
Political Accommodation in the Republic of Sudan May 2016

OVERVIEW

Conflict Dynamics' initiative in Sudan aims to help prevent conflict and enhance the country's political stability. In working toward this goal, Conflict Dynamics supports Sudanese in developing, agreeing upon, and implementing inclusive and effective political dialogue processes focused on building governance arrangements that accommodate Sudan's diverse interests.

BACKGROUND

In recent years, an increasing number of challenges – including escalating conflict in the west and south, unrest in Khartoum, and economic crisis – has diminished the strength of the Sudanese state and led to further fragmentation. A critical factor underlying these challenges is that governance arrangements have failed to accommodate the political interests arising from Sudan's diversity. Because existing governance arrangements do not offer people genuine opportunities to express their interests, people have manifested their interests through violent conflict.

Many constituencies agree that political dialogue is necessary to address Sudan's challenges. A range of actors – including the government, armed groups, opposition parties, civil society organizations, and youth movements – have proposed political dialogue that would lead to governance reform. However, they do not agree on how dialogue should take place, and ongoing dialogue processes have not genuinely or effectively accommodated the diverse interests of the Sudanese people. These challenges highlight the need for Sudanese to develop, agree upon, and implement governance arrangements and political dialogue processes that can accommodate their political interests.

METHODOLOGY

When discussing the future governance of Sudan, it is important for people to freely express, take into account, and reconcile their different political interests. One way Sudanese can work toward reconciling their interests is by using the concept of **political accommodation**.

The term *political accommodation* means the objectives, arrangements, processes, or outcomes of mutual conciliation of people's competing political interests and perspectives. Mutual conciliation is a process where **parties with competing interests take each other's interests into account without compromising their own core interests**.

The political accommodation methodology is a package of tools to translate people's interests into practical options for making and building peace. The methodology consists of three core components:

- A framework for analyzing and developing options for **governance arrangements**
- A framework for analyzing and developing options for **political dialogue processes**

A **series of steps** to develop options for governance arrangements and political dialogue processes

AREAS OF ACTIVITY

Conflict Dynamics has been directly and impartially supporting peacebuilding in Sudan since 2008. Under the current initiative, Conflict Dynamics is providing specialized and impartial technical support and expertise to help Sudanese stakeholders develop options for political dialogue processes and governance arrangements that achieve political accommodation.

As part of this support, Conflict Dynamics is **engaging with a wide range of Sudanese constituencies** through bilateral meetings and interactive workshops. Conflict Dynamics consults primarily with top-level actors in constituencies including the government, armed opposition groups, political parties, youth movements, civil society groups, and academics. During these consultations, Conflict Dynamics aims not to offer recommendations but to help Sudanese develop their own options for arrangements and processes that could promote political accommodation.

Through this engagement, Conflict Dynamics is also **facilitating and mediating dialogue** within and between constituencies. The goal of this dialogue is to enable Sudanese to work collaboratively toward building consensus on the options they develop. In addition, Conflict Dynamics is aiming to **contribute to the emergence of political will** in support of implementing these options.

Through consultations and applied research, Conflict Dynamics is **developing tools and frameworks** to share and apply with Sudanese stakeholders engaged through the initiative. These tools and frameworks are tailored to the Sudanese context and its challenges. Tools Conflict Dynamics has developed and used in Sudan include an online tool to map the political interests of key Sudanese stakeholders and a range of case studies that could offer lessons to Sudan.

PUBLICATIONS

- *Governance in the Sudan: Options for Political Accommodation in the Republic of the Sudan*, February 2014
- *National Elections and Political Accommodation in the Sudan*, June 2009
- *Electoral Reform in Sudan and Prospects for Peace in Darfur*, October 2008

Contact information:

Gerard Mc Hugh, President

Phone: +1 617 306-3157

Email: gmchugh@cdint.org