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**PROFILE OF A COMMUNITY:**

**A "SMART MAP" OF THE SUDANESE DIASPORA IN CANADA**

*prepared for*

The Sudan Task Force  
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT)

Friday, November 6, 2009

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## Executive Summary

Up until now, the Sudanese Diaspora in Canada has received relatively scant research attention, despite the importance of Sudan to Canada's foreign policy. The guiding assumption behind the current project is that those members of the Sudanese community living in Canada, although proudly attached to Canada and Canadian values, also retain a deep knowledge of and concern for Sudan, its internal dynamics, and the crises that it and its people continue to face. This paper considers this group of individuals to be a largely untapped resource – a population of “citizen experts” – whose knowledge and views could both inform and enhance the formulation and analysis of Canadian policy towards Sudan.

This *Profile of a Community: A Smart Map of the Sudanese Diaspora in Canada* (“Smart Map”) seeks both to describe the community's principal characteristics and dynamics, and catalogue its organizations, its leadership, and the foreign policy views of a sampling of community members from across Canada, all for the benefit of Canadian policy makers. The findings strewn throughout the *Smart Map* are based on seventy-seven (77) interviews and questionnaires administered to community leaders in seven (7) major cities across the country, as well as existing statistical data and scholarly literature.

The *Smart Map* profiles the complex ethnic and cultural identities of the Sudanese population in Canada. The main “fault line” that divides the community is the one between “Northerners” and “Southerners.” Wherever measurably large numbers of Sudanese-Canadians reside in a metropolitan centre, the norm, rather than the exception, is for the population to divide and organize itself into separate “Sudanese” (read, northern) and “Southern Sudanese” components. However, to further complicate matters, Sudanese-Canadians also organize themselves along a myriad of sub-regional, tribal, sub-tribal, and religious lines that do not necessarily cohere neatly with the standard north/south division. While the geographic, religious and ethnic (i.e. tribal) cleavages which derive from decades of civil war in Sudan have been largely replicated in the diaspora in Canada, there is a strong will on the part of many community leaders to build bridges between sub-communities and work towards pan-Sudanese unity in the Diaspora. We see promising examples of this in certain Canadian cities, like Winnipeg.

Regardless of geographic or tribal origin, members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada remain closely connected to Sudan. For some, this is demonstrated by the regular and generous payment of financial remittances to both family members and friends in Sudan, and by occasional return trips home. For others, this connection includes ongoing participation in an overtly-political organization such as the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), which has numerous chapters across Canada representing a sizable number of Southern Sudanese, or a less formal network of Sudanese Communist Party or Democratic Union Party chapters. However, all respondents, both southerners and northerners, agreed that, within Canada's Sudanese diaspora, political discussions are more often avoided than not, and particularly so in

the many community-based Sudanese associations that tend to be the principal organizations around which community members gather.

Virtually all members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada receive news about Sudan via either Sudanese television stations broadcast via satellite to North America, or via a select group of news-based websites.

A distributional analysis of the Sudanese population finds that like most recently-arrived migrant groups, its members exhibit a strong preference for urban centres. A slight majority (53%) live in Ontario, with the second largest concentration found in Alberta (28%). The diaspora is also characterized by a relatively high degree of educational attainment, with Statistics Canada suggesting that 24% of Sudanese-Canadians have completed post-secondary education. Of those 77 respondents who participated in this research project, almost all had post-secondary degrees, and 25% had completed post-graduate studies. This fact alone may begin to hint at the potential of diaspora members to participate constructively in consultations, forums, or deliberations concerning Canadian foreign policy towards Sudan.

Community organizations of the Sudanese diaspora - the purpose of which is typically both to promote the community's interests and to provide various settlement and integration services to its members – tend to exhibit a relatively low level of formal organization and often operate with scarce financial resources. That said, many receive settlement program funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and this relationship is among the strongest that community organizations are likely to have with the Government of Canada.

In general terms, those who have been living longest in Canada tend to be the best integrated into Canadian society. Some remain involved with community-based organizations and act as *de facto* mentors to newer arrivals to the country, but others grow more and more detached from their communities as their income and time spent in Canada increase. While the overall size of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada remains small – arguably between 25,000 and 30,000 nationwide – a number of individuals are emerging as successful academics, professionals, and business people. A selection of these people are listed by city in Appendix 2, and their key capacities – many of which may be directly relevant to elements of Canadian foreign policy towards Sudan, such as civil engineers who may be well-positioned to comment on certain development projects, and so on – are catalogued.

One of the most surprising but encouraging findings of this report was that there was no obvious correlation between respondents' geographical origin within Sudan, or their tribal affiliation, or their faith tradition, and their responses to a closed-ended survey we conducted regarding the politics of Sudan and the policies of Canada towards Sudan. It would be valuable to ascertain if the same finding would hold true if it were tested against a much larger sample of the community. In any event, participants were asked to respond to a series of propositions relating to current affairs in Sudan, and particularly Canada's role in Sudan. On balance, participants viewed Canada's

contributions positively, but felt that Canada should become more active. There was disagreement over the value of economic sanctions – with just over half saying that they are counterproductive and should be removed - but also a widespread belief that President Bashir is counterproductive to the country's interests and should be removed from office. There was strong support for humanitarian intervention in Sudan by Canadian and other Western troops. The high rate of response to almost all propositions points to the interest that diaspora members retain for current events in Sudan, as well as their keen interest in Canada's relationship with their country of birth.

The *Smart Map* project represents a first step towards realizing the potential of the Sudanese Diaspora to contribute to foreign policy. It is suggested that it can be used to organize a consultative forum or series of forums for diaspora members, under the auspices of the Sudan Task Force. It is also hoped that it will serve as a template for research on other diaspora groups that are similarly situated to contribute to foreign policy-making.

# 1. Introduction

The Smart Map of the Sudanese Diaspora in Canada project was commissioned and sponsored by the Sudan Task Force of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and conducted by the Mosaic Institute. This final report is intended to sketch the basic social and demographic characteristics of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada, explore the foreign policy positions and priorities of Sudanese-Canadians, and document their collective and individual capacities to enhance Canadian foreign policy towards Sudan. It is hoped that the final product will enable the Canadian government to make better use of the Sudanese “citizen experts” present in Canada, assist Sudanese-Canadians in engaging the Canadian government as well as making use of their professional and educational credentials, and ultimately improve the effectiveness of Canada’s official activities in Sudan.

This is the first report, to the authors’ knowledge, which analyzes and catalogues the individual and collective capacities of the Sudanese Diaspora to participate in the formulation of foreign policy towards Sudan. This research should be read as an important first step towards a robust and mutually-beneficial relationship between the official foreign policy-making community in Ottawa and Sudanese-Canadian communities across the country.

## 1.1 Statement of the Problem

The Sudanese diaspora in Canada, by virtue of its recent arrival relative to other ethnocultural communities, has gone largely unsurveyed, and studies that have been conducted have focused on the more immediate social and economic aspects of migration and resettlement.<sup>1</sup>

As a result, there is a lack of ready information about Sudanese-Canadians, their organizations, their leadership, their relationships to their country of origin and each other, their views of Canada’s policies towards Sudan, and their collective and individual capacities to enhance those policies. At the same time, given its ongoing civil conflict, its staggering poverty and drought, and its political instability, Sudan figures very prominently in Canada’s foreign affairs and development programming. Since 2006, that programming – including humanitarian and development assistance, as well as defence-related spending – has represented disbursements of some \$674 million (CAD) across all federal government departments and agencies.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Prior to the late 1980s, there was very little Sudanese migration to North America. In the 70’s and 80’s, Sudanese migration was more commonly to the neighboring rich oil countries in the Gulf region, as well as to Libya. Migration was typically driven by the pursuit of prosperity and improved career opportunities. The nearness of these countries and the shared language of Arabic facilitated this migration process.

<sup>2</sup> Figures confirmed through communications with DFAIT officials, November 2009.



This report and the data it presents are an attempt to begin to draw closer connections between Canadian policies and programming concerning Sudan, and the Sudanese-Canadians who are arguably our own country's most well-qualified "citizen experts" when it comes to assessing, commenting upon and enhancing those policies and programmes.

While the focus of this report is on Sudan and Sudanese-Canadians, it is hoped that a side benefit of this research will be to highlight the potentially important role that diasporas can play in enhancing the quality and the effectiveness of Canadian foreign policy-related decision-making throughout the world. Canada, by nature of its multinational and transnational population, is uniquely situated to take advantage of such Canadians' first-hand, expert knowledge of virtually all regions of the world. This immense potential resource is increasingly recognized but remains under-utilized. This report represents an effort to go beyond the numbers on the Canadian census in order to "map" the practical potential of a diaspora, so that policy makers may better access its wisdom, passion and creativity.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the Smart Map of the Sudanese Diaspora in Canada research project were as follows:

- To document the geographic concentrations and key demographic attributes of Canada's Sudanese Diaspora;
- To identify key Sudanese organizations in Canada, as well as their leaders and key members, that have an interest in and a capacity to help inform and contribute to the formulation and enhancement of Canadian foreign policy with respect to Sudan;
- To identify individual Sudanese-Canadians who have achieved notable success in academe, the professions, and the business community and who may have an interest in and a capacity to help inform and contribute to the formulation and enhancement of Canadian foreign policy with respect to Sudan;
- To document the tribal, ethnic, regional, religious and political origins and ties of key Sudanese-Canadian organizations and individuals;
- To analyze the interrelationships of key Sudanese-Canadian organizations and their leadership;
- To compile the policy positions and priorities of key Sudanese-Canadian organizations and individuals with respect to issues of critical policy importance, including:

- the dissemination of Canadian official development assistance (ODA) to Sudan;
  - human rights issues in Darfur and elsewhere in Sudan;
  - the ICC indictment of President Bashir;
  - Canada's potential peacekeeping role in Sudan; and
  - any other policy issues concerning Sudan that are of high-priority to the Sudanese-Canadian Diaspora.
- To document the strength and type of links which connect Sudanese-Canadians back to Sudan, including remittances, "brain circulation", knowledge sharing, social obligations, and web-based networking;
  - To consider the role of the Sudanese-Canadian Diaspora in homeland politics; and
  - To identify existing relationships between Sudanese-Canadian organizations and the Government of Canada.

The final report is intended to present a snapshot of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada, to describe its size, its distribution, its intra-community dynamics and its organizational structures, and to consider whether and how the community might play a role in the formulation, review or enhancement of Canadian foreign policy towards Sudan. The paper also catalogues a number of both Sudanese-Canadian and other Canadian organizations doing work related to Sudan, and lists a number of prominent members of the Sudanese-Canadian community who possess skill-sets, educational backgrounds and professional credentials that might qualify them to serve as "citizen experts" capable of enhancing Canada's policies concerning Sudan.

Finally, the paper presents the results of a survey that asks a number of questions pertaining to the politics of Sudan, and Canada's policies towards Sudan. Survey results are presented along with representative quotations from those surveyed. This foreign policy focus of the current study distinguishes it from most other studies of Sudanese migrants in Canada.

## **1.3 Research**

### **1.3.1 Methodology**

The researchers employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to meet research objectives, using the advantages of both to isolate different focuses of the study.

## **Literature Review**

Prior to field research, an exhaustive review of literature was conducted. This review included existing academic studies of the Sudanese-Canadian Diaspora as well as particular sub-sets thereof, publications and communications issued by Sudanese-Canadian community organizations and media outlets, studies, publications and communications about the Sudanese-Canadian community issued by Canadian non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and Canadian Census data. Most research publications relating to the Sudanese diaspora focused upon settlement and socio-economic issues facing Sudanese migrants.

## **Survey Tools**

Two survey tools were prepared. One was an anonymous, aggregate quantitative tool, which asked participants to indicate certain objective demographic characteristics and then respond to roughly thirty (30) propositions relating to current issues in Sudan, and Canadian policy towards Sudan. Participants were presented with positive statements, and asked to indicate whether they strongly agreed, somewhat agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, somewhat disagreed, strongly disagreed, or did not know. Space was also provided for additional comments relating to current events and Canadian activities in Sudan. Cross-tabular analysis was performed on the collected data.

The second survey tool asked open-ended questions relating to personal experiences with migration to and life in Canada, reasons for leaving Sudan, involvement in the Canadian Sudanese community and personal capacity to enhance Canadian official activities in Sudan. These were administered in conjunction with unstructured, in-depth interviews which allowed participants to identify issues of importance facing Sudan and the Sudanese diaspora in Canada. Most interviews were conducted either exclusively in Arabic, or in a combination of English and Arabic. The open-ended survey and interviews were analyzed and coded. Common themes and concerns were identified. Some direct quotes were selected to appear in the research paper as representative of similar attitudes expressed by multiple participants.

Strict ethical protocol was adhered to. Consent forms, provided in both English and Arabic, allowed participants to indicate whether they were willing to appear by name and be identified as a potential expert resource for Canadian policymakers, or whether they wished their participation to remain anonymous.

## **Sampling**

The researchers used a combination of purposive and snowball sampling to recruit individual Sudanese-Canadians in positions of leadership or active involvement in their communities as participants. They initially contacted the executive officers of regional Sudanese associations, as well as settlement agencies which provided services to large

numbers of Sudanese Newcomers. They also relied upon personal contacts of the Principal Researcher, an active member of the Toronto Sudanese community. Primary contacts were telephoned, and subsequently sent documents explaining the intent of the research, as well as introducing the work of the Mosaic Institute. These primary contacts were encouraged to distribute these materials to interested community-members. Most primary contacts allowed the researchers to use their personal networks to connect with additional community-members of standing and significance. Where regional and gender gaps appeared amongst participants in particular cities, the researchers sought the assistance of community partners to specifically recruit participants representative of sexes, all regions of Sudan, and all Sudanese-Canadian associations.

To the fullest degree possible, researchers allowed community partners to define and identify who constituted “leaders” in the community. For the purposes of the study, the term is left deliberately broad with the intention that it is interpreted liberally. Researchers sought a cross-section of both formal leaders (for instance, elected leaders of community organizations) and informal leaders (those holding no specific position, but regarded as significant to the functioning of the community).

## **Field Research**

Field research – including the administration of surveys and more in-depth interviews – was conducted over three (3) months (July, August and September 2009) in the following cities: Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary, Toronto, Hamilton, Kitchener, and Ottawa.

### **1.3.2 Limitations**

Primarily, this project’s limitations relate to its limited resources and the small time-frame within which it was conducted. Researchers were only able to make brief visits to cities and regions outside of Southern Ontario for consultation and conducting the study questionnaire. As a result, many interested community-members were unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts. An effort was made to follow up by telephone and email with these individuals, and some survey materials were completed from a distance, but the inability to conduct face-to-face meetings posed a minor detraction from the final results.

There were additional research limitations relating to the particular character and condition of the Sudanese Diaspora in Canada. First, because the communities are relatively recently-arrived, and because most lack the financial resources to support fully-operative associations, there is little stable community infrastructure which can be used to access community-members. Researchers found that many of the community associations listed online and in directories were only skeletal organizations. Many lacked physical space for meetings, and some did not have functioning phone numbers

and email addresses. They exist by the creativity, dedication and hard work of volunteers, but have little in the way of public entrance points. This created problems in accessing particular regional and tribal sub-segments of the Sudanese Diaspora for which the researchers lacked personal contacts, and further aggravated timeframe constraints. This lack of community institutions has been noted in past studies (The Study of Sudanese Settlement in Ontario, 2004). It is hoped that this project may assist community partners in establishing formal relationships with the Canadian government and working towards enlarging their organizational capacity.

Second, political tensions, related to 25 years of war and upheaval in Sudan and retained in a muted form in Canada, created unanticipated challenges for the researchers, particularly in their attempts to build trust relationships with potential participants. The Principal Researcher, originally from northern Sudan, was challenged on multiple occasions by participants from the southern region of Sudan to identify where he was born, when he left Sudan, and what his political leanings were. Other interviewees occasionally expressed suspicion about parts of the questionnaire, and wanted to know more about why certain questions were being asked. This was a reflection of profound divisions within the Sudanese Diaspora, as well as the attitudes and anxieties which are a by-product of the refugee experience and long-standing opposition to the government of Sudan.

Likely, if this study had focused solely on matters related to settlement in Canada as most others have, these reactions would not have been so strong. However, the content relating to current affairs in Sudan prompted some skepticism. It became important, and helpful, early on to note that the research was being conducted by a Canadian non-profit organization, and would be shared with the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. A majority of Sudanese-Canadians who were approached saw value in the research and participated enthusiastically, irrespective of their regional origins. Nevertheless, a small component of the population abstained, and their input is therefore missing from this report. This is the result of tragically-ingrained predispositions, and a deep uncertainty about political involvement which relates to unthinkable past trauma and upheaval. In any future government-sponsored research projects involving ethnographic research of the Sudanese-Canadian community, it is important to always approach members of these sub-communities with a compassionate understanding of the past trauma suffered by so many of them.

## 2. Sudanese Diaspora in Canada: An Overview

### 2.1 The Origins of Canada's Sudanese Diaspora

People living in Canada whose personal, family or community histories connect them to Sudan fall into two broad categories: a relatively small group of those who came to Canada in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s, typically in pursuit of educational or professional opportunities, and a much larger number who arrived in Canada from the mid-1980s on, as Sudan was plunged into a prolonged period of internal conflict and political tyranny.

A majority of the Sudanese immigrants who have come to Canada in the last two decades were seeking asylum from state repression, economic collapse and the escalation of conflict. They came principally as Government Assisted Refugees (GAR), privately sponsored refugees, or members of the Family Class.<sup>3</sup> For many, their flight from Sudan was prompted by the advent of the National Islamic Front (NIF) and Lieutenant General – now President - Omer Albashir, who, beginning in 1989, successfully usurped control of the government and began a systematic crackdown on internal dissenters. Bashir's military junta purged the civil service and army of perceived threats, and banned both trade unions and political parties. Such political tensions aggravated the ongoing civil war between the Northern and Southern regions of Sudan that had first begun in 1983. The wounds of that 21-year-long armed conflict, which ended officially in 2005 with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, have continued to be compounded by the resurgence of multi-party conflict in Darfur.<sup>4</sup>

All told, it is estimated that these various conflicts have internally displaced between 4 and 5 million Sudanese.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> World Bank. "International Migration, Economic Development and Policy". Washington: World Bank, 2007.

<sup>4</sup> Successive north-dominated governments have enacted policies of Arabization and Islamization of the southern region. This has resulted in two civil wars: the first, from 1955 to 1972, and the second, from 1983 to 2005, with the latter the longest ongoing civil war in African history, and one of the most brutal conflicts since the Second World War. The political and economic instability, disunity and mutual distrust created by these protracted wars has deeply scarred modern Sudan. The current military junta under Lieutenant General Albashir usurped power from the elected government of Prime Minister El Sadiq Almahadi on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June, 1989. The junta dissolved all political parties and trade unions. It curbed civil rights, including those to freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and the right to strike. State repression and human rights abuses continue, even though a Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in 2005 between President Albashir's National Congress and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). The region of Darfur, meanwhile, has been at the crossroads of a brutal conflict between the government of Sudan and Darfurian rebels (SLM and GEJM) since 2003, resulting in a serious humanitarian and military crisis. Meanwhile, aggressive economic liberalization under President Albashir thrust Sudan into greater poverty and further entrenched the economic division between North and South. Any hopes of creating a substantial middle-class in the country vanished. The regime's Islamist fanaticism has led to isolation from the international community and an end to financial aid and loans. The resulting inflation and rise in commodity prices has been a contributing factor to Sudanese immigration to Canada, particularly that of independent class migrants.

<sup>5</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. "Internal Displacement: Global Overview of Trends and Development in 2008". Geneva: IDMC, April 2009. Francis Deng, in a report for the United Nations entitled *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, defines an IDP as, "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or place of residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed

In addition to these refugees and those who were reunited with their loved ones in Canada under the Family Class, a much smaller number of Sudanese migrants have arrived as Independent-class immigrants. Many in this latter group were Sudanese who were working outside their home country during the worst years of civil war, in the oil-rich Arab countries such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the Sultanate of Oman, Libya and Iraq. Some of these Sudanese expatriates resettled their families in Canada to avoid returning to the turbulent political climate in Sudan while they themselves remained in the oil-rich Arab countries to work as long as employment opportunities were plentiful. By the mid-2000s, they, too, had come to Canada.<sup>6</sup>

Together, these people and their offspring born in Canada constitute the Sudanese diaspora in Canada.<sup>7</sup>

## **2.2 The Diversity of Canada's Sudanese Diaspora:**

### **2.2.1 The Diversity of the Country of Origin**

Though many of the members of Canada's Sudanese diaspora share a history of escaping a country torn apart by conflict and instability, it is important to stress – as reinforced by the findings of the surveys and questionnaires that were completed as part of this research project – that they are by no means monolithic in their backgrounds, views, or affiliations. No one member of the Sudanese diaspora is fully representative of that group any more than a single Canadian can be deemed to be representative of all Canadians.

This diversity is a reflection of the geographic, tribal, linguistic and religious complexity of the country from which they come. Physically, Sudan is the largest country in Africa and the 19<sup>th</sup> largest country in the world, covering an area of 2.5 million square kilometers. Its territorial boundaries comprise 8.3 percent of the land on the African

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conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.” Deng, Francis, “The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,” E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.1, February 11. New York, NY: United Nations, 1998. Sadly, Sudan's story is not unique. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre Report of 2008 (*supra*), the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) reached 26 million in some 52 countries by the end of 2008. Africa has the largest population of IDPs, numbering 11.6 million in 21 countries.

<sup>6</sup> Source: Principal Researcher's own experience and interviews with other Sudanese-Canadians.

<sup>7</sup> While no single, universally accepted definition of the term “diaspora” exists, most working definitions share certain fundamental characteristics. James Clifford highlights a history of dispersal, collective myths and memories, and the dichotomy of homeland and host country as essential. Clifford, James. “Diaspora”, in *Cultural Anthropology* Vol. 9 (3): 311 P

This report uses the term “diaspora” to refer to a group with a common ethnic identity that has been displaced and that has taken up permanent residence outside its traditional homeland. For the purpose of considering the Sudanese diaspora in Canada specifically, this report does not suggest that those individuals or sub-communities studied necessarily fit with all elements of Safran's definition – for instance, a belief that they are not fully accepted by Canada, or that they necessarily view their ancestral home as a place of eventual return.

continent.<sup>8</sup> Sudan is bordered to the west by Chad and the Central African Republic, to the north by Egypt and Libya, to the east by Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Kenya, and in the south by Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The state is bisected by the Nile river, which runs north-south, and whose tributaries are partly or entirely within its borders.<sup>9</sup>

In 2009 Sudanese population is approximately 39,154,490 persons according to the 5<sup>th</sup> Sudan Population and Housing Census conducted in 2008.<sup>10</sup> Sudan's population is often classified according to a number of binary social categorizations that, depending on how they are used, can sometimes fail to convey the ethnic and cultural complexity of Sudan's people. These categories are typically based on physical geography (North vs. South), ethnic identity (Arab vs. African), and religious affiliation (Islam vs. Christianity), or various combinations thereof. "Northerners" are assumed to be Sunni Moslems who self-identify as "Arab" and "Southerners" who are more likely to be practitioners of African religions or Christianity who self-identify as "African". It is estimated that some 70% of Sudan's people are Sunni Muslim, while approximately 18% practice indigenous African religions, including various forms of animism, and 10% identify as Christian.<sup>11</sup>

Nationwide, Arabic is the most widely-spoken language, though various tribal languages are also spoken throughout the country. English is also a useful means of communication for people from different regions and tribal groups.

### **2.2.2. Sub-Groups within Canada's Sudanese Diaspora**

These distinctions and classifications between and among the people of Sudan often persist when they immigrate to Canada. The Sudanese diaspora in Canada tends to define itself based on three inter-related factors: geographical origin, ethnicity (including tribal affiliations) and cultural (including religious) heritage.

#### **Geographic Origin: North vs. South**

In virtually all of the principal population centres in Canada where members of the Sudanese diaspora are clustered, there tends to be both "northerners" – people who are originally from the northern half of Sudan – and "southerners". In very general terms, there tend to be proportionally more "southerners" located in western Canada cities than in central Canada, where "northerners" tend to predominate, though in absolute terms there are likely more of both groups in central Canada. The general practice is for the Sudanese from the north and the south to establish their own organizations and to avoid

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<sup>8</sup> Abusharaf, Rogaia M. "Sudanese Migration to the New World: Socio-Economic Characteristics", in *International Migration* Vol. 35(4) (1997): 513-536 pp

<sup>9</sup> See Sudan Map –APPENDIX 2.

<sup>10</sup> Central Bureau of Statistics. "The 5<sup>th</sup> Sudan Population and Housing Census, 2008 Priority Results". Khartoum, Sudan: Central Bureau of Statistics, 2008.

<sup>11</sup> Deng, F. "War of Visions: Conflict of Identities in the Sudan." Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute, 1995.



mingling with each other. In some cities there is outright antipathy between the people of the “north” and the people of the “south”. However, in others, the two sub-communities cooperate closely with each other, and in at least one major metropolitan centre, Winnipeg, one Sudanese community organization serves the interests of both “southerners” and “northerners”.

### **Ethnic Origin: Tribal Affiliation**

The influence of ethnic tribalism on Sudanese social, cultural and political life should not be disregarded, and tribal affiliation remains one of the ways that the Sudanese diaspora organizes itself within Canada. This report's own field work with the major communities of Sudanese across Canada identified sub-sets within the diaspora from the Dinka, Nuer, Nuba, Nubian, Beja, Shaigia, Bediria, Jalyeen, Missirya, and Rubatab tribes, among others. Many immigrants even identified with sub-tribal units such as Dinka Boor, Dinka Yrool, and Dinka Baher al Ghazl. There are also quasi-ethnic groups, such as the Copts descended from Egyptians and who typically are adherents of the Orthodox Church, who function as *de facto* tribes and who, by the way, are just as likely to come from southern Sudan as from the northern part of the country.

Those who identify as “southerners” are most likely to be Dinka, Nuer, and Bari, “Northerners” will typically be Nuba, Nubian, Beja, Shaigia, or of some other tribe.

As in Sudan itself, some of these tribes – such as the Nuba – include both Muslim and Christian members. Others – such as the Dinka and the Nuer – encompass both Christians (largely from southern Sudan) and those who most closely associate with traditional African religions (ex. Animism). Still other tribes, such as the Nubians of northern Sudan and the Beja of Eastern Sudan, tend to be exclusively Muslim.

While within Canada people of Sudanese origin with different tribal affiliations will associate with one another around shared political or other interests, their sense of tribal identity may well be stronger than any sense of shared national identity. It is noteworthy, therefore, that in its most recent census data, Statistics Canada only recognizes one Sudanese tribe - the Dinka, of which there were 140 counted in 2006 – as a distinct entity.<sup>12</sup> As an aside, the failure to include more tribal options in the census may be another reason explaining why the census’ “official count” of Canadians of Sudanese extraction appears to be low.

### **Religious Affiliation: Muslims, Christians, Copts, & Others**

There is a clear tendency observed for the members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada to associate most closely with other members who share similar religious affiliations and backgrounds. Often, these affiliations overlap with regional origins, with most “northerners” living in Canada practising Islam and most “southerners” identifying as various types of Christian. Moreover, places of worship tend to play an extremely

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<sup>12</sup> Statistics Canada. 2006 Census – 20% Sample Data, Target Group Profile, 97C0002. Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 2006.

important political and organizational role within the various sub-communities of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada. For instance, the members of the Southern Sudanese community in southern Alberta – including members of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) living in Canada, and others who support or who are sympathetic to the GOSS (Government of Southern Sudan), tend to organize themselves in and around Christian churches that double as centres for community-related activities.<sup>13</sup>

It should be noted that even within the Christian segment of the broader Sudanese diaspora, there are divisions that affect its organizational patterns. Those Sudanese “Copts” who belong to the Orthodox Church, for instance, many of whom are concentrated in Toronto, tend to be no more or less closely affiliated with non-Coptic Christians from the Sudanese diaspora than they are with Muslim members of the diaspora. Rather, although that particular sub-group of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada tends not to inter-marry with other tribes, religions or sub-groups, they are generally viewed as getting along amiably with all corners of the broader diaspora.

In summary, therefore, there remain differences among Sudanese Canadians that can be traced back to the multi-variety diversity of Sudan itself, and to the numerous “binary” factors that tend to define Sudan’s society. While any tensions between different sub-groups of the Sudanese community in Canada tend to express themselves in relatively restrained ways – this being Canada, after all - the origin of the tensions can be traced back to many years of ongoing civil war and to the deep-rooted racial, ethnic and religious differences that both contributed to its start and were exploited by its principal combatants. As stated by Jok Madut Jok in 2007:

“The problem of racialized and religious violence makes the questions of national unity in Sudan a burning issue today as it has done since independence. More than fifty years after independence, the Sudanese remain divided on the issues of what the country’s cultural outlook, its racial self- perception, its system of government, the citizen’s loyalty to their ethnicity, or region versus loyalty to the state, and above all, whether ethnic, racial, and religious diversity is to be embraced as a source of strength or to be attacked and eliminated as a source of weakness and disunity.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> For instance, in early October 2009, a memorial service, well-attended by the southern Sudanese community, was held for Dr. John Garang De Mabior, former First Vice-President of Sudan, President of the Government of Southern Sudan and SPLM Chairman, in Calgary’s Church of Nazareth. Those in attendance included GOSS Mission Head to Canada, H.E. Joseph Mum Majak Malok, Acting SPLM Representative to Canada, Mr. Flex Dumo, Sudanese Communities’ leaders, Sudanese churches’ leaders, Lost Boys/Lost Girls of Sudan Rep., and SPLA Veteran members. Source: <http://www.gurtong.net/ECM/Editorial/tabid/124/ID/2034/SPLM-Chapter-Honours-Garang-in-Calgary.aspx>

<sup>14</sup> Madot Jok, Jok. *Sudan: Race, Religion and Violence*. Oxford: One World Publishers, 2008.

### **2.2.3 Inter-City Comparison of the Sudanese Diaspora Across Canada**

As shown by the census numbers reported under Section 2.3, below, Canada's Sudanese diaspora tends to be concentrated in large metropolitan areas across Canada. Field research was undertaken in several of these cities, including: Ottawa; Toronto; Hamilton; Kitchener; Winnipeg; Calgary; and Edmonton. Just as each of these cities has its own distinct characteristics, the constitution and dynamics of the Sudanese diaspora in each of these cities is also distinct. The following are very general "top note" descriptions of the distinguishing features of the Sudanese diaspora in each of these Canadian cities:

**Ottawa:** It being Canada's capital city, it is not surprising that there are a number of Sudanese representation offices in Ottawa. In addition to the Sudanese Embassy, there is an office of the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) and another of the Sudanese Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM). Each of these offices represents a key segment of the Sudanese diaspora that is also living, creating community-based institutions, and experiencing community dynamics in Ottawa, with the result that the overall Sudanese diaspora tends to be fairly diverse in terms of such traits as geographic, ethnic and religious background. The broader Sudanese community includes many highly-qualified personnel either working for the federal government or for various Arab embassies. Others are pursuing their post-graduate studies in Ottawa, and a great number are pursuing entrepreneurial businesses. In the course of a two-day research trip to the National Capital Region, the principal researcher ("Researcher") for this project encountered Sudanese small business owners working in such areas as interior design, translation, auto body repair, information technology consulting, and travel. Other members of the diaspora were professionals before coming to Canada who had changed careers out of frustration once they arrived, but who had now found success in their new chosen fields. These included one civil engineer and one chemical engineer who now work as information technology (IT) professionals for the federal government.

**Toronto:** As it is for virtually all other ethnocultural communities, Toronto is a hub for the Sudanese diaspora in Canada, and likely its largest area of concentration in Canada.

The majority of Sudanese who live in Toronto are Government-Assisted Refugees who chose Toronto over other parts of Canada for several reasons: pre-existing family or community-based connections, a larger job market, and Toronto's well-known commitment to and practice of multiculturalism. Although the biggest city, it is largely viewed as a safe place with a good education system.

Immigrants who arrived in Toronto in the early 90's are well-integrated when compared to the newly arrived ones. Within the "established" Sudanese diaspora in Toronto, there

are university lecturers, physicians, pharmacists, engineers, IT professionals, accountants, research consultants, federal and provincial public servants, and others. Even some of the best-educated and well-qualified new arrivals to the city, by contrast, often struggle to find employment and to make a living for their families.

Sudanese community associations in Toronto are hubs for both Northerners and Southerners to help the community and individuals. The Sudanese Settlement Community Organization of Canada, based in Toronto, is dominated by members from the south of Sudan, and the Sudanese Community Organization of Ontario is dominated by northerners. The two organizations have relatively little interaction with one another. (See Section 3.1, below, for a broader discussion of this topic.)

Ontario in general and Toronto in particular also has the largest group of Sudanese Copts in Canada, who are just as likely to be from the north as from the south of Sudan. The members of this group, who constituted an important component of the mercantile and commercial class in Sudan, largely came to Canada after the adoption of Islamic laws in 1983 by Sudan's Ex-president Gaffar Nimeeri and the subsequent deterioration of the economy. This group is doing well in different business activities in and around Toronto, where they tend to congregate around Lawrence Avenue East, and they practice their Christian Orthodox faith in their own house of worship. They are currently building a new church that, when finished, is expected to be the largest Coptic church in North America.

**Hamilton:** Most Sudanese living in Hamilton, Ontario originally came to Canada as Government-Assisted Refugees, though many now are Canadian citizens. They work in a variety of areas, including the provincial government, self-employment, and the service industry.

The Sudanese community in Hamilton is comprised of both "southerners" and "northerners", and there are separate community associations for each, including an active SPLM chapter in the city for those from the south. Nonetheless, the sub-groups in the community are fairly well-integrated with one another, and, during visits to Hamilton as part of the field research for this report, Sudanese groups exhibited a high degree of cooperation in political, social and cultural events. Sudanese Youth in Hamilton have formed their own community organization to focus on issues relevant to their cohort.

The combined community in Hamilton came together to organize a special Sudan-focused radio program on a local college station, CFMU 93.3. The radio show, "Tanweate Sudania," broadcasts on Sundays at 2pm.

**Kitchener:** As one of the Ontario cities that welcomed refugees from Sudan under a Canadian refugee resettlement program starting in 1989, Kitchener is now home to a notable community of Sudanese that came from war-zones in the South and from the

Nuba Mountains. The Southern Sudanese community is now well-established and well-served by a longstanding community organization. In 2009, a more recent immigrant from northern Sudan began a new organization in Kitchener.

Though they are from different parts of the country, the Southern Sudanese and the northerners from the Nuba Mountain region get along well. Many are active members or supporters of the SPLM organization.

As a small urban centre with only limited job opportunities, the majority of Sudanese encountered as part of the field research for this study are employed by small NGOs and community-service organizations, are public servants, or drive taxis.

**Winnipeg:** The Sudanese population is both large and diverse in Winnipeg, encompassing people from the north, the south, Darfur, and so on. They are familiar and cooperative with one another, and all belong to a single umbrella community organization, the Sudanese Association of Manitoba, or SAM (See section 3.1.6, below). However, there are many smaller informal and quasi-formal groups that have also emerged along tribal (ethnic) lines, and other issue-driven groups with that exist specifically to advance the interests of the people of Darfur and the former refugees and child soldiers known as the “Lost Boys and Girls” of Sudan.

Notably, when the Researchers leading this project first visited Winnipeg, they were met with significant resistance from some members and key leaders (including Christian religious leaders) of the Southern Sudanese community. They were suspicious of the intent and purposes underlying the research project, and they were particularly wary of the fact that the lead Researcher was originally from northern Sudan, even though personal introductions had been carefully brokered ahead of time. Over the span of a few days, however, the researchers were able to gain the trust of at least some of these naysayers and elicit their participation in the study.

The random sample of Winnipeg-based Sudanese consulted as part of the field research for this study exhibited a tendency to work in occupations having little or no relationship to their previous (i.e. pre-immigrant) profession or training. Hence, it was common to find former teachers and lawyers working as taxi drivers and elsewhere in the service industry in Winnipeg, although some individuals have now begun to “break through” and access professional opportunities in the public service, in community-based NGOs, or in the public education system. In a single case a lawyer is working in his field.

In summary, Sudanese individuals in Winnipeg have been very successful in achieving and maintaining a good standard of living and contributing to the development of a strong, united community that includes individuals from all regions, all major tribes, and all major religious groups that are present in modern Sudan.

**Calgary:** After Toronto, Calgary is home to the second largest Sudanese community in Canada (2350, according to Statistics Canada's 2006 census data), with the majority coming from Southern Sudan. Although many adapt well to Canadian life, they still maintain an intimate link to their families, friends and the activities that remain in Sudan.

Calgary's oil and gas industry provides employment opportunities to many from the Sudanese diaspora in that city, and especially when oil prices are high. Another sizable group works in the meat packaging industry.<sup>15</sup> The diversity within this group alone is complex: a variety of ethnic backgrounds, languages and religions are represented, although the majority speaks Nuer, Dinka or Bari.

The most active Sudanese association providing support to the community is the African Sudanese Association of Calgary (ASAC), which serves both southerners and northerners. In addition, there are a number of smaller, tribally-focused organizations with very few resources and extremely limited organizational infrastructures, including a Darfur association, a Nuer association, and a Dinka association. There are some other sub-group-specific community associations, such as the Calgary Sudanese Family Integration Centre, which primarily serves the female members of the community.

Many Southern Sudanese in Calgary are very active members in a chapter of the SPLM, and they support the government of southern Sudan (GOSS) in several ways. These include funding or participating in various peacebuilding initiatives and post-conflict reconstruction projects across southern Sudan.

The short timeframe and limited budget allocated for this research project did not afford the opportunity for a more in-depth study of the large, diverse and heterogeneous Sudanese diaspora in Calgary and the rest of southern Alberta. However, such an expanded research mandate would undoubtedly prove valuable, particularly given that the population of southern Alberta itself is significantly less diverse than that in southern Ontario. The Sudanese diaspora in Calgary and its environs, therefore, appears to be thriving in an environment that is not traditionally associated with multiculturalism.

**Edmonton:** The Sudanese diaspora in Edmonton is dominated by "southerners" who arrived as refugees from the 1983 – 2005 civil war. Notably, the majority of those "northerners" who also call Edmonton home are inter-provincial transplants who moved to northern Alberta from other Canadian provinces (i.e. Ontario and Quebec) in search of jobs and good wages.

Despite the search for good jobs that leads people to move to Alberta, the majority of those from the Sudanese diaspora in Edmonton who participated in the field research for this paper were university graduates who are now either self-employed (including taxi owners/drivers), under-employed, or unemployed. We met an unemployed PhD

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<sup>15</sup> Smith, Dr. Laura and Dr. Dave Este. "Meeting Multilevel Challenges of Sudanese Wellbeing and Social Integration in Canada", presented at the 12<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference, Melbourne, Australia, October 2007.

holder, a veterinary doctor working as a taxi driver, an accountant who works as a security officer and a lawyer who drives a truck. The two main organizations of the Sudanese diaspora in Edmonton are the Canadian Association of Edmonton and the Sudanese Cultural League of Edmonton. The former is an agglomeration of several tribal groups from Southern Sudan into one association while the latter is comprised mostly of northerners. While still separate and distinct, these two organizations have recently begun working together on different social, cultural and heritage events.

## **2.2.4 Integration into Canadian Life**

Not unlike many or most other immigrant communities, there are varying degrees of integration into Canadian life exhibited across the Sudanese diaspora in Canada.

In very general terms, those who came to Canada either as refugees or as immigrants several years ago tend to be better integrated and in better economic positions than those who arrived more recently. This applies both to refugees and immigrants. All those in the Sudanese diaspora in Canada with whom the authors spoke commented on the challenge of finding employment opportunities for even the best-educated and professionally-accomplished members of their community. Without Canadian experience or recognized credentials, those who may have been extremely successful while living overseas typically struggle to regain that status and level of economic success for several years after their arrival in Canada.

This challenge in integrating into Canadian life is seen as one of the principal reasons for the great number of community-based social service organizations that have grown up within and across the Sudanese diaspora in all major urban centres in Canada where large numbers of Sudanese are living. As described on a city-by-city basis in Section 3.1, below, these organizations tend to focus on the delivery of settlement-related programs and services, including English-language training, information services relating to public services, skills-development training, and employment counseling. Many deliver these settlement programs with the financial support of the Government of Canada (per Citizenship and Immigration Canada).

Given the importance of family, extended family, tribes and community in Sudanese culture and society, it is not surprising that, within Canada, it is not uncommon for better-integrated individuals within the diaspora to engage with those who are more recently arrived. That said, some of those interviewed for this paper expressed a certain degree of frustration with fellow members of their community who, as they become more and more successful in business or their other professional pursuits in Canada, tend to also become more disengaged from the community. This disengagement, according to some, manifests itself as a failure to volunteer as mentors or offer practical “how to” seminars (e.g. starting a business, the Canadian banking system, etc.) to those newly-arrived countrymen or women who would benefit from such assistance.

Several community members consulted or interviewed as part of this report noted that the transition to life in Canada is most difficult for those who arrive as adults. Even those who arrive with university or post-graduate education and years of professional experience – not to mention those who still arrive as refugees, who are less likely to have such sophisticated skill sets – find it very difficult to regain their past professional success, if they ever do. However, the children of such members of the diaspora – those either born in Canada or largely raised in Canada from childhood – tend to overcome the disadvantages faced by their parents and go on to success in Canada.

A number of members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada brought skill sets and knowledge with them to this country that could conceivably prove to be of assistance to government policy-makers and program designers charged with the enhancement of Canada's approaches towards Sudan. These include engineers, medical professionals, policy experts and others with specific technical knowledge that could assist in the enhancement of Canadian development or humanitarian assistance policies. In addition, those who hold office in community-based associations across Canada, apart from being recognized as *de facto* leaders by their local communities, often have extensive knowledge of the intricate ethnic, tribal, linguistic and other cultural nuances of Sudanese society. Such individuals, too, could be extremely helpful to Canadian government officials as they seek to enhance Canada's policies towards Sudan across a number of files.

In Appendix 2, below, a number of key leaders and professionals belonging to the Sudanese diaspora in Canada are listed on a city-by-city basis. Where there are personal coordinates and very brief profiles listed, these are either individuals who have specifically given the authors permission to share such information with the Government of Canada, per the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, or whose information is already in the public domain by virtue of the involvement with a Sudanese community association or other similar organization.

It is noteworthy, however, that some (i.e. more than 30 out of 110) of those who were approached to be interviewed for this report either refused to cooperate altogether with the researchers, OR they agreed to participate in the research, and did so, but with the express agreement that their names, coordinates and profile characteristics would not be shared with government officials. This reticence appeared to reflect a general distrust of government, likely connected to these people's experiences with government in Sudan, where many were victims of state-led assaults and years of civil war. Their generally positive experience living in Canada does not yet translate into a willingness to share personal information with the government, for fear of how that information might be used against them.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> One anecdote may be telling: the Lead Researcher for this project, when he first arrived in Winnipeg, even WITH a pre-introduction through a trusted common contact, was accused by the associates of a very prominent member of the Southern Sudanese community of being a spy for President Bashir who was seeking to obtain personal information from members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada in order to later blackmail them if they criticized Sudan's government. Eventually, those associates agreed to cooperate with the researchers because they were convinced that the research had been commissioned by the Government of Canada. However, they still refused to have their personal information included in the report.



## 2.3 Connections Back to Sudan

### Family and Extended Family

Sudanese-Canadians generally maintain close linkages and good relationships with any relatives who remain in Sudan. The majority of the members of the Sudanese diaspora living in Canada are first-generation, who were raised in Sudan or in communities of Sudanese expatriates in neighbouring countries, and they are therefore still steeped in its cultural values and traditions. Thus, they tend to remain very committed to not only their immediate families, but also their extended families.

In practice, this typically translates into the provision of financial remittances by even the poorest Sudanese-Canadians to their relatives, as well as their friends, who are still living overseas. Such remittances are often pivotal to the health and well-being of the recipients.

This spirit of commitment to family, extended family, tribe and broader community is also seen in a number of charitable or humanitarian endeavours to help Sudan that are being led by members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada. For instance, Cuban-trained physicians originally from Sudan started a well-received program, the Sudanese Physician Reintegration Program, in conjunction with the University of Calgary and Samaritan's Purse, to upgrade their skills and then travel back to Southern Sudan in order to provide medicines, medical equipment, and medical services to poor communities.<sup>17</sup> Other diaspora-driven development-related projects – such as raising funds to build a school or a community centre in a particular Sudanese village – are sometimes led by organizations emerging from within the Diaspora.<sup>18</sup> The small Darfuri sub-set of the larger Sudanese diaspora is similarly involved with a number of profile-raising, fundraising and humanitarian projects concerning the Darfur region and other war-affected areas of Sudan.

Children and teenagers from the Sudanese diaspora who are being raised in Canada are taught by their parents to appreciate the importance of family and extended family. Though their understanding of the communal values of Sudan is not what it would be if they were being raised in their parents' homeland, today it is common, where resources allow, for such young people to establish and maintain close "social networking" relationships with extended family members living in Africa, parts of the Middle East, or elsewhere. Such virtual or digital connections are often supplemented by family trips back to Sudan every 2-5 years, for even families living in Canada with relatively few resources. Maintaining a physical connection to the land and the people still living in Sudan is important and worth the financial outlay.

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<sup>17</sup> [http://medicine.ucalgary.ca/about/sudanese\\_lancet](http://medicine.ucalgary.ca/about/sudanese_lancet)

<sup>18</sup> See, for instance, the Southern Sudanese Association of Alberta's project to raise funds to build a new school in the town of Wau, Southern Sudan. <http://shamaassociation.org/dprograms.php>

## Media and News Sources

In between such visits, many members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada stay abreast of current affairs in Sudan – as well as maintain some degree of connection to broader Sudanese culture - through ready access to Sudanese media sources. These include “Sudan TV”, a 24-hour-a-day, free-to-air digital television station that broadcasts almost exclusively in Arabic, and “Southern Sudan TV”, which broadcasts fewer hours each day but in English, Arabic (Juba Arabic), and various tribal languages. Viewers in Canada require a digital satellite receiver and dish.

For international news reports about Sudan, members of the Sudanese diaspora within Canada tend to turn to the radio and television programming of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

The Internet is also a regular source of news and information from or about Sudan. Among the most well-known and frequently visited Internet sites are:

- [www.sudaneseonline.com](http://www.sudaneseonline.com)
- [www.sudanile.com](http://www.sudanile.com) and
- [www.sacdo.com](http://www.sacdo.com), the website of the Sudanese American Community Development Organization.

## Political Movements

In addition to keeping abreast of political and current events in Sudan through family connections and access to Sudanese media outlets, some members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada retain political affiliation to specific parties and movements in Sudan.

The most obvious examples of such attachments are the offices and chapters of the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) and the Sudanese Peoples’ Liberation Movement (SPLM) all across Canada, and both organizations are effectively extensions of their parent organizations in Sudan.

Supporters of the SPLM – dominated by those of the Dinka and Nuer tribes in southern Sudan – were involved in the establishment of a formal GOSS Representation Office in Ottawa in 2008. That same year, Canada’s then-foreign minister traveled to Juba to meet with the Government of Southern Sudan and demonstrate Canada’s support of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.<sup>19</sup> That office is now well-staffed and continues to promote the agenda and interests of the GOSS across Canada.

Peter Lam Both, who was appointed as the SPLM/GOSS Representative to Canada from May 2006 to November 2008, helped form fourteen (14) SPLM chapters across

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<sup>19</sup> <http://international.gc.ca/media/aff/news-communiqués/2008/385984.aspx>

the country with purported membership of around 4000.<sup>20</sup> In May 2008, he led a SPLM delegation from Canada to participate in the Second SPLM National Convention in Juba, at which Both reportedly “played a key role in mobilizing the delegates to maintain the unity of SPLM by proposing to keep the current leadership as it is.”<sup>21</sup> Notably, after resigning his Canadian post in late 2008, he was appointed the Deputy National Secretary for External Relations in August 2009 and tasked to assist the National Secretary for External Relations of the GOSS. This high-level appointment for someone who had been a leading member of the southern Sudanese diaspora living in Canada (in his case, since the late 1990s) underscores the close ties between Canada’s GOSS/SPLM network, and those still active on the ground in southern Sudan.

For Sudanese-Canadians from the north of Sudan, there is no exact counterpart to the SPLM chapter network that unites those politicized southern Sudanese living in Canada. Many of those northerners participating in our study emphasized that their community-oriented interests and activities are apolitical. When they come together with other Sudanese, these respondents said, it is to help strengthen the provision of support services to those in their community or to engage in informal business and community networking.

Nevertheless, both the Communist Party of Sudan and the Democratic Union Party have unofficial representatives in Canada and there are small pockets of support for these parties in various of the large metropolitan communities visited as part of this research project. In contrast to the SPLM network, any “chapters” of these parties tend to be small and informal.

Notably, some of the respondents involved in our study were reluctant to discuss their political ties to Sudan at all, given previous negative experiences they had had in countries such as Egypt, where their political affiliations within Sudan had been used as an excuse for repression and mistreatment by government officials.

Those Sudanese living in Canada who retain their Sudanese citizenship are entitled to vote in Sudanese national presidential – though not parliamentary – elections.

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<sup>20</sup> “Former SPLM/GOSS Representative to Canada has been appointed for SPLM position,” <http://www.southsudan.net/former11.html>

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

## 2.4 Statistical Overview of the Sudanese Diaspora in Canada

### 2.4.1 Size of Sudanese Diaspora in Canada:

The 2006 Census reported that 12,640 residents of Canada self-identified their ethnic background as “Sudanese”.<sup>22</sup> However, many from that group or familiar with it believe that official estimates do not accurately reflect its true size.

Some individual community associations working with the Sudanese diaspora have conducted their own informal population counts. Diverse Hamilton, for instance, estimates a population of 1,200 Sudanese in Hamilton, Ontario, although the 2006 Census counted only 400 (see Table 3. Sudanese Ethnic Origin by Major Cities Canadian Cities, 2006 Census, below). Diverse Hamilton also estimates, without substantiation, that there are between 35,000 and 40,000 members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada.<sup>23</sup> Even more astoundingly, some Southern Sudanese organizations in southern Alberta have estimated there to be as many as 80,000 individuals of Sudanese origin now living in Canada.<sup>24</sup>

The authors of this report believe that it is not unreasonable to believe that the true size of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada is somewhere between the “official” census count of 12,640, on the low end, and Diverse Hamilton’s 40,000-person tally on the high end. A number of between 25,000 and 30,000 seems reasonable. This imperfect-but-informed “guesstimate” is supported by the following facts and observations:

- The census relies entirely upon the assumption that Canadians self-report accurately, and are therefore inherently flawed. This is particularly true for a community such as the Sudanese, where there is both a natural mistrust of government representatives at play, and where the tribal superstitions of a broad swatch of the community interfere with their willingness to disclose accurate information about their families to data collectors. For instance, many Sudanese-Canadians have large families with several children, but to report an accurate tally of their children to assist the census administrators for some could be seen as inviting “bad luck” on those children.
- Some of the best-informed and well-respected researchers writing about the Sudanese diaspora in Canada presume there to be many more people in that group that is reflected by the Canadian census. These assumptions appear to be borne of years of experience with the community and its membership, and, unlike with the

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<sup>22</sup> Statistics Canada, in 2006 Census, *supra*.

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.diversehamilton.ca/index1.html>

<sup>24</sup> Information provided to The Mosaic Institute by discussions with the Director of DFAIT’s Sudan Task Force in October, 2009.

community itself, there is no obvious motivation for such researchers to over-estimate its size.<sup>25</sup>

- The statistics of other data-gathering Canadian government departments – most notably Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) – estimate a larger Sudanese diaspora than does the census. For instance, CIC found that 15,649 individual Permanent Residents who had identified their home country as Sudan had immigrated to Canada between 1980 and 2008, as seen in Table 1, below, and in the accompanying bar graph. While it is possible that the citizenship or national identify of almost 3,000 of these people was *other than* Sudanese, it does seem somewhat improbable.
- Many members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada have either been born in or lived for many years in displaced persons (DP) camps outside of Sudan before coming to Canada. Therefore, when asked their country of origin, they may identify not as Sudanese but as Egyptian, Ugandan, or Kenyan, or Ethiopian, or some other nationality that pertains to the country to which they and their family fled from Sudan.
- The official census numbers do not reflect those individuals who remain in Canada illegally after the expiration of their visitor or student visas. There could be many, many people who fall into that category.

**Table 1. New Permanent Residents Listing Sudan as Home Country By Year (1980-2008)<sup>26</sup>**

<u>Year</u>	<u>New Permanent Residents Listing Sudan as Home Country</u>
1980-9	633
1990	265
1991	317
1992	631
1993	528
1994	382
1995	508
1996	657
1997	824
1998	729
1999	539
2000	761
2001	1 179
2002	1 368
2003	1 533

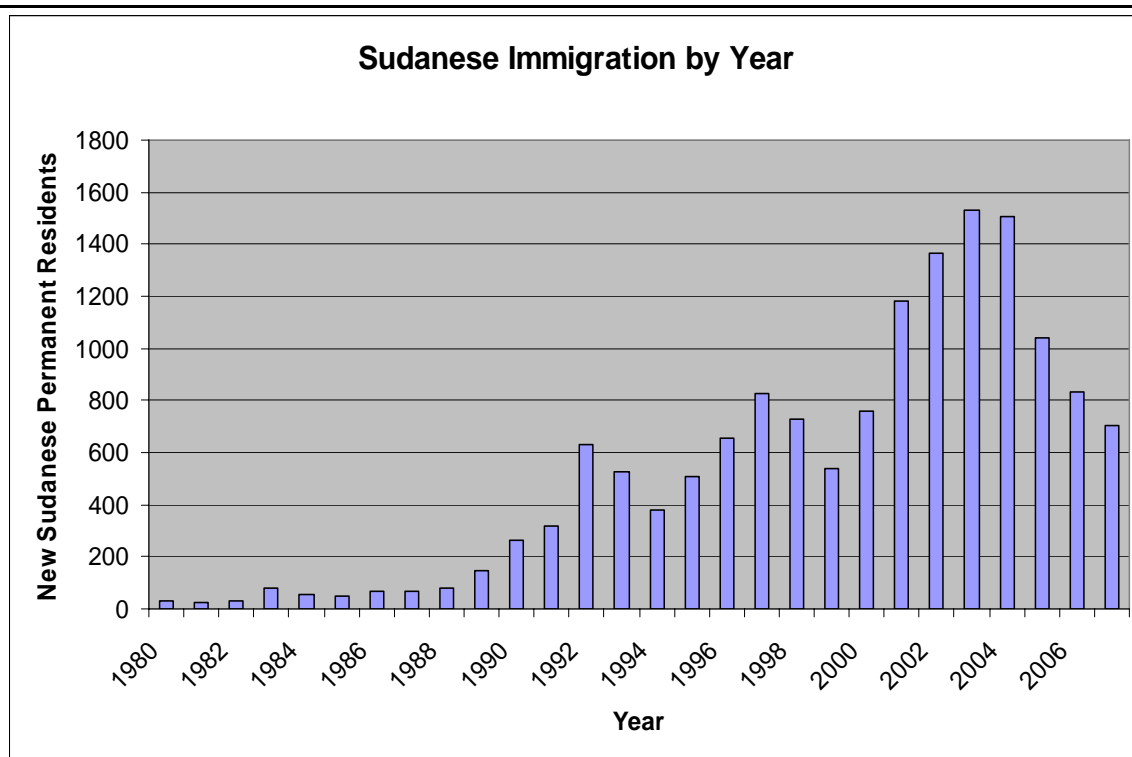
<sup>25</sup> See, for instance, Dr. Laura Smith and Dr. Dave Este, *supra* at Note 15. Drs. Smith and Este assume a population of 20,000 Sudanese living in Toronto for the purposes of their study.

<sup>26</sup> Citizenship and Immigration Canada:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2008/permanent/10.asp>

2004	1 508
2005	1 039
2006	832
2007	703
2008	723
<hr/>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15659</b>

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Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

## 2.4.2 Distribution of Sudanese Diaspora within Canada:

Table 2 represents the geographical distribution of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada by Province, as determined by the 2006 national Census. Among the Provinces, Ontario had the largest population of Sudanese with 6 645 people representing 53% of the total, followed by Alberta with 3 560 (28%), British Columbia with 775, Manitoba with 745, and Saskatchewan with 550.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Several reasons were given by those people from Canada's Sudanese diaspora who were interviewed for this study as to why they preferred to settle in Ontario and Alberta in such large numbers. Not surprisingly, their answers included job opportunities, relatives, a large Sudanese community, and the availability of resettlement programs.

**Table 2. Sudanese Ethnic Origin by Province, 2006 Census\***

<u>Province</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Ontario	6645	53%
Alberta	3565	28%
British Columbia	770	6%
Manitoba	745	6%
Saskatchewan	550	4%
Quebec	180	1%
Newfoundland	80	-
New Brunswick	50	-
Nova Scotia	35	-
North-West Territories	20	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12640</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Source: Statistics Canada. Sudanese Ethnic Origin (Single and Multiple Responses)", in 2006 Census, *supra*. Tabulation by The Mosaic Institute.

Table 3 represents the distribution of Sudanese by major urban area. Like most recent immigrants, Sudanese migrants demonstrate a clear preference for large urban centres over rural regions. Toronto has the highest number of Sudanese, followed by Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Vancouver, respectively.

**Table 3. Sudanese Ethnic Origin by Major Cities Canadian Cities, 2006 Census\***

<u>City</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Toronto	3025	29%
Calgary	2155	21%
Edmonton	885	8%
Winnipeg	745	7%

Vancouver	705	6%
Kitchener	790	7%
St. Catherine's/Niagara	625	6%
London	615	6%
Ottawa - Gatineau	460	4%
Hamilton	400	3%
Montreal	120	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10495</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Source: Statistics Canada. "EO 1468 -2006 Target Group Profile – Sudanese Ethnic Origin (Single and Multiple Responses)," in 2006 Census, *supra*.

### 2.4.3 Other Measurements of the Sudanese Diaspora in Canada:

#### Sudanese Population by Gender

According to Statistics Canada, there are slightly more male than female Sudanese Canadians.

N = 12 640

Male total:           6 920       (55%)  
 Female total:        5 720       (45%)<sup>28</sup>

#### Sudanese Population by Age

N = 12 640

15-24: 27%  
 25-34: 29%  
 35-44: 25%  
 45-54: 13%  
 55-64: 4%  
 65-74: 2%  
 Over 75: 0.2%

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<sup>28</sup> Data from Statistics Canada. "Sudanese Ethnic Origin (Single and Multiple Responses)," in 2006 Census, *supra*. Tabulation by The Mosaic Institute.



## Sudanese Population by Education Level

Statistics Canada data indicates that the Sudanese population in Canada is relatively well-educated, with almost a quarter of the population having completed a post-secondary degree or diploma. Almost three-quarters of such individuals (i.e. 2265 out of 3085, or 73%) received their post-secondary education outside of Canada.

N = 12 640

Total number with post-secondary education	<b>3 085 (24% of 12 640)</b>
Education obtained outside Canada	2 265 (73% of 3085)
Education obtained inside Canada	820 (27% of 3085)
Ontario	480
Alberta	90
Manitoba	60
Quebec	55
Saskatchewan	50
British Columbia	35
Nova Scotia	30
Newfoundland and Labrador	20
New Brunswick	10

The results of the survey conducted in the context of the present study paint an even more positive picture of the educational attainment of the leadership of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada. 66 out of the 76 community leaders interviewed (87%) had completed post-secondary education and 19, or 25%, had completed a post-graduate Masters or PhD program.

### **3. Sudanese-Canadian Civil Society Organizations and Canadian Not-for-Profit Organizations Working on Sudanese Issues**

This chapter profiles and catalogues both civil society groups and community associations led by and serving the Sudanese diaspora in Canada, and Canadian non-governmental organizations doing work related to Sudan.

#### **3.1 Sudanese Diaspora Community Organizations**

As with most immigrant groups in Canada, Sudanese migrants to Canada have established ethno-specific community organizations to enhance social cohesion, as well as to provide various community services. Because of the relatively small numbers of Sudanese immigrants to Canada relative to other nationalities, as well as the lack of community resources, these associations typically exhibit a low level of formal organization, and mostly operate with scarce financial resources. In this chapter, we will document the Sudanese community organizations in the cities where we conducted fieldwork that appear to be the most actively involved in their communities. Other organizations exist, but they tend to serve an almost exclusively social function.

#### **Apolitical Mandates**

**It is notable that nearly all of these organizations stipulate in their constitutions and mandates that they are apolitical.** Their focus is chiefly on seeking to improve the day-to-day realities of life for Sudanese migrants to Canada, and on providing essential settlement and social services. That said, the politics of Sudan are nonetheless reflected in the sheer number and membership profile of these community organizations. Most cities host two or more organizations representing different geographic and/or ethnic segments of the Sudanese population. We found differing degrees of collaboration between these sub-communities in the cities we visited.

Nevertheless, the Researchers' extensive consultations with leaders of Sudanese community organizations in the seven cities visited across Canada confirmed that within individual associations, regardless of sub-community affiliation, leaders are making a concerted effort to maintain their distance from political issues related to Sudan. Some leaders reported that, in instances where they did organize conferences or lectures with political themes, or where such themes were introduced by others, serious divisions began to emerge that hindered the associations' ability to deliver community-based development programs effectively.

## **Relations with Canadian Government**

It is also important to note that a number of these member-driven, community-based organizations of the Sudanese diaspora across Canada are partially funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to deliver settlement and integration services. These funding relationships with CIC are enormously important to the Sudanese diaspora, and it is probably fair to say that, of all federal government departments, it is CIC that is perceived as the most immediately-relevant to the day-to-day lives of the community.

Notably, some members of the Sudanese diaspora who were approached to participate in long-form interviews or to complete surveys as part of the research for the current report indicated their suspicion of the fact that the sponsoring department for this research was the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and not CIC. They could not understand or appreciate why the foreign policy arm of Canada's federal government might be interested in their views, and ascribed nefarious, "big brother"-like motives to the initiative. These people were among the 30% of prospective respondents who declined to participate in this study.

At the same time, and in stark contrast, several respondents who did participate in the study did so only after being informed that the Researchers were conducting research that had been commissioned by DFAIT. This group of individuals was suspicious of the motives and connections of an unknown, non-governmental organization that was approaching them to ask questions about Sudan and Canada's relationship thereto. It was only upon assurance that the information was being gathered to enhance the knowledge of the Government of Canada with respect to the foreign policy-related capacities and views of the members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada, rather than being gathered by a suspicious third-party that might be an agent of the Government of Sudan, that these people agreed to participate in the project.

In summary, the Researchers were left with the impression that of those who refused to participate in the research process because this research had been commissioned by DFAIT, and those who only agreed to participate once they were convinced that the research had been commissioned by DFAIT, both responded as they did because of their painful, personal, past experience with government authorities in Sudan. The first group was wary of any foreign affairs ministry because of the destructive role played by Sudan's foreign ministry in that country's many internal wars and conflicts over the past twenty-five years. The latter group was willing to participate in the study only after it truly believed that the research was being done for Canada, rather than as an intelligence-gathering exercise for Sudan that might invite repercussions upon family members still living in that country.

### **3.1.1 Sudanese Diaspora Community Organizations in Ottawa**

There is one main Sudanese community organization in Ottawa:

#### **The Sudanese–Canadian Association of Ottawa (SCAO)**

The SCAO was established in 2002 as a not-for profit organization. Its membership is open to all Sudanese peoples. It hosts an ambitious and comprehensive curriculum of activities. These include cultural and religious celebrations, as well as a series of settlement services.

### **3.1.2 Sudanese Diaspora Community Organizations in Toronto**

In Toronto, there are three principal community organizations promoting the interests of the Sudanese diaspora. These are:

#### **The Sudanese Community Association of Ontario (SCAO)**

Web Link: [www.scaoo.ca](http://www.scaoo.ca)

The SCAO was established and incorporated in 1989 as an NGO to address the needs, issues and concerns of Sudanese immigrants and refugees. Membership is not formally restricted – Sudanese of all ethnic backgrounds are welcome to participate in SCAO. In reality, however, the SCAO predominantly consists of northern Sudanese. SCAO's mandate is to identify and provide basic human needs, services and activities in response to the needs and welfare of the members of the community. It is not supported by government funding, and so it relies upon a subscription fee from its members.

#### **The Southern Sudanese Community Organization of Canada (aka the Sudanese Settlement and Community Service Organization of Canada) - SSCO**

Web Link: [www.sscocanada.org](http://www.sscocanada.org)

The SSCO was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in 2004. It bills itself as a non-political, self-help, volunteer based community organization. As its name suggests, it largely caters to the Southern Sudanese community in Toronto. It operates from the York Weston Community Services Centre located in North York and provides a range of settlement services. These include settlement counseling, language instruction for newcomers, women's training workshops and literacy programs.

## **Darfur Association of Canada**

Web Link: <http://www.darfurassociation.ca/>

The Darfur Association of Canada was founded at the outbreak of war in Darfur. It is focused chiefly on public education. Its leadership and many of its members are drawn from the Sudanese diaspora.

### **Inter-Organizational Relationships in Toronto**

The SCAO and SSCO have begun to meet to discuss collaborating on the administration of workshops and training services. However, there is still very little interaction between the two organizations. Interrelationships between northerners and southerners in Toronto are few and far between. This is reflected in the organization of community associations. This has proved a hindrance to community organization, as the capacity of both groups has not been utilized in concert.

### **3.1.3 Sudanese Diaspora Community Organizations in Hamilton**

In Hamilton, there are two main community organizations. These are:

#### **The Sudanese League of Hamilton**

The Sudanese League of Hamilton, established in 2003, is the organization which represents Northern Sudanese in the city. It operates a series of social events in the interest of bringing the community together. These include the Ontario Sudanese Soccer Tournament. Sudanese soccer teams from Toronto, London, St. Catherine's, Kitchener and Hamilton participate in this large sporting event, which provides a rare opportunity for the disparate Sudanese communities to come together socially.

#### **African Sudanese Association of Hamilton**

The African Sudanese Association of Hamilton represents the Southern Sudanese community of Hamilton, which is the predominant community.

### **Inter-Organizational Relationships in Hamilton**

In Hamilton, there is considerably more collaboration between the two community organizations than there is in larger cities like Toronto. They have participated cooperatively on cultural events, as well as on settlement-related activities. Both organizations have strong relationships not only with one

another, but also with other community service organizations serving other immigrant populations. As a result, the Sudanese community in Hamilton is fairly well-integrated into the general community.

In a demonstration of community coherence, Sudanese community members in Hamilton came together to organize a Sudanese-specific news and cultural radio program on a local college station, CFMU 93.3. The radio show, “Tanweate Sudania”, broadcasts on Sundays at 2pm.

### **3.1.4 Sudanese Diaspora Community Organizations in Kitchener**

Two community organizations have been identified as serving the Sudanese diaspora in Kitchener. One is a relatively more mature organization providing settlement and community services for people from southern Sudan who typically arrived in southwestern Ontario as Government-Assisted Refugees fleeing Sudan’s civil war. After stopping in refugee camps in various bordering countries, they began arriving in Canada from the mid-1990s onwards.

There is also a northern Sudanese community association forming that will provide social and cultural services to the northern Sudanese members of the diaspora.

#### **Inter-Organizational Relationships in Kitchener**

In Kitchener, both organizations are small, though one is more established than the other. There are no problematic intra-community divisions. In part, this appears to be a function of the shared allegiance of many southerners and Nuba Mountain northerners to the SPLM. While they share broad political views as represented by SPLM policies, the southerners belong to their community-based association, while the Nuba Mountain northerners are involved in setting up a separate organization to serve their needs and interests and those of other of northerners.

### **3.1.5 Sudanese Diaspora Community Organizations in Winnipeg**

Winnipeg, in contrast to many of the other cities, boasts a single, multi-ethnic Sudanese organization:

#### **The Sudanese Association of Manitoba (SAM)**

The SAM was established in the mid-90s to provide settlement and education services for Sudanese people, primarily in Winnipeg. A striking feature of the Sudanese Diaspora community in Winnipeg is that it is relatively united within one community association. The organization, led by a southerner, serves the whole Sudanese

community, which includes northerners, southerners (including a large contingent of Lost Boys and Girls of Sudan – young men and women who were displaced during the civil war, spent time in refugee camps in Kenya and elsewhere, and were resettled in North America in the last decade), Darfurians, Nuba, and others. In 1999, SAM hosted forums in order to discuss how relationships between sub-communities could be strengthened. Unity is thus a central thrust of the organization.

### **3.1.6 Sudanese Diaspora Community Organizations in Calgary**

Although there are a number of small, tribally-defined organizations in Calgary, as well as various political organizations, there is one well-established Sudanese association which is able to provide a variety of activities in support of the broader needs of the community (ASAC), and another, SHAMA, that is focused both on promoting volunteerism that will benefit Sudan and on helping Southern Sudanese youth:

#### **The African Sudanese Association of Calgary (ASAC)**

Web Link: <http://www.africansudanese.org/>

ASAC was incorporated as a not-for-profit association in 2003. It largely represents Southern Sudanese people – who constitute the majority of Sudanese people in Calgary. It offers a variety of integration and skill-building seminars, and has a particular focus on supporting Sudanese youth in the Calgary area.

#### **Southern Sudanese Association of Alberta (SHAMA)**

Web Link: <http://shamaassociation.org/dprograms.php>

The Southern Sudanese Association of Alberta is a small, start-up NGO that is directing its efforts both towards humanitarian work in Southern Sudan (e.g. fund raising to construct a school in Wau), and towards the needs of South Sudanese youth – staying in school, responding appropriately to negative peer pressure, etc. – in Calgary.

#### **Inter-Organizational Relationships in Calgary**

In Calgary, Researchers for this project discerned neither a close working relationship between ASAC and SHAMA, nor any specific antipathy. The former is focused on delivering settlement and integration services in support of the broader Sudanese community (though almost all clients are Southern Sudanese), while the latter has a mixed mandate that includes the completion of fundraising and humanitarian projects in Sudan.

### **3.1.7 Sudanese Diaspora Community Organizations Edmonton**

There are two main community organizations within the Sudanese diaspora in Edmonton:

#### **The Sudanese Canadian Community Association of Edmonton (SCCAE)**

Incorporated in 2001, the SCCAE is a predominantly southern organization, representing the internal diversity of that community. It is, in fact, an umbrella organization for four smaller, regional and tribal associations: The Greater Equatoria Community Association, the Sudanese Canadian Dinka Cultural Society, the Sudanese Nuer Community Association of Edmonton, and the Association of the Sudanese Canadians of Western Bahr-El-Ghazal of Edmonton.

#### **The Sudanese Cultural League of Edmonton (SCLE)**

The SCLE is an organization newly formed (2009) consisting primarily of people from north Sudan. The Sudanese Cultural League of Edmonton is very active in social and cultural programmes such as family days, Sudanese school, and different festivals and celebrations.

#### **Inter-Organizational Relationships in Edmonton**

Edmonton, like most of the other cities, features community organizations reflecting the north-south divide. However, recent cooperation between the two main organizations paints an optimistic picture for the potential of collaboration and unity.

Gbonga Loro is the current president of the SCCAE. Her influence in the Southern Sudanese community, as well as leadership in reaching out to the SCLE, has been influential in bridging the gap between the two communities.

SCCAE has invited the SCLE to collaborate on a youth-oriented initiative titled "Seeds of Change." This three-year community action initiative intends to develop the skills and self-esteem of Sudanese youth. Significantly, it will bring together young members from the community of all tribal and ethnic affiliations.

In another example of collaboration, the northern and southern communities jointly hosted a Sudan pavilion at the Edmonton Heritage Festival in August, 2009. Despite some community opposition, the event was successful, and facilitated new interactions between northerners and southerners. The joint effort was reported on in the Edmonton Journal.



## 3.2 Sudan-Related NGOs/Not-for-Profits in Canada

There are numerous Canadian not-for-profit agencies and non-governmental organizations that work in relation to Sudan. These include international NGOs that are funded by CIDA to provide humanitarian assistance to people in Sudan, and a burgeoning field of domestic advocacy organizations. There is a particular concentration of advocacy organizations solely concerned with the ongoing genocide in Darfur.

### 3.2.1 CIDA-Supported Canadian International NGOs Working in Sudan

The following are Canadian international NGOs that receive funding from CIDA to work in Sudan:

#### **The Canadian Red Cross Society**

[www.redcross.ca](http://www.redcross.ca)

170 Metcalfe Street, Suite 300

Ottawa, ON

K2P 2P2

Tel: (613) 740-1900

Fax: (613) 740-1911

[feedback@redcross.ca](mailto:feedback@redcross.ca)

#### **CARE Canada**

[www.care.ca](http://www.care.ca)

9 Gurdwara Road, Suite 200

Ottawa, ON

K2E 7X6

Tel: (613) 228-5600

Fax: (613) 226-5777

[info@care.ca](mailto:info@care.ca)

#### **Medecines sans Frontieres**

[www.msf.ca](http://www.msf.ca)

720 Spadina Avenue, Suite 402

Toronto, ON

M5S 2T9

Tel: 1 800 982 7903

Tel: (416) 964 0619

Fax: (416) 963 8707

[msfcan@msf.ca](mailto:msfcan@msf.ca)

#### **Oxfam Canada**

[www.oxfam.qc.ca](http://www.oxfam.qc.ca)

2330, rue Notre-Dame Ouest, bureau

200

Montréal, PQ

H3J 2Y2

Tel : (514) 937-1614

[info@oxfam.qc.ca](mailto:info@oxfam.qc.ca)

#### **Plan Canada**

[www.plancanada.ca](http://www.plancanada.ca)

95 St. Clair Avenue West, Suite 1001

Toronto, ON

M4V 3B5

Tel: 1 800-387-1418

Fax: (416) 920-9942

[info@plancanada.ca](mailto:info@plancanada.ca)

#### **Save the Children Canada**

[www.savethechildren.ca](http://www.savethechildren.ca)

4141 Yonge Street, Suite 300

Toronto, ON

M2P 2A8

Tel: 1-800-668-5036

Tel: (416) 221-5501

Fax: (416) 221-8214

[sccan@savethechildren.ca](mailto:sccan@savethechildren.ca)

**War Child Canada**

[www.warchild.ca](http://www.warchild.ca)

401 Richmond Street West, Suite 204

Toronto, ON

M5V 3A8

Tel: 1 866-927-2445

Tel: (416) 971-7474

Fax: (416) 971-7946

[info@warchild.ca](mailto:info@warchild.ca)

**World Vision Canada**

[www.worldvision.ca](http://www.worldvision.ca)

1 World Drive

Mississauga ON

L5T 2Y4

Tel: 1 866-595-5550

Tel: (905) 565-6100

Fax: 1 866-219-8620

[info@worldvision.ca](mailto:info@worldvision.ca)

Source: CIDA, "UN Agencies and NGOs and Working In Sudan," 2007, <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/ANN-52131918-NBM>

### 3.2.2 Domestic Not-for-Profits and Advocacy Organizations

The advocacy community has grown considerably in the last few years, and there is a particular concentration of organizations that work to promote awareness of the Darfur crisis. This is an extension of the international "Never Again" anti-genocide movement, which emerged in the late 1990s largely in response to Rwanda and Bosnia, and has attracted prominent supporters, particularly in the United States. Below is a non-exhaustive list of not-for-profits that advocate on behalf of Sudan and Sudanese people:

#### Save Darfur Canada

Save Darfur Canada is an umbrella organization that seeks to support greater and more effective Canadian participation in peace-building in Sudan. It acts to unify the activities of the many diverse Darfur-related agencies in Canada, so that they are more successful in raising public awareness and lobbying the Canadian government to play a more active role in ending the war. Recent activities include hosting a national postcard campaign, launching an e-campaign during the 2008 federal elections, and meeting with parliamentarians. Save Darfur Canada is amongst the most prominent Canadian civil society voices speaking on Sudan. It also considers it a priority to engage the Sudanese diaspora, and, in particular, the Darfuri diaspora in its efforts (Source: Core Programming Review).

Web Link: <http://www.sdcanada.org>

#### Amnesty International (Canada)

Amnesty International is engaged in series of public education and advocacy projects relating to human rights issues in Darfur. These include the "Justice for Darfur" campaign, which was launched in April 2008 and focuses upon encouraging Western

governments to ensure the arrests of war crimes suspects with outstanding ICC warrants. Amnesty also participates in the multi-organization “Global Day for Darfur”, with demonstrations across the country, tracks specific human rights abuses, and publishes research.

Web Link: <http://www.amnesty.ca/>

### **Darfur Association of Canada**

The Darfur Association of Canada was founded at the outbreak of war in Darfur. It is focused chiefly on public education. Its leadership and many of its members are drawn from the Sudanese Diaspora.

Web Link: <http://www.darfurassociation.ca/>

### **STAND Canada**

STAND is a student-run organization with chapters in universities, colleges and high schools across the country. It has conducted a number of campaigns seeking to mobilize youth voices to pressure the Canadian government to take a more activist approach in ending the Darfur crisis. Projects include: 1-800-GENOCIDE, a toll-free number which connects with the office of the Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs or Leader of the Opposition; Stand for the Dead, a campaign to tell individual stories of people killed in Darfur; and national student conferences.

Web Link: <http://www.standcanada.org/>

### **Canadian Students for Darfur**

Canadian Students for Darfur is coalition of students committed to public education regarding the crisis in Darfur. Much of its work focuses on a national fundraising effort for aid agencies which provide relief work in Darfur. CSFD is involved in organizing Global Day for Darfur rallies in Canada.

Web Link: <http://www.csfdarfur.net/home/index.php>

### **KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives**

KAIROS is a network of churches and religious organizations which advocate for social change relating to domestic and international issues. Sudan is one of its four “Countries of Concern”. Its advocacy has focused on the relationship between the Canadian government and Talisman Energy, as well as human rights issues in Darfur and South Sudan. It works through the New Sudan Council of Churches in community building in Sudan.

Web Link: <http://www.kairoscanada.org/>

## **Canadian Jewish Congress**

CJC is a Jewish advocacy and programming organization. It convenes a National Darfur Committee, and has done so since it was approached by members of the Darfuri diaspora in Vancouver. The CJC has met with Canadian parliamentarians, and organized a green ribbon campaign to bring attention to the genocide.

Web Link: <http://www.cjc.ca/>

## **Muslim Canadian Congress**

The MCC is a grassroots organization aimed at Muslims who do not feel they belong in other, more conservative ethnocultural organizations. Its founder and former President, Tarek Fatah, has publicly spoken about the “Muslim-on-Muslim” violence in Darfur. He has alleged in newspaper articles and speeches to the United Nations that the Muslim world experiences internal racism which divides light-skinned and darker-skinned co-religionists.

Web Link: <http://www.muslimcanadiancongress.org/>

## **Canadians for Action in Darfur**

Canadians for Action in Darfur is a movement committed to influencing the Canadian government to take a more activist involvement in leading the international community to bring peace to Darfur. It is circulating petitions in all parts of the country to present to parliament. It has also prepared a power point presentation which it encourages its membership to circulate.

Web Link: [darfur@cadarfur.org](mailto:darfur@cadarfur.org)

## **Canadians against Slavery and Torture in Sudan**

CSTS is a coalition dedicated to raising awareness about the issue of slavery in Sudan, as well as other human rights abuses related to the civil wars.

Web Link:

<http://www.geocities.com/castsudan/CanadiansagainstSlaveryandtortureinsudan.html>

Email: [castsudan@sympatico.ca](mailto:castsudan@sympatico.ca)

## **Never Again International (Canada)**

Never Again International is a network of young people in many countries around the world committed to renewing the post-WWII pledge of “never again” to genocide. It has organized international forums, particularly related to Rwanda, but also conducts advocacy work on Darfur and other regions.

Email: [poppy@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:poppy@neveragaininternational.org)

## **The Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies**

MIGS is a research institute dedicated to studying the underlying causes of genocide and proposing solutions. It is based out of the History and Sociology/Anthropology departments at Concordia University. Its research approach is comparative and historical. The organization monitors and reports what state broadcasters and newspapers are telling their people in a number of African countries, including Sudan. Web Link: <http://migs.concordia.ca/index.html>

## **In Their Shoes Canada**

In Their Shoes creates innovative 45-minute presentations targeted to high school students about global issues and crises. Some of the presentations they have prepared focus on Darfur.

Web Link: <http://intheirshoescanada.org/>

## **Project Equity Canada**

Project Equity is an international umbrella group dedicated to a variety of student and youth-led social justice campaigns. The LEAD (Leadership Education Ambassadors: Darfur) Program trains university and high school students to deliver presentations to their schools about Darfur.

Web Link: <http://www.projectequity.org/>

Email: [mail@projectequity.org](mailto:mail@projectequity.org)

## 4. Policy Positions and Priorities of Sudanese Canadians

### 4.1 Recap of Survey Methodology

In order to assess the political orientation and policy priorities of Sudanese Canadians, two survey tools were designed and provided to **approximately 110 individuals**. Of these, 77 (seventy-seven) agreed to provide comprehensive responses, for a **response rate of approximately 70%**.

As outlined in Section 1.3.1 of this paper, these individuals were identified through a combination of random and snowball sampling. Many either hold some position of formal responsibility with a Sudanese-focused community organization, or are regarded as a *de facto* tribal leader within one of the cities visited by this study's researchers. Others who hold no formal leadership position in either a community organization or a tribal network were identified to participate in this survey by virtue of their educational background, their professional achievements, or their general standing in the broader community. These respondents represented both Northerners and Southerners, a variety of tribal affiliations and ethnic backgrounds, different faith traditions, and varying degrees of integration into Canadian life.

This was a highly-educated group with a vast array of academic backgrounds and professional experiences. 66 out of the 77 interviewees (86%) had completed post-secondary education, and 19 (25%) possessed post-graduate degrees. While this group of respondents identified by random and snowball sampling may not be representative of the broader membership of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada, it does, nonetheless, suggest a degree of sophistication and capacity on the part of the Sudanese diaspora within Canada. Notably, these individuals were, almost to a person, extremely well-versed in the politics of Sudan, both past and present, and could therefore be reasonably described as "citizen experts" who could be of great help to Canadian decision makers, especially towards Sudan issues.

The first survey tool used with respondents was a questionnaire that gathered tombstone data, and asked **31 closed-ended questions** pertaining to Sudan and Canada's relationship thereto. That questionnaire offered an opportunity to provide narrative comments. (See Appendix 5)

The second survey tool used with these same 77 respondents was an **open-ended questionnaire** used to guide discussion and to elicit more extensive answers and opinions regarding the state of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada, Canada's foreign policy towards Sudan, and the relationship between the two. (See Appendix 7)

In addition to the administration of these survey tools to 77 respondents, in-depth interviews were conducted with approximately fifteen to twenty (15 to 20) noted community or political leaders from the Sudanese diaspora across Canada.

What follows is an aggregation of opinions gathered through the administration of these various tools and approaches, and relating to a variety of hot-button current issues.

Direct quotes, which are representative of currents of opinion and common advice expressed by participants, have also been included in italics.

## 4.2 Summary of Findings

Generally, those respondents who participated in this research exercise felt that Canada should expand its relationship with Sudan. Notably, however, they believe both that Canada should be prepared to intervene to respond to ongoing humanitarian crises in Sudan, and that Canada should normalize its diplomatic relations with Khartoum. While there was disagreement as to whether or not an ICC indictment should have been sought against President Bashir, a strong majority believe that he should be removed from office.

Views about such matters as the effectiveness of Canada's delivery of official development assistance (ODA) to Sudan and the effectiveness of the UNAMID troops in Darfur were also captured.

Across all the topic areas of the questions and answers summarized below, it is noteworthy that, despite the deep geographic and tribal (ethnic) cleavages which persist within the Sudanese community and have been commented upon in previous chapters of the study, ***there were no consistent or significant differences of opinion registered along these lines.*** Though many questions stimulated divided reactions, few if any broke down reliably according to the geographic, ethnic or religious backgrounds of respondents.

Below is a summary of the views of respondents regarding key questions about Sudan and Canada's relationship thereto. These responses are also presented as pie charts in Appendix 4 to this report. The number of respondents for all 31 scale-based questions below was 77 (N=77).

## 4.3 Canada's Official Involvement in Sudan

Canada is a major player in ongoing international efforts to restore peace and justice to Sudan. The quantitative survey tool included a number of propositions measuring general perceptions of Canada's role in Sudan.

### **1. The Canadian government represents a positive force in Sudan.**

The vast majority of respondents (63%) agree that the Canadian government represents a positive role in Sudan. Only 18% disagreed. This suggests that Canada can boast a markedly positive reputation in Sudan.

Strongly agree: 28%  
Somewhat agree: 35%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 11%  
Somewhat disagree: 9%  
Strongly disagree: 9%  
Don't know: 8%

*“Canada is respected and admired by the Sudanese people. There are considerable opportunities for investment and mutual trade between Sudan and Canada.”*

### **2. The Canadian government should do more to help the people of Sudan**

Despite Canada's positive reputation – or perhaps because of it – a vast majority (86%) of Sudanese people surveyed strongly agreed that Canada should become more involved in Sudan.

Strongly agree: 86%  
Agree: 8%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 1%  
Somewhat disagree: 2%  
Strongly disagree: 3%  
Don't know: 1%

*“Canada's reputation as a neutral, peace-broker state allows it to play a strong role in supporting peace and stability in Sudan. Canada is more suited than any (other) Western country to play a leading role in peace talks...”*

### **3. Canada should not interfere in Sudan's internal conflicts.**

This question – critical to Canadian foreign policy in Sudan, particularly in relation to Darfur – generated an interestingly-divided response. A plurality of respondents disagreed with the proposition, but there was substantial ambivalence (11% neither disagreed nor agreed) and some support for non-interference (28% strongly agreed).

Strongly agree: 28%  
Somewhat agree: 10%  
Neither agreed nor disagreed: 11%



Somewhat disagree: 23%  
Strongly disagree: 31%  
Don't know: 8%

**4. Canada has a responsibility to intervene when civilians are threatened by violence in Sudan.**

Framed differently, participants overwhelmingly agreed that Canada has a “responsibility to protect”. 91% of participants agreed that Canada had a responsibility to intervene on behalf of citizens threatened by violence.

Strongly agree: 75%  
Somewhat agree: 16%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 2%  
Somewhat disagree: 7%  
Strongly disagree: 1%  
Don't know: 0%

**5. Canada should open normal relations with Sudan.**

Interestingly, despite the fact that a majority of Sudanese in Canada have been dispossessed by the current regime in Khartoum, a majority (66%) support the resumption of normal relations between Canada and Sudan.

Strongly agree: 45%  
Somewhat agree: 21%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 1%  
Somewhat disagree: 11%  
Strongly disagree: 21%  
Don't know: 1%

*“The Canadian government should consider a strong economic role with respect to Sudan. It should hinge on interest-free bilateral trade that facilitates Canadian investment and capacity building. Canada should also allow for easier travel between itself and Sudan.”*

**6. Canada should remove economic sanctions on Sudan.**

On the question of maintaining or removing economic sanctions, participants were divided. A slim majority (52%) oppose economic sanctions, in keeping with the above stated preference for normal relations between states. However, a significant portion (29%) strongly disagrees with the proposition.

Strongly agree: 42%  
Somewhat agree: 10%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 4%  
Somewhat disagree: 10%  
Strongly disagree: 29%  
Don't know: 5%

*“International economic sanctions increase animosity and resistance of the federal government towards increasing international involvement. Sanctions increase poverty and punish the people, not their government. Canada was respected in Sudan while it was following its soft power policy in the past. Assistance requires a relationship toward the government and its institutions, in order to have some influence over its practices. Therefore, institutional co-operation is necessary for effective support and assistance of any kind.”*

*“(The) Canadian government mustn't give any direct assistance to the current Sudan government. Humanitarian assistance must be through international NGOs.”*

### **7. Canada should do more to support Sudanese refugees.**

On this question, there was little deviation. 83% of participants strongly agreed that Canada should provide more support for Sudanese refugees. This result is unsurprising, given the high proportion of former refugees in the community.

Strongly agree: 83%  
Somewhat agree: 9%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 4%  
Somewhat disagree: 1%  
Strongly disagree: 3%  
Don't know: 0%

*“Canada can help the Sudanese refugees by strictly monitoring the treatment of refugees at the Canadian Embassy in Egypt. As a Sudanese immigrant, I have been treated unfairly while passing through this Embassy... Many refugees become stranded there for many years, often having no option but to return back to Sudan...”*

## **4.4 The Provision of Official Development Assistance to Sudan**

In addition to general questions about Canada's role in Sudan, the survey tool assessed the specific issue of official development assistance. Many of the participants had first-

hand experience of Canadian development programs in Sudan, and as a result, offered insight into whether and how CIDA-funded programs in Sudan are effective.

### **1. Canadian development assistance sent to Sudan is used effectively.**

No clear result is evident. An equal number of respondents agreed and disagreed with this proposition. A substantial number also admitted to being unable to assess the effectiveness of development assistance to Sudan.

Strongly agree: 11%  
Somewhat agree: 22%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 9%  
Somewhat disagree: 15%  
Strongly disagree: 17%  
Don't know: 26%

*“The Canadian government provides assistance for human rights, women, and issues of political stability. It should also focus on the development of an effective education system and health care services. These have a direct impact on the development of citizens, regardless of whether they're in an urban or rural setting. Canadian assistance should ensure that Sudan is progressing towards a modern, national state that preserves equal rights and opportunities for all of its citizens.”*

## **4.5 Darfur Crisis**

One of the most current crucial issues emanating from Sudan is the war in Darfur. In the West, there is considerable disagreement about what ought to be done. In particular, there are concerns about how active a role Canada and other western nations can play in the resolution of the crisis, without engendering further conflict. The questionnaire sought to address some of these specific questions.

### **1. The war in Darfur should be labeled “genocide”.**

On this politically-charged issue, the community was relatively divided. The majority (60%) agree with the use of the term genocide. However, 23% strongly disagree. Given the popular acceptance of terming the Darfur crisis as genocide, this suggests a distinct perspective present in the Sudanese community.

Strongly agree: 48%  
Somewhat agree: 12%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 4%  
Somewhat disagree: 13%  
Strongly disagree: 23%

Don't know: 0%

*“Canada should put pressure on the U.N. and E.U. to end genocide in Darfur and to protect human rights. Canada should also support the ICC to arrest war criminals. Canada should be well aware of the massacre of millions, the rape of women and the internal displacement of civilians in Darfur. Please help.”*

## **2. The war in Darfur constitutes the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.**

More than half the respondents agree that the war in Darfur constitutes the worst humanitarian crisis in the world today.

Strongly agree: 51%  
Somewhat agree: 18%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 4%  
Somewhat disagree: 8%  
Strongly disagree: 15%  
Don't know: 4%

## **3. The AU/UN peacekeeping force in Darfur effectively protects the people of Darfur.**

Respondents indicated generally positive attitudes with regards to the UNAMID peacekeeping force in Darfur.

Strongly agree: 17%  
Somewhat agree: 46%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 5%  
Somewhat disagree: 11%  
Strongly disagree: 16%  
Don't know: 7%

## **4. The AU/UN peacekeeping force in Darfur has been inadequately supported by the international community.**

Despite reasonably high levels of satisfaction with the performance of UNAMID, a vast majority (72%) of respondents feel that the peacekeeping force has not been satisfactorily supported.

Strongly agree: 35%  
Somewhat agree: 38%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 6%  
Somewhat disagree: 4%

Strongly disagree: 13%  
Don't know: 4%

**5. The AU/UN peacekeeping force in Darfur should be enlarged.**

A substantial majority of respondents feel that the UNAMID peacekeeping force should be enlarged.

Strongly agree: 46%  
Somewhat agree: 22%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 7%  
Somewhat disagree: 9%  
Strongly disagree: 7%  
Don't know: 9%

**6. The Canadian government should provide more assistance to the AU/UN peacekeeping force in Darfur.**

Over 80% of respondents support the Canadian government assisting UNAMID in a greater capacity.

Strongly agree: 75%  
Somewhat agree: 12%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 4%  
Somewhat disagree: 5%  
Strongly disagree: 3%  
Don't know: 1%

*“Given Canada's experience and numerous NGOs, it can do more regarding economic and technical assistance to Darfur.”*

*“Canada should champion the proposal for the establishment of a No Fly Zone in Darfur, even if it is done as a complement to the current UNAMID proposal. This can prevent aerial attacks on civilians. The government of Sudan uses maneuvers to buy time and avoid penalties. It will only compromise in response to consistent pressure. The Canadian government should use its humanitarian assistance to build infrastructure in Darfur, especially regarding the creation of fresh drinking water wells and health care centres.”*

**7. Peacekeeping soldiers from Canada and other Western nations only complicate the situation in Darfur.**

Interestingly, a small majority of participants support the presence of Western troops in Sudan, and 44% strongly object to the above proposition. This is at odds with opinion currents in the West, which fear being regarded by Darfurians as representing an occupying force. On this question, it should be noted however, there was a significant divergence of opinions.

Strongly agree: 11%  
Somewhat agree: 27%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 9%  
Somewhat disagree: 9%  
Strongly disagree: 44%  
Don't Know: 1%

#### **8. *Canada should send peacekeepers to Darfur.***

In keeping with responses to the previous proposition, more than two-thirds of respondents agreed that Canada should maintain a peacekeeping presence in Darfur. 57% strongly agreed.

Strongly agree: 57%  
Somewhat agree: 19%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 4%  
Somewhat disagree: 9%  
Strongly disagree: 8%  
Don't know: 3%

### **4.6 Political Stability and the Peace Process**

This section of the study discusses the political stability of Sudan, perceptions of the current Al-Bashir-led regime, and prospects for peace.

#### **1. *The indictment of President Bashir has had a positive impact on peace and stability in Sudan.***

This question generated a variety of strong reactions in either direction. While a substantial majority of participants saw Bashir as a clear antagonist in the conflict and serious impediment to peace and stability, some felt that the ICC indictment created complications on the ground in Sudan.

Strongly agree: 33%  
Somewhat agree: 16%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 15%  
Somewhat disagree: 12%

Strongly disagree: 21%  
Don't know 3%

*“While there are claims that peace is returning to Sudan, the reality is that Bashir is exacerbating internal problems and leading the nation back to civil war. We don't need more war. Enough is enough. Over 2 million people have died in Sudan. The blood runs like the Nile River.”*

## **2. The removal of President Bashir is essential to achieving peace in Sudan.**

A strong majority of respondents view the removal of Bashir as a necessary first step towards sustainable peace. This likely reflects the fact that the majority of Sudanese migrants to Canada are refugees, and many – of all ethno-religious backgrounds – can trace their expulsion to the policies of the Bashir regime.

Strongly agree: 49%  
Somewhat agree: 23%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 9%  
Somewhat disagree: 9%  
Strongly disagree: 7%  
Don't know: 3%

*“I feel that Canada does not fully understand the reasons for the collapse of democracy in Sudan. This has been a major cause of conflict in the region. For many years, civil society served as a “security valve” that guarded Sudanese democracy with teeth. Today, the current fanatical regime works night and day to destroy civil society. If Canada conducted a realistic assessment of Sudan, it would conclude that supporting and rebuilding civil society could provide the capacity building necessary to restore stability and democracy.”*

*“There is a problem of trust between the Sudanese government and its citizens. There is also concern over the credibility of the ruling party. There is doubt as to whether the upcoming elections will be honest or not and whether the results can be considered valid. This is important as suspicions over the results may lead to new conflict. Canada should be more considerate of political issues and of the stances of Sudan's various groups”.*

## **3. The creation of Sudan Government of National Unity (GNU) has had a positive impact on the people of Sudan.**

Despite antipathy towards President Al-Bashir, a substantial majority of Sudanese expressed optimism with regards to the Government of National Unity, and its prospects for generating rapprochement particularly between the North and South. 59% of respondents feel that the GNU has had a positive impact.

Strongly agree: 24%  
Somewhat agree: 35%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 11%  
Somewhat disagree: 8%  
Strongly disagree: 17%  
Don't know: 5%

*“The Canadian government should ensure that Sudanese political parties and groups are involved in the peace process. Most peace efforts and development initiatives don't consider alternative parties and their opinions. Canada... should listen to and include other parties, including those who are viewed as enemies of the West. Since CPA and before it, most of the alternative parties have not been vocal and Canada is missing their point of view.”*

## **4.7 Unity, Diversity and the Secular State**

Sudan is a deeply-divided society. This inescapable fact plays a role in all major current issues in Sudan as well as in the Diaspora. The researchers considered it useful to engage the issue head-on, to gauge Sudanese attitudes towards diversity. This section also addresses the issue of religion versus secularization.

### **1. Southern Sudan should become an independent state.**

The majority of respondents rejected this proposition. Most leaders of the Southern Sudanese community expressed to the researchers their belief that Sudan could be, and should be made to work as a single state. However, particularly amongst younger community members, there is some continued support for an independent Southern Sudan.

Strongly agree: 21%  
Somewhat agree: 16%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 8%  
Somewhat disagree: 16%  
Strongly disagree: 34%  
Don't know: 5%

*“A united, strong, democratic, secular Sudan. This is what I prefer. It is the only option that will bring peace.”*

### **2. Sudan's diversity is its strength.**



Despite decades of civil war, a large majority of respondents expressed the belief that Sudan is strong in its diversity. In part, this may reflect a learning process associated with resettlement in Canada. A number of participants expressed their admiration for the Canadian model of coexistence. This openness to accommodation and diversity also suggests the potential of the Diaspora to impact peace building efforts in a positive way.

Strongly agree: 46%  
Somewhat agree: 32%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 3%  
Somewhat disagree: 11%  
Strongly disagree: 5%  
Don't know: 3%

*"I think there is a need to pay more attention to the growing dangers of tribalism in Sudanese politics and society under the current regime. Up to and until the Islamist movement usurped power from the democratically elected government in 1989, tribalism was gradually waning in most parts of Sudan. The state played a positive role in this through the education system and general policies of recruitment in different state institutions that were largely based on merit. Sadly, the state now is perceived as the main proponent of tribalistic and divisive policies. The vast majority of Sudanese people, I believe, are peaceful and far more tolerant than their present leaders. They don't deserve to be left in their current predicament."*

### **3. Sudan must achieve a true separation of religion and politics.**

A vast majority of respondents strongly agree that the Sudanese state must undergo secularizing reform.

Strongly agree: 69%  
Somewhat agree: 16%  
Neither agree nor disagree: 0%  
Somewhat disagree: 8%  
Strongly disagree: 4%  
Don't know: 4%

## 5. Summary and Recommendations

### 5.1 Summary:

This report – conceived as a “Smart Map” - has attempted to profile the size, distribution, organization, and leadership of the Sudanese diaspora in major centres across Canada, as well as to assess and report on the perspectives of a random sampling of community leaders towards the major political issues facing Sudan today and Canada’s responses thereto. Given that Canada has made a substantial financial and policy commitment towards Sudan, knowing more about the constitution and dynamics of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada is an important step towards inviting greater participation by a significant group of “citizen experts” and stakeholders in the ongoing review and enhancement of Canada’s relationship with that country.

This was a small study with a small budget and extremely limited resources. This meant, necessarily, that the number of cities and communities that could be visited, the amount of time that could be spent attempting to secure the cooperation of the leadership of different components of the broader Sudanese diaspora, and the ability of the report’s researchers to make anything more than well-informed “guesstimates” of even such basic facts as the true size of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada, was extremely limited.

Officially, according to the 2006 Canadian Census, there were 12,640 residents of Canada who identified as being of Sudanese origin. This number appears low, by all reasonable estimates, and even by landing statistics compiled by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which found there to have been in excess of 15,000 people landing in Canada from Sudan from 1980 to 2008. While some estimates made by community leaders and respected academics suggest there may be as many as 80,000 Sudanese living in Canada or 20,000+ living in Toronto alone, our own sense is that the total size of the Sudanese diaspora living in Canada is somewhere between 25,000 and 30,000.

Immigration statistics demonstrate that any significant Sudanese migration to Canada has been a relatively recent phenomenon. There was a dramatic increase in the late 1980s due to the upheaval caused by civil war and political instability in Sudan. The majority of Sudanese immigrants have come to Canada since that time as Government-Assisted Refugees (GAR), privately sponsored refugees, and Family Class immigrants. Most have settled in urban centres, as tends to be the case for most immigrant groups, which in turn influenced the choice of population centre studied as part of this project. In the event, those cities visited, surveyed and profiled included Ottawa, Toronto, Hamilton, Kitchener, Winnipeg, Calgary and Edmonton.

At the provincial level, again according to official Census statistics from 2006, Ontario had 6,645 (53%) residents of Sudanese origin, while Alberta had 3,565 (28%).

Once refugees or immigrants from Sudan arrive in Canada, even if they have strong academic credentials, they often encounter serious difficulty in locating employment opportunities. Anecdotally, our research identified a growing trend among those from Sudan who have arrived in Canada as permanent residents under the Independent class to establish their families in Canada before traveling to work in oil-rich Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait or Qatar.

That said, this report does gather together important information about a community that, while still relatively small as compared to other diaspora communities in Canada, including from other African countries (e.g. Ethiopia, Somalia)<sup>29</sup>, is nonetheless increasing in size as Sudan continues to suffer from the effects of war, poverty and mismanagement. Sudan is also increasing in relative policy importance, in part because it remains a major recipient of Canadian Official Development Assistance (ODA) even while Canada's overall ODA program shifts emphasis from Africa towards the Americas. It also continues to receive military support through the Department of National Defence.

This study used random and snowball sampling to identify a group of respondents from the Sudanese diaspora in Canada who would be willing to participate in individual and small-group interviews about the distribution, organization and dynamics of the broader community, as well to provide specific responses to a survey instrument designed to assess their views of the current political situation in Sudan and Canada's relationship to that country. Of approximately 110 individuals identified and contacted, 77 agreed to participate fully in the research process. This was a highly-educated group with a vast array of educational backgrounds and professional experiences. 66 out of the 77 interviewees (86%) had completed post-secondary education, and 19 (25%) possessed post-graduate degrees. While this group of respondents identified by random and snowball sampling may not be representative of the broader membership of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada, it does, nonetheless, suggest a degree of sophistication and capacity on the part of the Sudanese diaspora within Canada. Notably, these individuals were, almost to a person, extremely well-versed in the politics of Sudan, both past and present, and could therefore be reasonably described as "citizen experts" who could be of great help to Canadian decision makers, especially towards Sudan issues.

This report confirmed that there is still a tendency for members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada to organize themselves on the basis of geography, tribal/ethnic affiliation, and religious background. Any such differences that are underscored and perpetuated among these different groups of Sudanese Canadians tend to be attributable to the near-continuous civil war in their shared homeland and deep-rooted racial, ethnic and religious conflicts that have been exploited for military and/or political gain in Sudan.

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<sup>29</sup> Among the most common African origins reported by self-identified Black Canadians in 2006 were Somali (4.5%), Ghanaian (2.9%) and Ethiopian (2.8%). Source: Statistics Canada – Catalogue no. 97-562.

However, through open discussions with and comments by respondents participating in this study, we have also observed a tendency for more-established community members to combine together with those who are more newly-arrived to Canada under the umbrella of community-based organizations focused on assisting the process of settlement and integration. While many of these organizations in centres such as Edmonton and Hamilton are focused on particular sub-groups of the larger Sudanese community, with many organized along geographic and/or tribal lines (e.g. organizations exclusively serving Southern Sudanese or Northern Sudanese populations, for instance), there are also encouraging examples of such organizations that provide integration services to all members of the Sudanese diaspora regardless of one's place of origin with Sudan or one's tribal affiliation.

Winnipeg, for instance, in contrast to many of the other cities, boasts a single, multi-ethnic Sudanese organization: the Sudanese Association of Manitoba (SAM). The organization, led by a southerner, serves the whole Sudanese community, which includes northerners, southerners (including a large contingent of Lost Boys and Girls of Sudan – young men and women who were displaced during the civil war, spent time in refugee camps in Kenya and elsewhere, and were later resettled in North America), Darfurians, Nuba, and others. In 1999, SAM hosted forums in order to discuss how relationships between sub-communities could be strengthened. Unity is thus a central thrust of the organization. (See Section 3.1.4, above)

Notably, for the purposes of this paper, our discussions held across Canada suggest that virtually all of these key community organizations appear to eschew overt political discourse or advocacy. Those organizations within the diaspora communities that are active in political advocacy have overt party or political affiliations (e.g. SPLM chapters in Alberta), and do not typically offer other forms of support or services to their communities. Furthermore, it is commonplace that within the membership of individual community-based organizations serving the Sudanese diaspora there will be a variety of political views and affiliations represented, including affiliations (some loose and notional, some more firm and avid) with more than one national political party in Sudan. This may suggest that members of the diaspora who have shared the experience of leaving Sudan because of the ongoing conflicts and deprivation there are drawn together by that common experience once they settle in Canada, rather than by adherence to a singular political viewpoint.

This possibility was underscored by our somewhat surprising and encouraging finding that there was no obvious correlation between respondents' geographical origin within Sudan, or their tribal affiliation, or their faith tradition, and their responses to a survey of 31 multiple-choice questions regarding the politics of Sudan and the policies of Canada towards Sudan. This, however, would be a valuable question for an expanded research study of the Sudanese diaspora, based upon a much larger sample of the community.

Those survey responses revealed that about 50% of respondents had no hesitation in labeling the war in Darfur as genocide. Around 72% of all respondents agreed that President Bashir is an impediment to peace and must go, although there was less

robust support for the value of pursuing an ICC indictment against him. (NB: During the course of in-depth discussions with community members, there was a discernible tendency for those respondents from Darfur and other Sudanese communities with strong backgrounds in human rights to be more supportive of indicting Bashir than those with different geographic or professional backgrounds.)

The majority of Sudanese respondents are in favor of a secular state (85%) in Sudan. Sudan is a country where the issues of race, ethnicity, religion and cultural differences lead to overwhelming disputes and civil wars. Yet fully 85% of the Sudanese respondents who participated in our research saw “diversity as strength”. Arguably, given Canada’s own ongoing commitment to the value of diversity, this finding bodes well for the ongoing ability of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada to integrate and to thrive within broader Canadian society, and to contribute effectively to Canadian policy debates and discussions, including those related to Canada’s policies towards Sudan.

## **5.2 Recommendations:**

The intent of this report was not to identify or offer specific recommendations regarding the relationship between Canada’s Sudanese diaspora and Canadian foreign policy. Nonetheless, in the course of researching and writing this paper, a number of possible approaches have suggested themselves for enhancing the Government of Canada’s knowledge about the Sudanese diaspora, and for increasing the involvement of the Sudanese diaspora in the review and enhancement of Canada’s policies towards Sudan. These include:

**1./ THAT** the Sudan Task Force test the findings of this report to see if they are supported by a broader, more comprehensive study that captures the views of a much larger and randomized group of respondents from within the Sudanese diaspora in Canada. This will require substantially larger resources both in terms of time and money. A larger, cross-Canada research team with deeper pockets and the time to establish or reinforce trust-based relationships with community leaders and members all across Canada will be needed to counteract a perhaps unavoidable tendency for the first-generation members of the Sudanese diaspora – those who have lived through and escaped civil war, ethnic strife, government repression, the denial of their most basic human rights, and physical displacement – to be suspicious of attempts led either by the Canadian government or by third-party organizations to gather information about their political views, their ties back to Sudan, their leadership structures, and other types of information that, in their minds, could be put to inappropriate use. Such a comprehensive research study could, among other things, help to bring more clarity to such basic issues as the true size and composition of the Sudanese diaspora living in Canada. It could also delve with more specificity into issues of particular concern to certain quarters of Canada’s Sudanese diaspora, with a particular focus on those from the most problematic and conflict-plagued areas in Sudan, including Darfurians, those from the Nuba Mountain region, Blue Nile groups, and Nubians.

**2./ THAT** those departments or agencies of the Government of Canada involved in Sudan – including DFAIT, CIDA, the Department of National Defence, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police – undertake issue-specific consultations with broad cross-sections of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada from all major population centres regarding the current political situation in Sudan and the efficacy of Canadian policies towards Sudan. Such consultations should be comprehensive in scope, and should therefore embrace such divergent issues as Canada’s ODA programming, its support for UNAMID through the African Union, the use of economic sanctions, and institution-building within Sudan, among other topics.

**3./ THAT,** in addition to issue-specific consultations, the Sudan Task Force consider the establishment of permanent or semi-permanent mechanisms or forums for bringing together Sudanese-Canadian “citizen experts” to provide ongoing feedback and advice concerning the ongoing development and management of Canada’s relationship with the Government of Sudan. Any such mechanisms must be carefully and sensitively balanced in terms of their membership.

**4./ THAT,** consistent with the “all of government” approach that the Government of Canada is taking with respect to its foreign policy towards Sudan, the Sudan Task Force and its foreign policy partners also liaise with officials of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Canada, as well Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and provincial authorities, where relevant, to encourage their efforts to help members of the Sudanese diaspora in Canada integrate into the economic life of Canada. The longer it takes such individuals to update their professional and educational credentials, or to gather information about establishing businesses in Canada, or to become aware of or actively involved in the leadership of Canadian public institutions, the longer such individuals are to remain suspicious of or disconnected from sincere government efforts to gain their trust and to benefit from their expertise about Sudan. In other words, better integration of the members of the Sudanese diaspora into Canadian life could improve the Government of Canada’s opportunity to enhance its official activities in or policies towards Sudan.