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Sudan

Country Profile

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Profile: Sudan

**Sudan**

Sudan currently consists of two major political groups under a single govern-
ment. The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 created the
Government of National Unity and the Government of South Sudan. The GNU is recog-
nized as the government of Sudan but the term is also used to politically differentiate north-
ern Sudan from the southern region which is represented by the GoSS. The formation of the GNU allowed for the creation of a new gov-
erning body to represent South Sudan in the national government. The Sudan People’s Lib-
eration Army/People’s Liberation Movement, the main military and political organization in southern Sudan formed the GNU, and the GoSS operates the country as a type of coalition gov-
ernment and has since signed multiple peace and political agreements with the national government. The Sudan People’s Lib-
eration Movement and the GoSS represent South Sudan in the GNU and the GoSS, the north and southern Sudan were represented by various gov-
ernments and political groups. In the years approaching the Comprehensive Peace Agree-
ment several other peace and mine-related agreements were made between these repre-
sentative bodies.

The signing of the Ottawa Convention incorporated these previous peace- and mine-
related agreements and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Further agreements, such as the Darfur Peace Agreement and Eastern States Peace Agreement, have helped stabilize the country and create a workable atmosphere for mine-action efforts.

### Mine-action Efforts

The majority of mine-action efforts are headed by international organizations, including Handicap International, the HALO Trust, Mines Advisory Group and Landmine Action, among others. These organizations provide fairly comprehensive mine-action efforts, but because of the division of the country and lack of governmental help, their efforts are lim-
ited in size. The formation of the National Mine Action Authority and the Southern Sudan Demining Commission constitute sig-
nificant achievements for future sustainable mine-action efforts in Sudan. These national mine-action institutions gain momentum, international non-govern-
mental organizations remain critical to supporting victim assistance efforts. Currently, the International Committee of the Red Cross pro-
vides the most victim assistance in Sudan. Furthermore, a total of 1.1 million people have received MRE through the NMA.6

As the national mine-action institutions gain momentum, international non-govern-
mental organizations remain critical to supporting victim assistance efforts. Currently, the International Committee of the Red Cross pro-
vides the most victim assistance in Sudan.6 Suf-
ficient funding for victim assistance remains a constant problem for both the national and international organizations, but efforts from national mine-action institutions and inter-
national funding have recently increased. Currently, the United Nations Mine Action Service has developed a two-year work plan to provide victim assistance, thereby strengthen-
ing one of the weaker aspects of mine-action efforts in Sudan.8

**Outlook**

Sudan has taken several significant steps toward reducing the ERW contamination found in the country. The signing of the Ottawa Convention and bilateral agreements to stop the use of landmines have made mine-action efforts much easier. On the negative side, however, is the reality that continued conflict in Darfur and the possibility of futures instability between the GNU and the GoSS may result in renewed conflict.

In the short term, mine-action efforts will have to rely on the various internationa-
lar organizations currently operating in Sudan for support. In the long term, it is hoped that the formation of the National Mine Action Authority and Southern Sudan Demining Commission will create effective national mine-action institutions for future efforts. The larger humanitarian situation inside Sudan also remains critical. Any mine-action efforts must fit into a larger rebuilding effort. If the humanitarian and political situation does not improve, then renewed fighting between the GNU and GoSS could erase recent gains.7

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**Notes:**

1. Prepares for the Mine Action Information Center in July, 2007 as an Editorial Assistant for the Journal of Mine Action. He plans to graduate from James Madison University with a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies and a minor in education or graduate school.

2. Prepared for the Mine Action Information Center in July, 2007 as an Editorial Assistant for the Journal of Mine Action. E-mail: maic@jmu.edu

3. Stephen Powers

4. A similar division with separate operations for mine-action efforts much easier. On the negative side, however, is the reality that continued conflict in Darfur and the possibility of futures instability between the GNU and the GoSS may result in renewed conflict.

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**References:**

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**New Documentary Discusses Environmental Effects of War**

Scared Lands and Wounded Lives: The Environmental Footprint of War by sociologists-turned-
filmmakers Alice and Lincoln Day talks about the environmental problems created by war. The film debuted at the 2008 Environmental Film Festival in Washington, D.C. The couple was raised to realize that the environment is war’s silent casualty. The couple is working on getting the film distributed to a broader audience around the globe. To learn more, visit http://www.
vaweek.com/english/Science/2008-03-26-voa1.cfm