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Negotiation
Simulation



SUDAN: PEACE PROCESS

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LAWYERING PEACE

Sudan Peace Process

The purpose of this negotiation is to identify the challenges involved in setting up and carrying out a peace negotiation to end the ongoing conflict in Sudan. This negotiation has two distinct objectives. One is to negotiate the *design* of a peace process, and the second is to negotiate substantive issues that will arise during the peace negotiations.

Parties are encouraged to explore potential points of agreement or disagreement among the key negotiating parties. Through the simulation, participants will debate their positions, learn negotiation techniques, identify points of conflict, and discuss potential solutions.

Background

The conflict in Sudan has been marked by long-standing tensions and complex dynamics. One of the recent significant conflicts in the country was the Sudanese transition, which began in 2019 following the ousting of President Omar al-Bashir after months of popular protests. The transition aimed to establish a civilian-led government after years of authoritarian rule but faced challenges due to the involvement of various military and paramilitary groups.

The power struggle and violence between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a paramilitary group with close ties to the government, have been central to the conflict. In April 2023, Sudan experienced a devastating civil war that erupted between the SAF and the RSF. The conflict escalated as tensions between the two factions reached a breaking point, leading to fierce confrontations across various regions of the country. Efforts to find a peaceful resolution were hindered as both SAF and RSF remained adamant about their military positions, prolonging the conflict and perpetuating a cycle of

violence and instability in the region. Moreover, the conflict is marked by widespread atrocity crimes, being committed by both the SAF and the RSF.

All of Sudan's neighboring states, have a vested, and oftentimes competing, interest in the way in which the conflict is resolved. Moreover, the international community, broadly defined, also has a vested interest in peace and stability in Sudan.

According to most commentators, achieving lasting peace requires addressing the grievances of different groups, incorporating civilian perspectives, and finding common ground among the diverse actors involved in the conflict.

Parties

- Sudan Armed Forces (SAF)
 - Representing the interests of the Sudanese military, they prioritize national security and may be skeptical about civilian involvement in the peace process.
- Rapid Support Forces (RSF)
 - Representing a powerful paramilitary group with close ties to the government, their focus is on defeating the RSF and maintaining their new found political influence and control over certain natural resources.
- A civilian delegation
 - Representing the diverse interests of Sudanese civilians, they advocate for inclusion, justice, and lasting peace.
- Mediator (US/Saudi - led)
 - A seemingly impartial party working to facilitate dialogue and find common ground among the other three parties.

Time Allotted:

- Part 1: 90 minutes
- Part 2: 120 minutes

Instructions: Negotiations will occur between the civilians, the SAF, and the RSF. It is critical that you stick to the role you were assigned. Only address the issues set forth in this simulation. You may assume that other issues are on the agenda for a later session and will be addressed in subsequent negotiations. The delegations may communicate with each other or individuals from other delegations in written messages via WhatsApp or side-meetings at any time.

PART I

Agenda (*note: subject to adjustment*)

- Individual Delegation Meetings (20 minutes)
- Working Group Meetings (20 minutes)
 - Group 1: Venue and Timeline
 - Group 2: Civilian Inclusion
- Individual Delegation (15 minutes)
- Working Group Meetings (20 minutes)
- Plenary (15 minutes)

Issues

- Civilian Involvement: The degree of involvement and representation of civilians in the peace process.
- Venue for Negotiations: The choice of the location for the negotiations, which can impact the atmosphere and safety during the talks.
- Timeline for Negotiations: When to begin negotiations. The parties may have different urgencies and goals, leading to conflicts over the negotiation timeline.

Talking Points

SAF

Civilian Inclusion

- The SAF is the legitimate government of Sudan, and effectively represents the interest of its people.
- The SAF has widespread public support, and thus there is no need for a separate Civilian delegation.
- Express concerns about civilian involvement leading to potential chaos.
 - Acknowledge that civilian involvement could add complexity to the negotiations.
- Express reservations about civilian representatives lacking expertise in military and political matters.
- Point out security concerns for civilian delegates, especially if they come from areas with ongoing conflict.

Venue

- Prefer a venue in Sudan under SAF control; or in a location, hosted by an ally, such as Egypt

- Emphasize that the SAF is committed to restoring national security and stability through a Sudanese led process.

Timeline

- May be wary of engaging in negotiations as they fear being pressured into making concessions that could undermine their positions of power and influence.
- May point to past peace negotiations that failed to bring about lasting solutions, reinforcing their skepticism towards the efficacy of dialogue.
- To consider negotiations seriously, SAF would demand concrete security guarantees for their forces during and after the process to protect their interests and prevent potential retribution.
- May prefer to delay negotiations to attempt to win militarily first
 - Highlight the need for a swift resolution through military means to establish a stronger position in negotiations.
- May pursue a strategy that would delay negotiations, until after they achieve specific battlefield successes or gain significant leverage, which they believe would give them an upper hand in talks.
- SAF might stress their commitment to safeguarding Sudan's sovereignty and national security, seeing themselves as protectors of the state's integrity.

RSF

Civilian Inclusion

- The RSF has widespread public support in most of Sudan
- So-called civilians are likely SAF supporters, and not genuine representatives of the Sudanese people.
- Express reservations about giving civilians a prominent role in decision-making. Also express concerns about civilian representatives with potential diverging interests. However, recognize that excluding civilians could lead to grievances and potential spoilers to the agreement.
 - Consider the potential for building trust and reconciliation through engaging with civilian representatives.
 - Generally support the inclusion of civilians when speaking to the civilians, but seek to limit the actual level of engagement.

Venue

- Push for a negotiation venue under your control to ensure your interests are protected; or in a location, hosted by an ally, such as the United Arab Emirates.
- Highlight their role in maintaining order and stability.

Timeline

- May be interested in continuing military operations to weaken the opposition before negotiating. View a military victory as the primary means to secure their interests and maintain control.
- May be wary of engaging in negotiations as they fear being pressured into making concessions that could undermine their positions of power and influence.
- Emphasize that rushing into negotiations prematurely could lead to an inconclusive agreement, perpetuating the conflict and causing further instability.
- To consider negotiations seriously, RSF would demand concrete security guarantees for their forces during and after the process to protect their interests and prevent potential retribution.

Combined SAF and RSF notes on Civilian Inclusion

- **Negotiation Dynamics:** Adding more stakeholders to the negotiation table can complicate the process, making it harder to reach consensus and slowing down decision-making.
- **Lack of Expertise:** Civilians may not have the necessary expertise in complex political and military matters, potentially leading to challenges in negotiating technical aspects of the agreement.
- **Diverging Interests:** Civilian groups may have conflicting interests and demands, leading to internal disagreements amongst the civilian participants, that could obstruct the negotiation process.
- **Time-Consuming:** Engaging civilians in the peace process may require additional time and resources for consultation and consensus-building, potentially prolonging the negotiations.
- **Lack of Coherence:** Without a unified civilian voice, representing all civilian interests can be difficult, leading to fragmented positions that may weaken their impact in the negotiations.

Civilians

Civilian Inclusion

- **Representing Diverse Perspectives:** Civilians bring diverse experiences and perspectives, reflecting the concerns and aspirations of various societal groups. Their involvement ensures a more comprehensive understanding of the conflict's root causes and potential solutions.
- **Sustainable Peace Agreement:** Including civilians in the peace process can lead to a more sustainable and lasting agreement. Addressing the grievances and needs of the affected population increases the chances of successful implementation and long-term stability. Inclusion of civilians can lead to the

identification of underlying grievances and foster long-term reconciliation and stability.

- **Legitimacy and Inclusivity:** Involving civilians enhances the legitimacy of the peace process. An inclusive negotiation process helps foster a sense of ownership among the broader population, making the resulting agreement more widely accepted. Excluding civilians could lead to grievances, resentment, and potential spoilers to the peace agreement.
- **Local Knowledge and Solutions:** Civilians possess local knowledge and insights into the conflict's dynamics, which can be invaluable in finding contextually appropriate and effective solutions to address underlying issues. Engaging civil society can strengthen the peace process by tapping into local expertise and grassroots efforts for peacebuilding.
- **Building Trust and Reconciliation:** Engaging civilians can facilitate trust-building between conflicting parties. Civilian participation in peace talks demonstrates a commitment to addressing their concerns, promoting reconciliation, and healing societal divisions. Civilians are the most affected by the conflict and their perspectives and needs must be included in the peace process
- **Enforcement:** When civilians are part of the agreement, they may exert pressure on the parties to uphold their commitments.
- **Transitional Justice and Human Rights:** Including civilians allows for the discussion of human rights violations and the pursuit of transitional justice, providing an avenue for acknowledging past atrocities and seeking accountability.
- Different societal groups, including women and marginalized communities, must have a seat at the negotiation table to voice their concerns and aspirations.

Venue

- May push for a neutral and secure venue to ensure fair participation.
- Address security concerns for civilian representatives and request appropriate safeguards during the negotiations.
- Recognize the complexity of political and military matters and express the willingness to work collaboratively with other parties.
- Internal tension point is that many of the elite political actors are outside of Sudan, while many of the local actors (some of which may have more political authority) are still in Sudan and it is difficult for them to leave Sudan for peace talks.

Timeline

- Insist on a comprehensive and thorough negotiation process, even if it takes longer. It is worth the time to come to a comprehensive peace agreement that addresses the root causes of the conflict.
- Start negotiations right away to stop the fighting
- Acknowledge that reaching consensus among different civilian groups may be challenging and time-consuming.

Mediator

Civilian Inclusion

- The mediator should actively encourage and facilitate the inclusion of civilian representatives in the peace talks.
- Ensuring a diverse representation will contribute to a more comprehensive and lasting peace agreement.
- Encourage all parties to recognize the benefits of civilian involvement in reaching a sustainable agreement.
- Advocate for the representation of diverse civilian perspectives to build trust and inclusivity.
- Emphasize the importance of addressing human rights violations and transitional justice in the agreement.
- Acknowledge the potential complexities arising from civilian involvement and help find ways to manage the process effectively.
- Offer logistical and security support to ensure the safety of civilian representatives during negotiations.

Venue

- Suggest potential venues and propose a balanced timeline that addresses urgent concerns.

Timeline

- Remind all parties of the importance of finding a sustainable and inclusive solution - most important
- Encourage compromise and open dialogue to build trust.
- Suggest measures to balance civilian inclusion with the need for expediency in the peace process.

PART II

Despite what occurred in Part I, imagine that civilians are included in the peace process, you are in an agreed upon venue, and negotiations are beginning now. There may still be a deep lack of trust between the SAF, the RSF, and the civilian delegation.

Agenda (*note: subject to adjustment*)

- Individual Delegation Meetings (15 minutes)
- Working Group Meetings (20 minutes)
 - Group 1: Disarmament and Demobilization
 - Group 2: Enforcement and Monitoring
- Individual Delegation (15 minutes)
- Working Group Meetings (20 minutes)
- Plenary (20 minutes)

Parties are the same. The three issues to be discussed now are disarmament, demobilization, and the establishment of peacekeeping forces.

Disarmament. Refers to the process of collecting, controlling, and reducing the possession of weapons by military forces, paramilitary groups, and armed civilians. It aims to create a safer and more stable environment by reducing the risk of armed confrontations and promoting the shift from a militarized society to one governed by rule of law.

Demobilization. The systematic disbanding of military and paramilitary forces, helping former combatants reintegrate into civilian life. It includes providing support for ex-combatants to access education, employment, and social services, reducing the risk of their re-engagement in violence.

Peacekeeping Forces. The establishment and operation of peacekeeping forces. The focus is on determining the composition, mandate, and rules of engagement for these forces to ensure effective peacekeeping and stabilization in the region.

Talking Points

Sudan Armed Forces (SAF)

Disarmament

- In the view of SAF disarmament should only applied to the RSF, and not to the national army.
- SAF opposes any disarmament of the national army, fearing that it could weaken their ability to respond to security threats and protect the nation.
- SAF can argue that their continued armament is essential for safeguarding Sudan's national security. They may highlight their role in countering external threats and internal security challenges to justify their unwillingness to disarm fully.
- The SAF can express reservations about the disarmament process due to a lack of trust in other armed groups' commitment to peace. They may raise concerns about potential rearmament or regrouping of armed factions if the SAF undertakes any meaningful Disarmament.
- The SAF can argue for retaining military strength to maintain control over security affairs during the transitional period. They may express reservations about delegating security responsibilities entirely to civilian institutions.
- If the staff is required to undertake any level of Disarmament, they will argue for a very gradual process of Disarmament, to ensure that they can meet any internal or external security threats that may arise in the short term.

Demobilization

- SAF might express concerns about the potential economic and social burdens of large-scale demobilization of the national army.
- The SAF can express concerns about the safety and protection of their personnel during and after disarmament. They might seek guarantees that their forces will not be targeted by other armed groups once they disarm.
- They may advocate for gradual demobilization while ensuring the reintegration of ex-combatants into society.
- SAF may be willing to agree to some minimal to moderate demobilization as it will likely not be able to afford to maintain a war time personnel roster.
- The SAF will want to complete the mobilization of the RSF, and or the integration of RSF forces fully into SAF units.

Peacekeeping Forces

- The SAF might support the deployment of a peacekeeping force but with a limited international presence.
- They may emphasize the primary role of SAF in maintaining national security, with peacekeepers in a supportive role and a limited mandate with a clearly defined end date.
- The SAF would seek to maintain a level of control or influence over the activities of peacekeeping forces.

Rapid Support Forces (RSF)

Disarmament

- RSF may be reluctant to disarm, as they wield influence and power through force. May also insist on maintaining their armed strength and resisting substantial disarmament and demobilization efforts.
- The RSF can emphasize their crucial role in conducting counterinsurgency operations against armed rebel groups in Sudan. They may argue that their continued armament is necessary to effectively combat threats to the country's security and stability, especially in regions like Darfur and the Two Areas where they have been actively engaged in military operations.
- The RSF can highlight their potential integration into the Sudanese military and assert that their status as a paramilitary force allows them to better respond to various security challenges. They might argue that disarmament could compromise their operational capabilities and hinder their ability to address security threats effectively.
- They could propose a phased disarmament plan that addresses concerns about their force's stability and security.
- The RSF can request clear incentives and guarantees for disarmament, including assurances about their future role in the security sector and the integration of their members into civilian life or other security institutions.

Demobilization

- The RSF is generally opposed to any significant demobilization.
- The RSF prefers to remain either as an independent military force, sanctioned by the government, or if it is integrated into the national army it should be integrated as a separate branch of the army, and maintain its command and control structure, independent from the command and control structure of the Sudanese Armed Forces.
- RSF may emphasize the need to consider their members' livelihoods during the demobilization process.
- The RSF can position themselves as protectors of communities and defenders of Sudan's national interest. They might argue that their armed presence is necessary to prevent criminal activities, safeguard civilians, and maintain territorial integrity.
- They might propose programs that facilitate the transition of their members into productive civilian roles.

Peacekeeping Forces

- The RSF is less opposed to the creation of a peacekeeping force than the SAF. They may advocate for a joint operation model where RSF works alongside peacekeeping forces.

- While they may appear open to the establishment of peacekeeping forces, the RSF would likely desire operational autonomy from the peacekeeping forces.
- They might suggest that peacekeeping forces concentrate their efforts in areas where the SAF maintains control with a more limited presence in RSF-controlled regions.

Civilian Delegation

Disarmament

- The civilian delegation would stress the importance of comprehensive disarmament to prevent violence and abuse of weapons.
- They would advocate for the inclusion of disarmament programs for armed civilian groups, ensuring that civilians also contribute to a safer society.
- May also push for complete disarmament and swift demobilization to reduce the militarization of society.

Demobilization

- The civilian delegation would highlight the importance of ensuring a well-structured and comprehensive demobilization plan.
- They would advocate for providing education, training, and employment opportunities for ex-combatants to reduce the risk of their involvement in criminal activities.
- The civilian delegation can express their willingness to actively participate in the state-building process and contribute to shaping the future governance structure. They may seek assurances that civilians will have a meaningful role in post-conflict command and control of the military.

Peacekeeping Forces

- The civilian delegation would stress the importance of a robust and impartial peacekeeping force with a substantial international component (and a robust mandate).
- They would emphasize the role of peacekeepers in safeguarding civilians and preventing human rights abuses.
- The civilian delegation would call for mechanisms to monitor the actions of peacekeeping forces and hold them accountable.

Mediator (US/Saudi-led)

Disarmament

- The mediator would emphasize the benefits of disarmament in building trust among parties and promoting a peaceful transition.
- They could propose the establishment of a neutral body to oversee the disarmament process and ensure its fair implementation.

- The mediator can work to address the SAF and RSF's security concerns related to disarmament. They may propose confidence-building measures and security guarantees to ensure the safety of forces during and after the disarmament process.

Demobilization

- The mediator would underscore the significance of demobilization in building a peaceful and inclusive society.
- They could propose international assistance to support the reintegration of former combatants into civilian life.

Peacekeeping Forces

- The mediator is unlikely to be enthusiastic about an international peacekeeping force, given the highly insecure situation in Sudan. The mediator may, however, be persuaded by the civilians of the essential nature of such a force.
- They may recommend a mix of international and local forces in the peacekeeping team for broader acceptance, with the majority of international forces coming from the western region of Africa.
- The mediator would likely advocate for a well-defined mandate that addresses key security concerns and peacekeeping objectives. They would encourage communication between peacekeeping forces and Sudanese parties to build trust.

Additional Resources:

- International Crisis Group
 - <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/sudan>
 - <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/sudan/b190-race-against-time-halt-sudans-collapse>
 - <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/sudan/war-sudan>
- Council on Foreign Relations
 - <https://www.cfr.org/sub-saharan-africa/sudan>
 - <https://www.cfr.org/blog/sudan-crisis>
 -
- Carnegie
 - <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/region/640>
 - <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/89736>
- PILPG Resources
 - <https://www.publicinternationallawandpolicygroup.org/sudan-foundational-documents>
 - <https://www.publicinternationallawandpolicygroup.org/pilpg-sudan-roundtables>