

In the church:

A Message from AFRECS Executive Director Richard Parkins
The Challenges Persist

A two day conference at George Mason University brought vivid attention to the horrors facing the people of the Nuba Mountains. Photographs depicting unspeakable suffering once again underscored the power of visual depictions to drive home the message of unmitigated violence and anguish. Speaker after speaker lamented the atrocities that continue in South Kordofan and Blue Nile while the international community fails to exert the leadership needed to bring attention to this horrific crisis. Failure to mobilize the political will to hold Khartoum accountable for what most consider to be genocide, became the mantra of the conference.

Several media experts spoke about constraints to more widespread coverage of the crisis, noting the retrenchment of resources major media operations are able to devote to international news coverage. While not excusing the paucity of interest being shown in the devastation of life in Blue Nile and South Kordofan, the proliferation of crises around the world, the diminishing resources being assigned to on-the-ground coverage of these crises, often in dangerous and remote areas such as the Nuba Mountains, partially explains why some situations get minimal attention and are overlooked. Nevertheless, the horrors of Nuba genocide are known thanks to compelling documentary evidence that does exist. The fact is that infrequent reporting from the region should not be a reason for relegating this monumental crisis to the back burner.

A corollary of discussions on the Nuba crisis was the attention given to current political climate in Khartoum. Several panelists conveyed the heartening view that opposition to the NCP was coalescing into a more concerted political force – possibly one which could eventually present a formidable challenge to Bashir’s hegemony. There was not unanimity as to how quickly an effective opposition could be mobilized and whether the result would be a viable democratic force. Still many recommended supporting the opposition as a precursor to regime change. The premise was that Bashir’s intractability in ceasing his bombardment of the Nuba people and his total untrustworthiness in adhering to agreements to resolve crises in Darfur, Abyei, and the Nuba Mountains was not likely to change.

The conference demonstrated that there is significant work to be done to keep the spotlight on the protracted crises that plague Sudan. The Enough Project has announced a special advocacy event taking place in DC on June 8-10, including a major rally on June 10th to call attention to and press for action on this festering situation. As many as are able are asked to participate in this demonstration. It supports those who are likely to depend only on us to be their voice. The rally will hopefully send a signal to policy makers and beyond that these crises in Sudan cannot be ignored.

Richard Parkins

In the church (continued):

Additional prayer request from Richard Parkins:

Prayers are requested for Bishop Andudu Adam Elnail, bishop of the ECS diocese of Kadugli, who will undergo surgery today (3/20/13) in Denver. Bishop Andudu has faced the daunting challenge of ministering to his people who have been victims of the vicious assault launched by the Khartoum government on the people of the Nuba Mountains. Prayers are offered for his early recovery as well as for his ministry and his work with the people of Kadugli and the Nuba Mountains.

News from AFRECS:

Save the date for the 2013 National Conference of AFRECS to be held in Chicago at Seabury Seminary from October 4-6, 2013. Details about the conference will be forth coming.

Reminder: Please check the [AFRECS web site](#) for the Winter edition of *SUDAN CONNECTIONS*.

In both Sudan & South Sudan:

[Getting to Normal with the Two Sudans](#): A Report of Rethinking the US Foreign Assistance Program. The author, Kate Almquist Knopf, points out that "(t)he time to normalize US diplomatic relations with the two Sudans is now. After more than a decade of US special envoys...and the independence of South Sudan...it is time for the US to reevaluate...(Does the US) still need a special envoy for Sudan and South Sudan, and if so, why?" This paper argues that moving to more normal diplomatic relations with each country may better achieve peace and stability, by refocusing diplomatic engagement on the internal governance challenges in both states.

In South Sudan:

The [Sudd Institute](#) weekly review focuses on several dynamics (including the on-going review of the transitional constitution, the national reconciliation effort spearheaded by the Vice President Riek Machar Teny, and the relations with the Republic of Sudan) "in order to assess their weight in terms of nation-building, to evaluate relevant public debates, and to map out what direction the citizens think the country is headed." The author, Jok Madut Jok, Executive Director and co-founder of the Sudd Institute, asks a final question: "Are we up for possible political fallout that further destabilizes the nation or an open democratic society where citizens can challenge their government and demand better discharge of public office without fear of harassment? "

In Sudan:

["South Kordofan and Blue Nile](#) threaten to repeat the Darfur tragedy." Two politicians from the US and the UK, the authors of this article published in *The Guardian*, call on the UN Security Council to act in order to prevent a new humanitarian disaster, a decade after brutality in

Darfur began.

Pray

Pray for Bishop Andudu undergoing surgery in Denver today. (See above.)

Continuing prayers are requested for the Principal of Bishop Gwynne College in Juba, South Sudan: Joseph Taban Lasuba is in Nairobi recovering from surgery.

Also pray for an overwhelming response to the advocacy efforts detailed in these E-Blasts. (See last issue on March 7th as well as this one.)

Urge

Seriously consider going to the [Enough Project Advocacy event](#) in June. (See above.) Urge others to join you there, as well. Urge others to write letters to government representatives as outlined in the last E-Blast (March 7th). If you have not already done so, write your letter today.

Give

Give a modest amount today to further the work of AFRECS by becoming a member. (See [here](#) for how to join.)

Peace,
Ellen J. Hanckel, Editor

This bi-weekly Sudan update is from the American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan. You are receiving it because you are currently on an AFRECS listserv. Feel free to forward this newsflash to others who may find it helpful.