of the country and within regions themselves.

<sup>2</sup> High-vulnerability areas include (eastern and western) Equatoria, Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal—the region informally recognized as southern—as well as the areas of Southern Darfur, Southern Kordofan, northern Bahr el Ghazal, and southern Blue Nile, known as transitional zone between the north and south. These areas have a long history of lack of access to humanitarian assistance. They are under continued threat of human rights violations. Children in these areas are at extreme risk of being displaced from their homes, separated from their parents and families, lacking access to education and healthcare, and being subject to abduction, slavery and a range of other violations.

<sup>3</sup> Refugees and internally displaced Sudanese have fled their homes for a number of reasons, including warfare, drought, lack of food and general insecurity. This report focuses on the refugee and IDP children who have been uprooted as a result of war.

<sup>4</sup> Estimated number of children who have lost their mother or father or both parents to AIDS and were alive and under age 15 at end of 2001.

<sup>5</sup> According to UNAIDS/WHO, HIV has recently grown to become a major health problem in Sudan. Although the surveillance system is limited to four sites only, it is feared that Sudan is facing a generalized epidemic.

<sup>6</sup> Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term used for any harm that is perpetrated on a person against her/his will that has a negative impact on the physical and psychological health, development and identity of the person, and is the result of gendered power relationships determined by social roles ascribed to by males and females. Violence may be physical, sexual, psychological, economic or sociocultural, and is almost always and across all cultures disparately impacting women and children.

<sup>7</sup> In May 2002, the Report of the International Eminent Persons Group, *Slavery, Abduction and Forced Servitude in Sudan*, concluded that in a significant number of cases, abduction is the first stage in a pattern of abuse that falls under the definition of slavery in the International Slavery Convention of 1926 and the Supplementary Convention of 1956.

<sup>8</sup> The SPLM/A is unable to ratify this and other international conventions because of its non-state status.

<sup>9</sup> For more information, see NGO Recommendations to Improve the Effectiveness of Civilian Monitoring and Protection in Sudan, February 13, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> Many abuses against children in Sudan are connected with oil production and oil-rich areas. At the same time, displacement and other violations also occur in areas such as northern Bahr el Ghazal and northern Equatoria that have no relation to oil exploration. These violations tend to receive less attention from the international community and little information is available.

<sup>11</sup> UNDP/OLS, Sudan 2000 Annual Needs Assessment.

<sup>12</sup> The LRA is also known to abduct and abuse Ugandan children. For more information, see the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children report, Participatory Research Study with Adolescents in Northern Uganda, *Against All Odds: Surviving the War on Adolescents* and other relevant sources.

<sup>13</sup> Interagency Paper of CARE International, Christian Aid, International Rescue Committee, Oxfam, Save the Children and Tearfund.

<sup>14</sup> *Report of an Investigation into Oil Development, Conflict and Displacement in Western Upper Nile, Sudan*, October 2001, p. 35.

<sup>15</sup> For in-depth political analysis of the ongoing conflict in Sudan, please refer to the list of sources in this document or contact the Watchlist for more information.

<sup>16</sup> Sudan's Oilfields Burn Again: Brinkmanship Endangers the Peace Process, [www.crisisweb.org](http://www.crisisweb.org). Also see other recent ICG reports on Sudan for in-depth review of the Machakos peace initiative.

<sup>17</sup> Due to debate over what constitutes "safe drinking water," the UNICEF survey used "access to improved source of drinking water" as the indicator in its survey, MICS 2000.

<sup>18</sup> Commissioned by Canadian Auto Workers Union, Steelworkers Humanity Fund, The Simons Foundation, United Church of Canada, Division of World Outreach and World Vision, Canada.

<sup>19</sup> Interagency mission included representatives from 11 UN agencies and four NGOs.

<sup>20</sup> Lack of consent to sexual intercourse cannot be proven without testimony of physical violence from four adult witnesses (the testimony of two women is equal to the testimony of one man). These testimonies are a prerequisite

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to proving rape. Punishment for adultery according to the 1991 Criminal Act (article 146) is death by stoning if a woman is married and 100 lashes if she is unmarried.

<sup>21</sup> Approximately 90 percent of girls in northern Sudan are subject to FGM. This may not be a direct result of conflict, but it is a harmful traditional practice based on customary behaviors that has sustained and reinforced abuses against girls throughout the armed conflict.

<sup>22</sup> The SSIM/A is a break-away movement from the SPLA.

<sup>23</sup> UN Security Council Resolutions 1044 and 1070 demand extradition from Sudan to Ethiopia of three suspects wanted in connection with an assassination attempt on President Mubarak of Egypt.

The Watchlist works within the framework of the provisions adopted in Security Council Resolutions 1261, 1314 and 1379, the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its protocols, and other internationally adopted human rights and humanitarian standards.

Information is collected through an extensive network of organizations that work with children around the world. Analysis is provided by a multidisciplinary team of people with expertise and/or experience in the particular situation. Information in the public domain may be directly cited in the report. All sources are listed in alphabetical order at the end of report to protect the security of sources.

General supervision of the project is provided by a Steering Committee of international non-governmental organizations known for their work with children and human rights. The views presented in any report do not represent the views of any one organization in the network or on the Steering Committee.

For further information about the Watchlist Project or specific reports, or to share information about children in a particular conflict situation, please contact:  
watchlist@womenscommission.org