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Master's Thesis

Reintegration of Former Child Soldiers… A Global Challenge to Child Rights Realisation:

The Case of Sudan

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The hope for sustainable peace in the Sudan shimmers buoyantly in the smiles of her children.

Cit. Faith Miyandazi.

Abstract

The issue of child soldiers in contemporary times is overwhelming. It comes with incomprehensible consequences for those involved whether actively or passively. It is estimated that about 300, 000 children under the age of 18 are currently serving as child soldiers globally.[1] Africa has been hardest hit by this phenomenon with more than 120,000 children under 18 years of age currently participating in armed conflicts across the continent, some no more than 7 or 8 years of age.[2]

However, Africa is not the only continent where children are involved in armed conflict. Research has revealed that up to a forth of the 300,000 children are found in the East Asia and Pacific region and many more have served as soldiers in countries no longer facing armed conflict.[3]

Ongoing conflicts in various parts of the world continue to pose a danger to the recruitment of children despite international outcry and legal instruments that forbid the exercise. It is reported that military recruitment of children (under-18) and their use in hostilities still takes place in one form or another in at least 86 countries and territories worldwide.[4]

Despite the long period of conflict in the Sudan, the phenomenon of child soldiery has not sufficiently been delved into. Scholarly literature on the issue mostly covers African countries like Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Uganda (particularly northern Uganda), just to mention but a few. In the few occasions that Sudan is mentioned, it is to refer to various aspects of the conflict and usually the child soldier issue is pushed to the periphery.

In an attempt to cover this desideratum, this thesis examines the child soldier phenomenon in Sudan, particularly the reintegration of former child soldiers back into their respective

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[1] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Global Report on Child Soldiers: Global Report 2001* (London; United Kingdom: Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, April 2001) <http://www.child-soldiers.org/library/global-reports?root_id=159&directory_id=215> [accessed 18 July 2010]; UNICEF, *Adult Wars, Child Soldiers: Voices of Children Involved in Armed Conflict in the East Asia and Pacific Region* (UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, Thailand: United Nations Children's Fund, 2001), p. 8 <http://www.unicef.org/sowc06/pdfs/pub_adultwars_en.pdf> [accessed 19 July 2010].

[2] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, p. 14.

[3] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers; UNICEF, pp. 8-9.

[4] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 'Child Soldiers: Global Report 2008' (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers: London, 2003), p. 398 <http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/files/country_pdfs/FINAL_2008_Global_Report.pdf>.

communities. The thesis intends to examine different aspects of reintegration to provide in depth information on the process.

Specifically, it aspires to answer the question why the reintegration of former child soldiers in Sudan is basically failing when its success is so fundamental to the future of the country especially if peace has to prevail.

Zusammenfassung

Reintegration von Kindersoldaten – eine globale Herausforderung für die Kinderrechte: Der Fall des Sudans

Der Einsatz von Kindern und Jugendlichen in kriegerischen Auseinandersetzungen ist bereits für den dreißigjährigen Krieg belegt. Durch die Veröffentlichung von Bildern und Berichten des unfassbaren Leides, das vielen Kindersoldaten widerfahren ist, geriet dieses Thema erstmals in den 90er Jahren in den Blickpunkt der Weltöffentlichkeit und gilt heute als eine der extremsten Formen ausbeuterischer Kinderarbeit[5]. Trotz internationaler Proteste und eindeutiger Rechtslage werden nach wie vor Kinder für kriegerische Handlungen von regulären oder nichtregulären bewaffneten Gruppen rekrutiert und an der Waffe ausgebildet. Schätzungen zufolge sind zurzeit circa 300.000 Kinder und Jugendliche, die das achtzehnte Lebensjahr noch nicht erreicht haben, unter Waffen in Konflikte involviert;[6] wobei die Zahl derer, die auf Reintegrationsmaßnahmen angewiesen sind, sehr viel größer ist. Dazu gehören vor allem ehemalige Kindersoldaten, die entweder das achtzehnte Lebensjahr überschritten haben, oder aber nicht länger an Konflikten beteiligt sind.

Obgleich Afrika nicht der einzige Kontinent ist, in dem es zu Rekrutierung von Kindern kommt, __ ist er doch von dieser Problematik am stärksten betroffen. Etwas weniger als die Hälfte aller Kindersoldaten weltweit befinden sich in Afrika (ca. 120.000)[7]. Die meisten Kinder werden aus kriegstaktischen und finanziellen Gründen zwangsrekrutiert; jedoch schließen sich vor allem Jugendliche auch freiwillig einer bewaffneten Gruppe an, die vermeintlichen Schutz, Zugehörigkeit und eine Stärkung des Selbstwertes durch Macht verspricht. Begünstigt wird dieser Umstand durch

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[5] International Labour Organisation (ILO), 'Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182)' <http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/appl-displayConv.cfm?conv=C182&hdroff=1&lang=EN> [accessed 20 July 2010].
[6] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers; UNICEF, p. 8.
[7] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 14.

Faktoren wie extreme Armut, ___ Tod der eigenen Familie und/oder die Zerstörung des eigenen Dorfes.

Die Rekrutierung von Kindersoldaten speziell im Sudan wurde trotz des dort langanhaltenden Bürgerkrieges bis heute nicht hinreichend untersucht. Die wissenschaftliche Literatur befasst sich hauptsächlich mit afrikanischen Ländern wie zum Beispiel Sierra Leone, Liberia oder der Demokratischen Republik Kongo. In der vorliegenden Arbeit wird der Versuch unternommen, dem Desiderat einer näheren Erforschung der Kindersoldaten im Sudan Rechnung zu tragen. Insbesondere soll die Frage geklärt werden, weshalb Versuche zur Reintegration von Kindersoldaten scheiterten.

Im Gegensatz zu früheren Kriegen, die zwischen souveränen Staaten um die Ausweitung oder Verteidigung der Landesgrenzen geführt wurden, ist die Mehrzahl der Konflikte des 21.Jahrhunderts innerstaatlich. Diese Konflikte sind kennzeichnend für einen zerfallenden Staat - mit Gruppen unterschiedlicher Identitäten - in dem das Gewaltmonopol nicht länger gewährleistet werden kann. Im Verlauf eines solchen Konfliktes erlischt die staatliche Macht zusehends. Das staatliche Gewaltmonopol wird von Privatarmeen verdrängt und es entstehen kriegsökonomische Strukturen, bei denen sich diese Armeen durch den Verkauf von Rohstoffen finanzieren.

Wie die meisten afrikanischen Länder befindet sich auch der Sudan in einer postkolonialen Krise. Die lange Zeit der Akkulturation an fremde Normen und Gebräuche, sowie die teilweise willkürliche Festlegung der Landesgrenzen, welche auf ethnische Gruppen wenig Rücksicht nahm, erschwert die kulturelle Identitätsfindung des Landes. Nach seiner Unabhängigkeit im Jahre 1956 rutschte der Sudan in einen Bürgerkrieg. Die im Süden beheimateten schwarzafrikanischen Ethnien, größtenteils Dinka, Schilluk und Nuer, fühlten sich gegenüber dem moslemisch-arabisch geprägten Norden benachteiligt und forderten machtpolitische Gleichberechtigung und im laufe der Zeit einen unabhängigen Süd-Sudan. Seit seiner Unabhängigkeit befand sich das Land 26 Jahre lang im Bürgerkrieg. Das durch die ägyptische und britische Kolonisation noch immer geprägte politische Denken, die Unterstützung des Nord-Sudans durch die USA und die Unterstützung des Süd-Sudans durch die Sowjetunion während des Kalten Krieges, Bestrebungen des Nordens zur massiven

Islamisierung des Landes, zahlreiche ethnische Konflikte vor allem im Süden und nicht zuletzt das ökonomische Interesse an dem Zugang zu Ressourcen erhalten den Konflikt seit der Unabhängigkeit mit unterschiedlicher Intensität aufrecht. Die Unterzeichnung eines umfassenden Friedenabkommens (CPA) zwischen Khartum im Norden und der SPLM im Süden am 9. Januar 2005[8]__ beendete vorläufig den langen Konflikt zwischen Nord- und Süd-Sudan.

Die hohe Zahl der Kindersoldaten im Sudan, zeugt von der großen Intensität des Nord-Süd-Konfliktes. Kinder werden sowohl von staatlicher als auch von nichtstaatlicher Seite für Kampfeinsätze rekrutiert. Die Rekrutierung wird oftmals begünstigt durch die persönliche Situation des Kindes – Armut, Heimat- und Familienlosigkeit oder das Bedürfnis des Kindes nach Schutz oder Rache können hierbei eine entscheidende Rolle spielen. Die Zwangsrekrutierung findet vor allem aus kriegstaktischen und finanziellen Gründen statt. Für Kinder werden weniger Verpflegungs- und Materialkosten benötigt und sie lassen sich leichter manipulieren. Durch brutalen militärischen Drill sowie ideologische und religiöse Indoktrination werden die Kinder zu Soldaten ausgebildet, die blind ihrem Befehlshaber ergeben sind. Vor allem aber die lange Dauer des Konfliktes lässt die Zahl der Kindersoldaten wachsen. Mit der Zeit entwickeln sich kriegsökonomische Strukturen. Viele kennen nur das Leben des Kriegs- und Krisenalltags, und durch die auszehrenden Jahre des Bürgerkrieges fehlt es an erwachsenen Rekruten. Der technologische Fortschritt bringt außerdem massive, leichtgewichtige und leicht zu handhabende Waffen hervor, deren Bedienung auch für Kinder möglich ist.[9]

Der Konflikt im Sudan könnte jederzeit wieder aufflammen. Die ethnischen, kulturellen, religiösen und politischen Unterschiede zwischen den einzelnen Gruppen bestehen weiterhin. Auch wenn bewaffnete Konflikte weitgehend ausbleiben sollten, steht das Land vor großen Herausforderungen. Die Reintegration der Kindersoldaten ist eine von ihnen.

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[8] Government of the Sudan (CPA), 'The Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/ Sudan People's Liberation Army' <http://unmis.unmissions.org/Portals/UNMIS/Documents/General/cpa-en.pdf> [accessed 18 July 2010].
[9] Diese nach wie vor weit verbreiteten Kleinwaffen sind ein Überbleibsel aus der Zeit des Kalten Krieges, in der sie den jeweiligen Konfliktparteien von den Großmächten geliefert wurden.

Einen Ansatz zur Reintegration der Kindersoldaten bieten die sogenannten DDR-Programme (Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration), die in drei aufeinander aufbauende Maßnahmen gegliedert sind:

1. Entwaffnung: Einsammeln von Waffen im Konfliktgebiet, mit anschließender Verwahrung oder Zerstörung der Waffen

2. Demobilisierung: begleitete und kontrollierte Entlassung der Kindersoldaten aus den bewaffneten Gruppen

3. Reintegration: Rückkehr und Wiedereinführung der Kinder in ihre Familien und das zivile Leben

Zusätzlich ist für die Kinder eine Traumabehandlung existentiell.

Oft werden lokal übliche Rituale zur Reintegration der Kinder in die Gemeinschaft durchgeführt. Wie zum Beispiel bei dem Stamm der Dinka Bahr el Ghazal. Das Ritual, bei dem ein Huhn, eine Ziege oder ein Stier geschlachtet wird, wird von einem „Speermann" (beny bith in Dinka) geleitet. Das Kind soll dabei von den Geistern der Toten gereinigt werden, die es im Kampf auf sich geladen hat und die Gemeinschaft vor dem Zorn der Geister schützen.

Rituale zur Aufnahme von ehemaligen Kindersoldaten sind hilfreich. Sie haben einen emotionalen und psychologischen Effekt, und die Kinder fühlen sich zugehörig und aufgenommen in die Gemeinschaft. Die Erfahrung hat jedoch gezeigt, dass Rituale allein nicht ausreichen das Leben eines Kindes vollständig zu stabilisieren. Zusätzlich müssen Berufs- und Bildungsmaßnahmen eine Zukunftsperspektive geben. In Schulen oder Ausbildungsstätten erfahren sich Kinder als Teil der Schülergemeinschaft und werden zusätzlich sozial stabilisiert. Sie bekommen die Chance persönliche Talente und Fähigkeiten kennenzulernen und zu trainieren, was auch das Selbstwertgefühl steigern kann.

Im Sudan fehlen derartige Bildungseinrichtungen weitgehend und die Kinder werden mit ihrer Situation oft allein gelassen. Viele schließen sich Banden an, flüchten sich in Drogen, werden kriminell oder prostituieren sich. Der noch immer anhaltende Konflikt in Darfur, im Westen des

Sudans, macht diese ehemaligen Kindersoldaten extrem anfällig für eine erneute Rekrutierung durch irreguläre bewaffnete Gruppen.

Die Reintegration der Kindersoldaten ist eine der Voraussetzungen für ein Ende der Gewaltspirale im Sudan.

Statement of Purpose

This research has selected Sudan as the object of study, neither because of it's proximity to my country of origin – Kenya, nor because I lived and worked there, but because relevant literature on the country has not comprehensively explored the issue of child soldiers. The fact that the country has suffered internal conflicts for more than two decades only goes to show how profound an exploitation, in social, political, economic and even human rights terms it has faced.

That children were used in the Sudanese civil wars is a fact that cannot be ignored and their reintegration provides a good entry point to explore the challenge of peace building in "post-conflict"[10] Sudan.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed on 9 January 2005, officially ended the conflict between the government, based in the country's northern town of Khartoum and rebel groups in the southern part, largely dominated by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). The signature of the CPA brought with it the challenge of rebuilding the country's much-destroyed infrastructure, an onerous challenge in this day and age.

So enormous is the burden of reconstruction that Sudan alone cannot adequately deal with it given the paucity in its resources. The challenge then becomes global and includes local, regional and international actors, hence the global perspective of this research.

Child soldiery being an equally new but widespread phenomenon in the international front and scholarship as well, makes it an interesting but challenging topic to tackle. This paper aspires to contribute to existing literature not only by attempting to cover the lacuna created by the non-representation of Sudan, but also to bring to the fore the child soldier phenomenon in the country through the lens of reintegration of former child soldiers and its challenges.

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[10] It is difficult to talk of a wholly post-conflict Sudan as Darfur is still engulfed in active conflict. However, post-conflict in the case refers to the fact that the larger part of the country is not involved in active conflict as this was brought to an end by the signature of the CPA in 2005.

I wasn't a boy. I was a soldier, and at night my dreams haunted me more than they ever had. I missed my AK-47 and wanted a pistol to keep me safe.

Emmanuel Jal, former Sudanese child soldier.[11]

[11] Emmanuel Jal, *Warchild: A Boy Soldier's Story* (Little, Brown, 2009), p. 188.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABC – Abyei Boundaries Commission

ACHRPs – the African Charter on Human and People's Rights

ACRWC – the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

ACT – the Action Plan Project for Children in Armed Conflict

AI – Amnesty International

AP(s) – Additional Protocol(s)

AU – the African Union

CAR – Central African Republic

CPA – Comprehensive Peace Agreement

CRC – the Convention on the Rights of the Child

DDR – disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration

DPA – Darfur Peace Process

DRC – the Democratic Republic of Congo

DUP – Democratic Unionist Party

GoNU – Government of National Unity

GoS – Government of Sudan

GoSS – Government of southern Sudan

HIV/AIDS – Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome)

ICJ – International Court of Justice

ICTR – International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

ICTY – International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

ICRC – the International Committee of the Red Cross

IDPs – internally displaced persons

IHL – International Humanitarian Law

JEM – Justice and Equality Movement

LRA – the Lord's Resistance Army

NCP – National Congress Party

NGEs – non-governmental entities

NGO – non-governmental organisations

NRA – National Resistance Army

NRDF – National Reconstruction and Development Fund

OAG – Other Armed Groups

OAU – Organisation of African Unity

PTSD – post-traumatic stress disorder

RC – Republic of Congo

RENAMO – Mozambique National Resistance

SAF – Sudan Armed Forces

SCA – Save the Children Alliance

SLM – Sudan Liberation Movement

SPLM/A – Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army

SSDF – South Sudan Defence Force

SSLM – Southern Sudan Liberation Movement

STDs – sexually transmitted diseases

TMC – transitional military council

UN – the United Nations

**UNICEF** – United Nations Children's Fund

US – the United States

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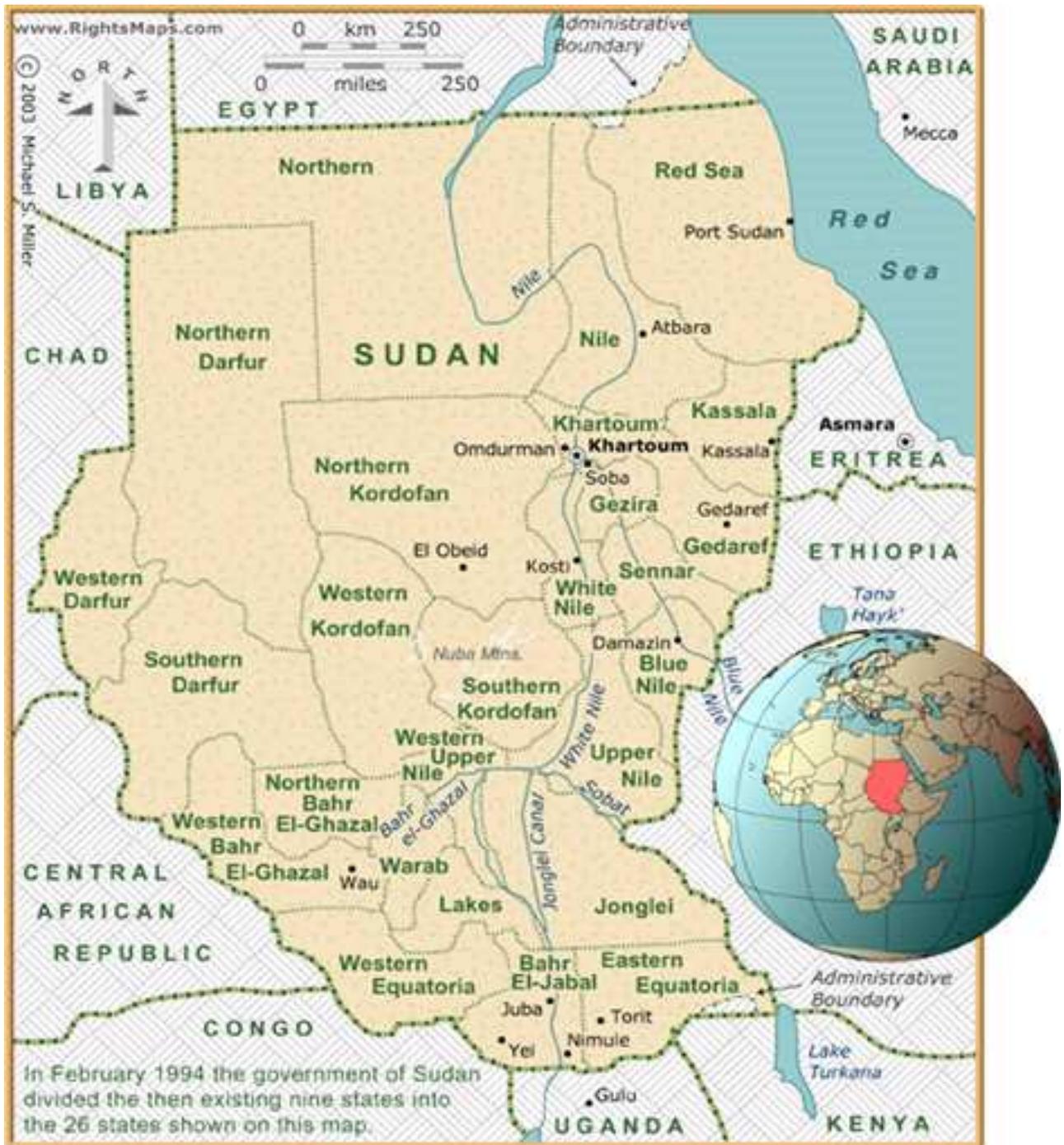
Figure 1: Map of the Sudan as at mid 2010

(Adopted from 'map of Oil and Human Rights,' Rightsmaps.com)[12]

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[12] 'Sudan overview map' <http://www.rightsmaps.com/html/sudmap1.html> [accessed 18 July 2010].

Chapter 1: Sowing Seeds of Conflict: Nature of the Colonial and Post-colonial Sudanese State

1.1 Bilad es Sudan: A Brief History of the Conflict in Sudan

The Sudan, Bilad es Sudan 'the land of the blacks', as was the name given to it by medieval Arabs to the negro belt which stretched across Africa from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, is a land with its own history.[13]

Since medieval times to date, the country has undergone numerous geographical and physical changes.

The country, as we know it today can be divided into four geographical regions; the northern plains, which mainly comprise desert rock and sand and which cover the largest area, and constitute a part of the Sahara desert, the northwestern corridor characterised by flat-topped hills and interrupted by steep-sided gullies and sand dunes, clusters of beehive-shaped hills dominate the central part of the country and lastly, the southern part which is largely a plateau, the eastern half of which is covered by massive mountains such as the *Immatong* range.[14]

Historically, Sudan has had two different imperial powers, Turco-Egyptian, as well as Anglo-Egyptian. It has had two periods of independence: first when the Mahdist state (1885-1898) is recalled and that since 1956 when Sudan attained its independence from the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium rule.

This research will capitalise on the period of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium of 1899-1956 and the developments thereafter that are believed to have intensified the Sudanese conflict.

Some reference will nonetheless be made to the Turco-Egyptian rule of 1820-1865 and the Mahdist Interlude of 1885-1898 to emphasise certain important points.

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[13] Anthony John Arkell, *A history of the Sudan: from the earliest times to 1821* (University of London, Athlone Press, 1955), p. 1.
[14] Catherine Jendia, *The Sudanese civil conflict, 1969-1985* (Peter Lang, 2002), p. 5.

1.1.1 The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium 1899-1956

Egyptian invasion of Sudan begun in 1820 and was intended to provide Egypt with a steady supply of gold and slave soldiers to sustain its military. The northern Sudanese people of Nubia, Kordofan and the Red Sea were the first to be conquered by the Egyptian army and to be coerced into collaboration with Egypt.[15]

Douglas Johnson informs us that this period marked the beginning of the North-South divide in Sudan and was characterised by the impoverishment of some areas of the northern Sudan through new forms of taxation and ownership which then contributed to the dramatic expansion of slavery and slave-owning. Within the structure of the Turco-Egyptian Empire, Muslims among the indigenous population benefited more than the non-Muslims.[16]

Slave raiding reached its peak in the South in the early 1870s during the Turkiyya (the Turco-Egyptian regime in Sudan) when the slave population in the North was drawn very largely from the South of Sudan and in the popular mind slaves and 'blacks' were synonymous[17].

The Mahdist state (1885-98), which overthrew the Turco-Egyptian regime built on a pattern of segregation between the people in the North of the country (henceforth, the North) and those in the South (henceforth, the South) already established by the previous Turco-Egyptian regime.

The Anglo-Egyptian "Condominium"[18] Agreement was signed in 1899.[19] By this Agreement, Britain and Egypt would share the governance of Sudan; the Governor-General, appointed and recalled by the Khedive (formally or informally used to refer to the Viceroy) of Egypt would be the chief administrator but only act on the advice of the British government.[20] Under the Condominium, Sudan was divided into provinces, their number and boundaries were changed over the years. Each was headed by a governor (*mudir*) answerable to the Governor-General through the various

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[15] See Douglas Hamilton Johnson, *The root causes of Sudan's civil wars* (James Currey Publishers, 2003), p. 4.
[16] Johnson, p. 5.
[17] Johnson, p. 6.
[18] A condominium it was but the British dominated over the Egyptians to the extent that it could be alleged that Sudan was under British rule rather than a Condominium.
[19] Peter Malcolm Holt and M. W. Daly, *The history of the Sudan: from the coming of Islam to the present day* (Westview Press, 1979).
[20] Robert O. Collins, *A history of modern Sudan* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), see p.33.

departments[21]. As stated above, southern Sudan had been neglected during the Mahdiyya, the Anglo-Egyptian administration followed suit and developed distinctly different patterns of governance in the South and in the North. For instance, there was a fairly quick transition from military occupation to civil administration in the North before World War One: civilian British officials replaced all military governors in the Northern provinces, and the police took over responsibility for rural security from the army.[22] However, the situation in the South was different as the Mahdists had had virtually no control over the region and there was no need therefore for the Anglo-Egyptian administration to wean people away from Mahdism by offering rewards for renewing their loyalty to the then government[23]. Douglas Johnson further points out two main reasons that contributed to a longer 'pacification' in the South than in the North, he argues: 1) that the Anglo-Egyptian government did not have to negotiate local alliances against a variety of competitors as it had done in the North; and 2) the re-established Governor-Generalate for the whole of Sudan, centred in Khartoum, was remote from the South in physical distance and in its guiding preoccupations.[24] Moreover, political management of Islam was the only policy available in northern Sudan, but in the South, even as the *jallaba* (Arab/s) continued to spread Islam, massive conversion proved impossible.

Seeking to build a bulwark against the spread of Islam, Sir Reginal Wingate the Governor-General of the Condominium (1861-1953) and his subordinates encouraged Christian missionaries to convert the southern Sudanese from their traditional religions to Christianity, teach them English, discourage the use of Arabic, and even prohibit the wearing of Arabic clothing.[25]

The Egyptian revolution of 1919 and subsequent negotiations reinforced Britain's strategic interest in the Sudan.[26] As a consequence of the revolution, British Officials firmly discouraged any recognition or expansion of the new educated class of Sudanese and instead proposed and encouraged a system of Indirect Rule whereby the functions of governance would not descend to

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[21] Holt and Daly, p. 122.
[22] Johnson, p. 9.
[23] Johnson, p. see. P 9; Holt and Daly, p. see P. 119.
[24] Johnson, p. 10.
[25] Collins, p. 35; Holt and Daly, p. 125.
[26] Holt and Daly, p. 130.

the educated Sudanese elite but be left to traditional tribal authorities with a British resident to advice them. This was intended to discourage resistance from the locals who then would not easily question rules brought forth to them.

In 1922, the government promulgated the Passports and Permits Ordinance, which declared much of the South Closed Districts.[27] Gradually, many more ordinances and regulations further segregating the North from the South were reinforced and slowly but surely, 'the combination of all these ordinances and rudimentary institutions to exclude Muslims and Islam from the South, while isolating Southerners themselves became known as the *Southern Policy*'[28]. Though the Southern Policy encouraged the use of English to replace Arabic, and Christian mission schools, it failed to eradicate northern influence entirely and produced understandable fears amongst the already existing northern intelligentsia of a plan to attach the South to East Africa, while it deliberately sought to avoid educational steps which might produce such intelligentsia in the South.[29]

In general, there had been little negative reaction among the Sudanese to the Egyptian revolution. The British Government interpreted that as being a sign of Sudanese desire to end Egypt's participation in the country. However, they were wrong as 'the first of a series of Sudanese political organisations to appear after the war (World War I) was the League of Sudan Union in 1920, which in its anonymous circulars took a decidedly anti-British position'[30]. For example, in 1922, an ex-army officer of Dinka origins, 'Ali 'Abd al-Latif, was arrested and imprisoned for submitting to the *Hadara* newspaper an article calling for 'self-determination of the Sudanese.'[31] After his release in 1923, together with several other government employees, he founded the White Flag League, ironically with Egyptian financial assistance.

Meanwhile, the colonial administration continued investing considerably in the political, economic, social and cultural development of the North hoping that they would agree to adopt Christianity among other things while the South remained subject to isolation and violence.

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[27] Collins, p. 41.
[28] Collins, p. 42.
[29] Peter Woodward and Murray Greensmith Forsyth, *Conflict and peace in the Horn of Africa: federalism and its alternatives* (Dartmouth Pub. Co., 1994), p. 84.
[30] Holt and Daly, p. 131.
[31] Holt and Daly, p. 131.

It is no wonder that the North was the main centre of Sudanese nationalism after the Second World War. This is seen in the way that, at the time of independence in 1956, the post of Prime Minister was held by Isma'il al-Azhari, "father of the new Sudan," a northerner although his tenure in office lasted just a few months.

1.1.2   Sudan after Independence

After independence (in 1956), the problem of segregation and underdevelopment of the South became apparent and there were numerous calls on the government to deal with the issue. Unfortunately, successive northern-dominated governments, both civilian and military were unsuccessful in handling the 'southern problem', ranging from neglect to attempts to reverse the British isolation by enforced Arabisation and Islamisation.[32] This only resulted to animosity and between the two regions and political resistance from the South. For instance, on 8 July 1965 northern troops at Juba went on Rampage and left hundreds of southern residents dead and whole sections of the town in ashes while on the 11th of the same month, a further mass killing of southerners occurred in Wau (presently a city in southern Sudan and the capital of west Bahr el Ghazal state. Refer to the map of Sudan above).[33]While the government reacted by restating its policy that lawlessness must be crushed and order restored, the Anyanya (a rebel group in the South, and later a generically used term to refer to southern armed resistance movement/groups) with arms acquired through the Congo and from other foreign sources, responded to the new government offensively causing atrocities all over the country.

Resistance continued until 1969 when on 25 May 1969, Colonel Ja'far Nimeiri took over the government of Sudan in a coup. The regime announced that it would follow a radical pan-Arab path, and imprisoned all the leaders of traditional parties except those of the Communist Party who declared their support for the regime.[34] The regime also sought to find a solution to the southern problem. To this effect an agreement between the government and the Southern Sudan Liberation

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[32] Woodward and Forsyth, p. 88.
[33] Holt and Daly, p. 187.
[34] Peter Woodward, *Sudan after Nimeiri* (Routledge, 1991), p. 45.

Movement (SSLM) was concluded in Addis Ababa in February 1972. The agreement, commonly known as the Addis Ababa Agreement, was incorporated into the constitution the following year. It, not only brought peace to Sudan (for a while), but , as a unique resolution to the civil war never before achieved in post-colonial Africa, brought great international acclaim to Sudan and its leaders.[35]

However, the agreement was seen as a failure by most southern Sudanese. For instance, there was a clear difference of understanding between the government and the SSLM delegations about the 'regional autonomy' then proposed for negotiation. 'Autonomy,' to the SSLM, meant federation, and they came (to the meeting in Addis Ababa) armed with a proposal for a full federal structure. Contrary to their expectation they were offered and accepted something far less in what became the Southern Regional Government.[36]

The Addis Ababa Agreement was neither popular in the North nor in the South.

In the North, politicians thought that the Agreement gave too many concessions to the South and were therefore against it. Those who detested it most were of course those who favoured an Islamic state, most pronounced were; the Umma Party, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), and the Muslim Brothers. These parties saw the Agreement, and the 1973 Constitution into which it was incorporated, as an obstacle to the creation of such a state.[37] It must be noted that most of these parties were deeply disappointed because they had been displaced by Nimeiri in the 1969 Coup.

In the South, southern leaders continued to be criticised by the people for accepting an agreement with poor terms. These, coupled with lack of commitment to the Agreement by northern parties and resistance from various political and armed groups in the North made Nimeiri's regime unpopular. Most visible opponents in the South then were the Anyanya.

The Anyanya, later, Anyanya-2, comprised of many guerrilla bands that operated in the south between 1980-3. In 1983, the ex-Anyanya-2 soldiers, the Sudanese Army Battalion members absorbed from the original Anyanya, commonly known as battalion 105 (which had its garrisons at

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[35] Johnson, p. 39.
[36] Johnson, p. 39.
[37] Johnson, p. 55.

Bor, Pibor and pochalla) merged under one Commander, John Garang de Mabior to form the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A).

Ideologically, the SPLM/A was from the outset radical and sophisticated. Though based in the South, it was not secessionist but stood instead for a notion of a 'new Sudan' in which there could be federalism or regionalism, just as long as central domination by a 'ruling clique' was prevented.[38] In this vein, one of their immediate problems was Nimeiri, and their strategy was to overthrow him. Acknowledging the physical and geographical interconnectedness between the south and the north, the movement called for a 'revolution' in the country rather than a separation of the two areas. In their manifesto,[39] they called for the redress of various issues among them, under-development or the so-called "problem of Southern Sudan," racism, tribalism and ethnicity.

However, the introduction of Islamic *sharia* law by the Nimeiri government in September 1983 created further unrest in the country particularly in the South where majority of them were non-Muslims. From then onwards through to 1985, there were massive anti-government demonstrations that the government could no longer contain.

Realising that the situation wasn't getting any better, the then commander-in-chief of the army, 'General Abdul Rahman Swar al-Dahab, eventually took control of the country as head of the Transitional Military Council (TMC) on 6 April, overthrowing president Nimeiri who was on a trip in the USA'[40].

In 1986, the first "democratic general elections" were held in Sudan with the Umma Party wining most seats in parliament, but could not form government on its own, so a coalition government had to be formed under the leadership of Sayyid Sadiq al-Mahdi. It was comprised of a new council of ministers majorly from the Umma Party, followed by the DUP (Democratic Unionist Party), and other smaller parties like the NIF (National Islamic Front, which later, in 1998 became National Congress Party (NCP)).

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[38] Woodward and Forsyth, p. 90.
[39] Johnson, p. 63.
[40] Woodward, p. 47.

The TMC handed over power to the coalition government soon after the elections. However, it is reported that between 1986 and 1989 the coalition government failed to address critical matters affecting the country then: the deteriorating economy, the on-going war in the South and the issues concerning sharia law among other things. To make matters worse, neither the (TMC) nor the subsequent elected government was able to reach a settlement with the SPLM/A leaving the southern problem unresolved.

On June 30 1989, a radical Islamic faction in the military took over in yet another coup. This time under the leadership of General Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir, whose Islamist policies have been said to have 'widened the cleavage with the SPLM-SPLA and sharpened the issues and options confronting the nation'[41].

From then on conflict pursued in Sudan especially in the South with the SPLA/M championing the notion of a 'new Sudan' on the one hand and the government and allied politicians in the North maintaining that 'Islam, the majority religion and Arabic the language of the Quran represent bases for the Country's nationalism and should define its legal, political and economic systems,'[42] on the other hand.

That is not to say that the conflict in Sudan has since then only been fought on these lines but as outlined above, on different, sometimes very distinct and controversial lines that are deep rooted in the country's history.

These conflicts were only brought to a halt in 2005 by the signing of the landmark Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) by the National Congress Party (NCP) officially headed by president Omar el Bashir (who is still the incumbent president of Sudan at the time of writing this thesis-2010), and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) headed by Dr. John Garang who passed on shortly after the signature of the agreement.

It is from this point in time that this research takes off as only after the signing of the CPA was there a permanent ceasefire in Sudan. With the presumption that after the CPA a large part of the

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[41] Francis Mading Deng, *War of visions: conflict of identities in the Sudan* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1995), p. 13.
[42] Ann Mosely Lesch, *The Sudan-Contested National Identities* (Indiana University Press, 1998), p. 113.

Sudanese territory was no longer in active warfare, this thesis aspires to delve deeper into the situation of former child soldiers and particularly their reintegration back into society after being demobilised from armed forces and rebel groups. It will also take into account their experiences in combat given the long period of conflict the country has experienced.

1.2 Relevance of History

The main aim of burrowing into the archives of Sudanese history is to locate this research in a historical context and to understand the root causes of conflict in the country.
This historical backdrop will be vital in understanding the point at which the conflict in Sudan is at presently in the theoretical discourse tackled in the following chapter.

A deeper look at the history of the country disapproves popular notion that the conflict there was between the Islamic north and largely Christian and animist south. As observed, there were many points of contention that brought about the conflict among them the neglect of the South in terms of development, segregation of the country and administering it as two separate blocks-North and South and the consequent encouragement of Christianity and the use of English in the South, while Islam and the use of Arabic remained dominant in the North. These are just a few of the main triggers of the conflict.

Quintessential to this thesis is the fact that some of these problems were conceived during the Turco-Egyptian period and passed down to the Anglo-Egyptian period of rule. So there is not only a conception of problems in the early colonial period but also fertile ground for their evolution and maturity which culminated into clear-cut differences between northern and southern Sudan in the later stages of the condominium in the early 1950s.

The independent Sudanese state, we may conclude, inherited a host of problems from the previous imperial powers. These problems were not only characterised by the North-South divide but also by administrative shortcomings. The Anglo-Egyptian rule, dominated by the British was essentially a military-administrative unit which relied heavily on police forces to ensure order is maintained. Administration also followed a system of dictatorship where oppressive rules and

ordinance were put in place for the subjects to follow without question. This is one reason why British administrators forged for the exclusion of the Sudanese elite class and preferred local "uneducated" leaders whose capacity to question their authority was negligible.

Against this backdrop, the post-colonial state had to face numerous issues, most of which were alien in nature hence failure of successive governments to resolve fundamental and contentious issues in the country. The result of this negligence was a dilemma in governance that slowly led to massive dissatisfaction and ultimate civil war in Sudan.

The length of time the civil war has lasted is also imperative to this paper as it emphasises the constant demand for combatants and in cases where adults combatants were 'lacking in supply' then child soldiers were used in their stead.

Noteworthy is also the point that dialogue between northern and southern elites failed to work because both sides held strong to their beliefs and a compromise was difficult to find in the aftermath of independence. The South took to arms in what could be seen as a last desperate resort to have its voice heard.

1.3 The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)[43] at a Glance

The CPA, signed in 2005, provided for a six-month pre-interim period followed by a six-year interim period during which the NCP and the SPLM/A would share power. At the expiry of this period, a referendum would take place to give a chance for southern Sudan to vote on self-determination. The referendum is expected to take place next year (2010).

In the interim, the CPA established a transitional government of national unity (GoNU) based in Khartoum and a semi-autonomous government of southern Sudan (GoSS) based in Juba.

The CPA also provided that the national and southern governments would share power, wealth and resources but would maintain separate constitutions, armies, budgets and laws. It therefore required that armed groups either join the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) or the SPLA by 2006. To this effect, a declaration on unity and integration was signed in Juba in 2006 between the SPLA and the

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[43] Government of the Sudan (CPA).

South Sudan Defence Force (SSDF), which was mostly comprised of southern Sudan militias previously backed by the Khartoum government to help reintegrate combatants in the south. However reports indicate rising tensions as the integration process is still incomplete.

Funds for development would also be availed by GoNU and the areas most hard hit by war would be prioritised. In allocating the funds to the war-affected areas and least developed areas, the National Reconstruction and Development Fund (NRDF) would use the effects of war and level of development as the main criteria. Those areas singled out include Southern Kordofan/Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile.

In the oil-rich area of Abyei, the CPA provided it special status. The CPA, in the Abyei Protocol, provided for shared governance, an interim oil-revenue sharing plan and a chance for the region to decide on whether to join what might be an independent southern Sudan in the 2011 referendum. Regrettably, it is reported that in 2005, in violation of the CPA, the NCP rejected the Abyei Boundaries Commission (ABC) report[44] on the demarcation of the region.

Despite signature of the CPA and the consequent permanent ceasefire and peaceful dialogue in the country, violence continued in Darfur. To date, the government has failed to stop the violence in the area, largely because it is involved in it and its impartiality compromised.

The division in provisions provided for in the CPA (between north and southern Sudan) has been taken note of in this paper. However, the time period in question (2005-2010) is one in which the NCP and the SPLM share power under a united government of national unity hence one Sudanese government and therefore one country-Sudan, as is implied in this paper.

Accordingly, this paper will examine the child soldier phenomenon in the context of Sudan, combining elements of the issue from both the northern and southern parts in one melting pot it recognises as the Republic of the Sudan, the Sudan or just Sudan. Specifics of the CPA relating to children, particularly child soldiers will be tackled in chapter 4 below.

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[44] 'Sudan Open Archive - Abyei Boundaries Commission Report' <http://www.sudanarchive.net/cgi-bin/sudan?e=--
----1025-10-1-0-&a=d&d=Dl1d18.3> [accessed 20 July 2010].

Chapter 2:   Theoretical Discourse and Methodological Scope

2.1   Theoretical Background

2.1.1   Conflict Resolution/ Post-conflict Peace Building

Internal (intra-state) conflicts as opposed to external (inter-state) conflicts have been a major occurrence in Africa in the post-cold war era. So numerous are these conflicts in the continent that some scholars ask whether violence is inevitable in Africa.[45]

Nevertheless, it is only fair to note that the number of armed conflicts in Africa has greatly reduced in recent times – for instance between the year 2000 and 2002, it is reported that there were 18 active wars in the continent. As of February 2008, there were only 5 active wars and armed conflicts ongoing in the continent: Sudan (Darfur region), Kenya (post-election violence between December 2007 and February 2008), Somalia (excluding Somaliland), DR Congo (eastern region) and Chad.[46]

Sudan provides perhaps the worst example as it has suffered several internal conflicts for about twenty one years after its independence. The big question we need to ask here is what the term conflict really means?

Johan Galtung defines conflict as 'an action-system with two or more incompatible goal-states,'[47] whereby an action-system refers to a system of actors.

More specifically conflict can be understood as a situation in which two or more actors, who interact with each other, pursue incompatible goals, are aware of this incompatibility, and claim to be justified in their pursuit of their particular course of action.[48]

War, on the other hand, refers to international and internal armed conflict and situations of militarised violence that may amount to *de facto* armed conflict. Given that the conflict in Sudan was internal, it qualifies to be called a civil/communal war. As a matter of fact most Sudanese refer to

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[45] Ulf Engel, Patrick Chabal and Annamaria Gentili, *Is violence inevitable in Africa?: theories of conflict and approaches to conflict prevention* (Brill, 2005).
[46] David J. Francis, *Peace and conflict in Africa* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2008), p. 8.
[47] Johan Galtung, 'Journal of Peace and Conflict Research', Vol. 2 (1965), 348-397.
[48] Ulrich Schneckener and Stefan Wolff, *Managing and settling ethnic conflicts: perspectives on successes and failures in Europe, Africa and Asia* (C. Hurst & Co. Publishers, 2004), p. 1.

the conflict or civil war that took place in their country simply as 'the war'. In the same vein, this paper shall use the terms war and conflict interchangeably to refer to one and the same thing in the Sudanese context. Talking of war in its strict sense of ongoing militarised violence, then we are talking of a period of violence in Sudan that started in the early 1980s and ensued through to the year 2005 when the CPA was signed.

Though the Sudanese conflict had many actors, pursuing various goals, sometimes even deemed noble in each actors ayes, two major ones can be singled out: the Government of Sudan (GoS), based in the northern part of the country on the one hand and the SPLM/A mostly based in southern Sudan on the other (refer to map of Sudan above for details on the geographical demarcation of the country).

To better understand the nature of conflict in Sudan we may categorise it in one of the types of internal conflicts discussed by Oliver Furley. He identifies five types of domestic political conflicts:

1. Elite Conflicts. These are said to be between old guard politicians and younger technocrats; between ideologists and bureaucrats and between party functionaries and civil servants. The objective, in such cases is to alter the uses of state power.[49]

2. Factional conflicts. These can be organised by elites but reach down to a variety of social groups involving regional and ethnic inequalities, where mobilisation in the conflict may be based on appeals to ethnicity or class.[50]

3. Communal conflicts. These are said to involve a threat to the state by a subgroup, which as a secessionist movement or civil war, often involves external support, or it may transform itself into a guerrilla struggle or even alternate between periods of violence and political negotiation. From the history of Sudan above, it is clear that the conflict in the country falls into this category. The subgroup in the case of Sudan can be assumed to be the SPLM/A which declared war on the state, in this case the government of Sudan.

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[49] Oliver Furley, *Conflict in Africa* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1995), p. 5.
[50] Furley, p. 5.

4. Mass conflicts. These are those conflicts where political movements call for a complete revolution and change in the power structure. These are rare and have only occurred so far in Africa, as in the Ethiopian revolution of 1974.[51]

5. Conflicts against existing patronage networks. Here, political protest are made against existing networks of patronage that exclude large numbers among whom resentment results in combining together to confront the regime, often with outbreaks of violence.[52]

Having categorised the conflict in Sudan as a communal one, then we might as well go further and situate the warring parties in two categories mentioned. The government in the north on the one hand, championing the idea of a Sudan unified under Islamic sharia law (for instance), and the SPLM/A as a 'secessionist' movement revolting against the governments ideals and instead forging for the notion of a 'new Sudan' free from racism and ethnicity among other freedoms, on the other hand. Here, we have two parties within a state that are seen to be pursuing incompatible goals, hence conflict, specifically a communal (or civil) conflict.

Conflicts, depending on their types can either be short or last long. The latter is the case of Sudan. For a conflict to end several factors must converge. Wallesteen points out seven distinct ways in which parties can resolve their incompatibilities:

1. A party may change its goals - that is, shift its priorities. The chances of this happening are very dismal since most parties hold strong to their beliefs and priorities. This was the case in Sudan especially in the immediate aftermath of independence and many years after when northern and southern elite could not reach an agreement on resolving the ideological and developmental differences in the country. However, a party can display a shift in what it gives highest priority to and this may open way in which the other side can reciprocate.[53]

2. The parties stick to their goals but find a middle point at which resources can be divided or shared. Dominant perceptions refer to this as the main form of compromise but as Wallesteen indicates, it is only one form of compromise. The essence is not that parties surrender their

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[51] Furley, p. 5.
[52] Furley, p. 5.
[53] Peter Wallensteen, *Understanding conflict resolution: war, peace and the global system* (SAGE, 2007), p. 51.

goals and priorities but that they meet at a point of symbolic meaning to all of them.[54] Here caution needs to be taken so that no part feels left out or having taken a raw deal. It is important therefore that change by one side (say change by the government of Sudan) be coupled to change by the other side (say change by the SPLM/A).

3. *Horse-trading.* This involves meeting the demands of one party on one or more issues, while fulfilling those priorities of the other party on other issues. In horse-trading, for instance when it comes to matters of territory, the idea would be that one party, A, (take for instance GoS) takes area 1, (for example Omdurman, presently part of northern Sudan) and the other party, B, (for instance the GoSS) takes area 2, (for instance Juba, presently part of southern Sudan) although both of them have had demands on both areas. This can also be seen as a form of compromise but doesn't involve division as discussed above.[55]

4. Shared Control. A territory can be shared by being ruled as a condominium, where decisions require the consent of both parties.[56] A good example is the case of colonial Sudan where the British and Egyptians signed a condominium agreement in 1899 to share the governance of Sudan. As will be discussed later, features of this can also be seen in post-CPA Sudan where GoS is basically sharing the governance of the country with a SPLM.

5. Leaving control to an outside party. This means externalising control so that the warring parties agree not to rule the resources themselves.[57] This can be seen in light of former protectorates where colonial powers took over control of certain territories as protectorates. An example of this in the early period of colonisation would be Uganda which was considered a British protectorate. In recent years, the example of Bosnia-Herzegovina is also mentioned where in 1999 part of its territory-Kosovo was placed under international protection. This meant that neither the Yugoslav authorities nor the Kosovo Albanian representatives run the area; instead authority resided with the United Nations (UN) Commissioner for a given time.[58]

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[54] See Wallensteen, p. 51.
[55] See Wallensteen, p. 52.
[56] Wallensteen, p. 52.
[57] Wallensteen, p. 53.
[58] See Wallensteen, p. 53.

6. Possibility of resorting to conflict resolution mechanism, notably arbitration or other legal procedures that the parties can accept. This entails finding a procedure that can resolve the conflict according to some of the previously mentioned five ways, with the added quality that it is done through a process outside the parties: immediate control.[59]

7. Leave issues for later or to oblivion. The reasoning behind this argument is that some issues may gain from being delayed as their significance may pale or their symbolic characters may be reduced.[60] This strategy is also meant to avoid rushing to find solutions to all problems at the same but to give time to ponder ways forward for certain problems. What must be considered here is that there should be a second chance to bring up and tackle such issues and not to entirely throw them under the carpet.

Most of these aspects can be seen in one form or another when it comes to the Sudanese conflict resolution process which boiled down to the signing of the CPA.

Firstly, the agreement reached by Gos and SPLAM/A in 2005 was due to the fact that both parties reached, without surrendering all their goals, a middle ground and met halfway to agree to end the conflict in a peaceful manner this time. Signature of the CPA was a sign of both parties reaffirming and consolidating their commitment to what they had agreed upon.

Aspects of 'horse-riding' on a general level can also be observed in the fact that the northern part of the territory was put under the government of Sudan while the southern part under the SPLM/A which later formed the government of southern Sudan.

Shared control here is seen in the way that the CPA provided for a means of power- and wealth sharing between the contracting parties.

Therefore, the act of signing the CPA can be referred to as a quintessential component of peace resolution, a concept this paper uses as an entry point to exploring reintegration of former child soldiers.

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[59] Wallensteen, p. 53.
[60] Wallensteen, p. 54.

Wallesteen defines conflict resolution as 'a social situation where the armed conflicting parties in a (voluntary) agreement resolve to peacefully live with-and/or dissolve-their basic incompatibilities and henceforth cease to use arms against each other.'[61]

Johan Galtung refers to conflict resolution as a process that leads the action-system to a state where the system no longer has two or more incompatible goal-states. If we choose to understand conflict resolution as a *process* geared towards peaceful living then we might as well agree with Druckman and Diehl in equating conflict resolution to post-conflict peace reconstruction.

To them, post-conflict peace building is an inclusive term that involves efforts not only to maintain order but also, after a settlement is implemented, to increase cooperation among the parties to a conflict and to deepen their relationship by addressing the conditions that led to the dispute, fostering positive attitudes and allaying distrust, and building or strengthening common institutions and processes through which the parties interact.[62]

It is at this stage of conflict resolution/peace building that I believe reintegration should be located and which I situate the issue of reintegration of former Sudanese child soldiers in this paper.

A diagram is used to further elaborate on the characteristic features of this stage of conflict. The figure below depicts the full life cycle of a typical conflict and the level that conflict resolution occupies. Assuming that the conflict in Sudan underwent the periods of conflict indicated in this cycle, and that one process, in no particular order led to the development of the other, then we end up with a stage at the bottom left-hand side of the diagram, referred to as peace resolution or post-conflict peace building characterised by the signing of the CPA. In understanding this stage as part of a process of a large process of conflict resolution, we may divide and locate two different phases characteristic of the signing of the CPA as follows; 1) peace enforcement or conflict mitigation - illustrated by the fact that the CPA provided for a cease fire and opened up space for dialogue; and 2) peace keeping or conflict termination - indicated by the very fact that it ended the long civil war between the South and the North and made provisions for among other things, power-sharing and

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[61] Wallensteen, p. 51.
[62] Daniel Druckman and Paul F. Diehl, *Conflict resolution* (London, California and New Delhi: SAGE, 2006), II, p. 27.

wealth-sharing which qualify it as a form of settlement, a typical and vital characteristic/component of this phase of conflict.

In opting to locate reintegration at the post-conflict, peace building phase, I am not assuming that there is absolutely no conflict at this stage, as is evident in Sudan, there is still conflict in the country. As a matter of fact, 'all these levels (of peace and conflict, indicated on the right-hand, vertical axis of the diagram) involve some degree of conflict, but with significantly different levels of hostility, including violence'[63]. For this reason, each level, including that of conflict resolution, should be understood as referring to a sequence of goals each applicable to the conflict.
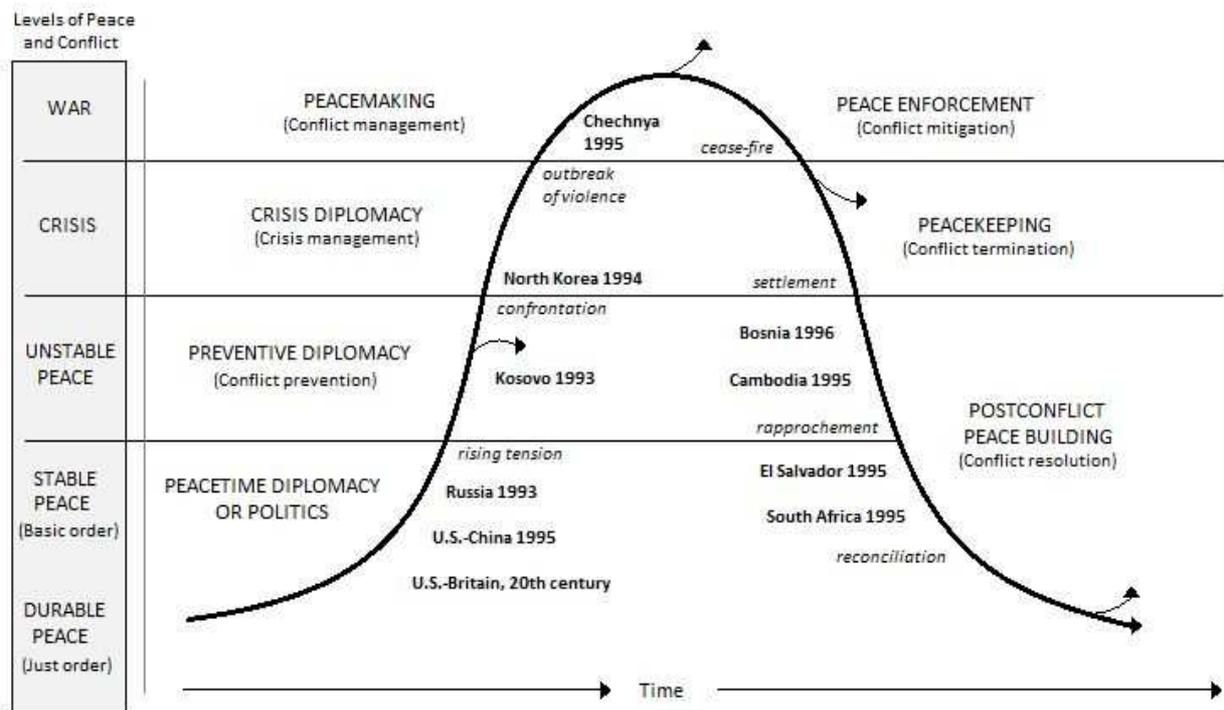
Figure 2: Life History of a Conflict. Adopted from Druckman D. and Diehl F. P, Conflict Resolution, Vol. II (London, California and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006), P.11.[64]

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[63] Druckman and Diehl, II, p. 10.
[64] The drawing was originally adopted from Michael S. Lund, Preventing Violent Conflicts: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996), p. 38.

In examining conflict, it is important to recognise that conflict resolution is that thin line between a narrow concept of peace (no war) and a very broad one (justice) as pointed out by Wallensteen. Therefore, conflict resolution should not be confused with conflict solution particularly in light of the conflict in Sudan. Galtung points out that what is characteristic of a 'solution' is that there is no more incompatibility. Literally speaking, this may be *prima facie* the perception of some in the outside world (those not familiar with Sudan), but it is **not** the case in Sudan. The (two) parties to the conflict reached a compromise but did not get rid of their incompatibilities. Optimistically, we may hope that the CPA, if well executed might, by intent or accident lead to a solution to the conflict in Sudan. The hope for a solution is nonetheless thinned by the fact that many controversial issues remain pending and the problem of Darfur is not yet resolved.

Even though conflict resolution is not the same as complete disarmament, it is probable that peace agreements (like that of Sudan) will only be durable if they result in some disarmament (like those exercises undertaken in the aftermath of the signing of the CPA to disarm and demobilise soldiers including child soldiers from armed zones and which are still underway), as well as changes in all security sectors aimed towards transparency, integrity and professionalism that includes safeguarding of human rights.[65] Particularly, disarmament and demobilisation need to be joined with reintegration and rehabilitation of soldiers, not least, child soldiers.

Imperative to post-conflict peace building is that all efforts are channelled towards maintenance of peace and preventive measure taken to remedy the situation from sliding back to "active-conflict." Reintegration and rehabilitation of former child soldiers is an imperative process at this stage. The reintegration of such children ensures that children are protected from participating in conflict, that they are slowly weaned to the norms of their respective societies and that they are provided with security by their families and government. Failure to successfully reintegrate such children, I argue and outline, in the coming chapters, upsets peace and creates insecurity as they are used to cause mayhem in society. For example, in Sudan, villages and warring communities use these children to raid and loot from neighbouring communities.

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[65] Wallensteen, pp. 10-11.

Even though disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes have become central efforts of peace building in post-CPA Sudan both by government and national and international organisations, these efforts have been marred with challenges that have largely stalled them.

In the few areas where the processes are still underway, progress is modicum and former child soldiers remain in Internally Displaced Persons' (IDPs) centres for a long time that some of them are re-recruited by armed groups in Darfur and neighbouring countries.

The effort of this thesis is to examine the process of reintegration of former child soldiers back into society and question why this process has so far not bore the fruits it intended in Sudan since 2005.

2.1.2   Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR)

DDR is a set of terms used by organisations and most post-conflict governments to refer to activities that involve programmes to help with the rehabilitation of 'ex-combatants' after the termination of a war or conflict. In this thesis, the terms will be used and understood in the context of disarming, demobilising and reintegrating former child soldiers.

1) **Disarmament** refers to the process of collecting small arms and light and heavy weapons within a conflict zone. It basically entails the collection of weapons, assembly of combatants and development of arms management programs, including their safe storage and sometimes their destruction. Disarmament is however not a prerequisite of demobilisation of children from armed forces and conflict zones since most of them do not carry their own weapons. *In casu* to Sudan, child soldiers are easily identified as they mostly carry their weapons with them and it is easier then to trace the barracks' that they're associated with. In the immediate aftermath of the war, it was common to see civilians, including children with guns. In that case, disarmament could be seen as a prerequisite to demobilisation or a condition that may necessitate (even though it may not necessarily lead to) demobilisation.

2) **Demobilisation** is the formal and controlled discharge of soldiers from the army or from an armed group. This is common after the signing of a peace agreement as in the case of Sudan.

During the demobilisation of children, basic information of their participation in armed conflict is collected in order to establish their level of participation. Personal information is also collected in order to determine the child's identity which will help in family tracing.

Demobilisation can also be informal. Informal demobilisation occurs when child soldiers escape from armed forces/groups or are released by their armed groups spontaneously or randomly as a result of advocacy pressures or other circumstances. The fact that southern Sudan passed a law that criminalised the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict (in the Child bill 2008)[66]; most commanders randomly release children from military barracks fearing criminal charges. As a result, such children do not get to be formally registered and are excluded in reintegration programmes-a factor that has dealt a hard blow to the reintegration of child soldiers in Sudan.[67] Informal occasions of demobilisation also include gaining the agreement of a particular armed group to release child soldiers during an ongoing conflict which has proved difficult in most conflicts[68]

3) **Reintegration** encompasses a long-term process that aims to give children a viable alternative to their involvement in armed conflict and help them resume life in the community. Elements of reintegration include family reunification (or finding alternative care if reunification is impossible), providing education and training, devising appropriate strategies for economic and livelihood support and in some cases providing psycho-social support. Psycho-social support include programmes that are devised to psychologically help the child come to grips with the realities of conflict and its aftermath, as well as help him/her become a social human being able to interact 'normally' with others and rejoin the community. What we may ask here then is what constitutes successful reintegration?

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[66] Government of Southern Sudan, 'The Child Act, 2008' (Ministry of Legal Affairs and Constitutional Development, by Order of the Government, 2008), The Southern Sudan Gazette No. 1 Volume 1 dated 10th February, 2009 <http://www.goss-online.org/magnoliaPublic/en/Laws--Legislation--Policies/mainColumnParagraphs/0/content_files/file13/16.pdf>.
[67] For more elaboration on the effects of lack of registration after demobilisation, see, United Nations Security Council-February 2009, *Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Sudan*, 10 February 2009, See note 11, http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/sgrep09.htm <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N09/233/88/PDF/N0923388.pdf?OpenElement> [accessed 18 July 2010].
[68] Beth Verhey, 'Child Soldiers: Preventing, Demobilising and Reintegrating' (World Bank, 2001), p. 6 <http://www.worldbank.org/afr/wps/wp23.pdf> [accessed 15 July 2010].

There are no specific laid down components to successful reintegration since each child soldier's experience is different and communal contexts after demobilisation vary from one country or society (society here referring to the people in a country) to the other. However, experience has shown that there are some fundamental indicators of successful reintegration, these include, *inter alia*;

a) Family reunification and acceptance as part of the family and larger community.

b) Effective psycho-social support.

c) Having appropriate opportunities for education and/training and a strategic source of livelihood.

Some human rights experts[69] categorise, and rightly so, such processes as psycho-social support as falling into a large framework of rehabilitation, which the child must undergo before they can be socially reintegrated back into societies.

Where as while in combat child soldiers can loot to survive, in 'normal life' they cannot loot with impunity. In a country like Sudan which is wallowing in poverty with high unemployment rates, where a large percentage of its population struggles to obtain the basics for survival, can we still talk of reintegration? Former child soldiers wonder, reintegration to what? To normal life where they might only face rejection, unemployment, lack of food, shelter and other basic needs? These factors complicate the issue of reintegration and call for thorough examination of the issue as well as a pragmatic approach to tackling the issue.

2.2 Hypothesis

In trying to understand the genesis of conflicts in post-colonial Africa, scholars have resorted to analysing colonial attitudes and governance structures, and comparing those to the nature and state of the immediate post-colonial state in order to find out whether there is a dichotomy that largely contributes to what most of them refer to as 'the crisis' of most colonised states.[70] From

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[69] Rachel Brett and Margaret McCallin, *Children: the invisible soldiers*, 2nd edn (Rädda Barnen Publishing, 1998), pp. 122-126.
[70] Naomi Chazan and others, *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*, 3rd edn (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999); Crawford Young, 'The African Colonial State Revisited', *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions*, 11 (1998), 101-120 <doi:10.1111/0952-1895.591998059>.

various analyses of the colonial state, scholars have come up with overwhelming factors and theories that explain the crises that most post-colonial states face.

This thesis maps out some of the arguments presented but is also careful to point out that not all 'crises' experienced in post-colonial states are as a result of colonisation but that some of those originate from within these states. The underlying aim here is to emphasise the quandary of the Sudanese state, a formerly colonial state, when it comes to handling the issue of rehabilitation and reintegration of former child soldiers.

A state in this sense being understood in Weberian terms as 'a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory'[71].

During the scramble for Africa, European powers partitioned territories without paying due regard to ethnic divisions in the continent. The colonial division of the continent was to make it easier for colonisers to manipulate the various peoples in order to ease governance. In the aftermath of African colonisation (around the period of 1960s) the Organisation of African Union (OAU) was concerned with this artificial partition of the continent but assumed that African nations would be more focussed on building their nations as one people and that ethnicity would not play a big role. This assumption was based on a rickety premise as today's independent African states are 'polyglot mixtures of cultural and linguistic groups'[72] that have proved superficially difficult to integrate and unite the continent.

In terms of governance many observers note that colonial administrations used a system of governance that emulated that in their home countries. For example, the British used a system largely based on the Westminster system of administration which ignored the traditional power structures already existent in most African societies.

In the case of Sudan, the condominium leadership relied heavily on civil leaders and on the police force making their administration militant and suppressive. After independence, (the period referred to here is that from the late 1950 to 1960s when most African countries regained their

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[71] Max Weber, *Politics As a Vocation* (Fortress Press, 2000), p. 1.
[72] Alfred G. Nhema and Tiyambe Zeleza, *The Resolution of African Conflicts: the Management of Conflict Resolution & Post-conflict Reconstruction* (Ohio University Press, 2008), p. 1.

independence) most African states based their institutions on more or less what had been created during colonisation. The need to review these structures or even to construct them a new, even though deemed imperative in those early years of independence was ignored. It was clear then that most independent states were mere replicas of the colonial state only with their national elites on the steering wheel. Why do I say this? Because when new African leaders took over power from colonial administrations, 'they were confronted with the paradoxical situation of having to operate with newly conceived pluralist institutions of alien derivation (alien because they were not founded within the national/local state regime and were therefore not tailored to enhance democracy but supression) (including parties and parliaments), whereas the bulk of their own political understanding had been modelled in a centralised and authoritarian colonial context[73]. Therefore, it was clear that 'the formal agencies transferred to African hands were thus alien in derivation, functionally conceived, bureaucratically designed, authoritarian in nature, and primarily concerned with issues of domination rather than legitimacy'[74].

Most measures taken to correct this misnomer incessantly failed as the wrong strategies and approaches were adopted. For instance, in Kenya the government resorted to enlarging government institutions like ministries in the façade that it would lead to shared responsibility and more ethnic representation when in reality, it was to ensure the government's domination which would as a result increase the possibilities that it stayed in power. Such maliciously calculated moves meant to benefit but a few, weakened state structures and made them futile. These weaknesses of states that began in the aftermath of independence largely created what is mostly referred to the "crisis of the African state." This crisis, I believe, is at the crux of most conflicts in the continent.

In contributing to the scholarly debate on the nature of the state in Africa, I argue in this thesis that the child soldier phenomenon in the continent and specifically in Sudan is better understood not only in the context of the crisis of the post-colonial state but the crisis of a post-

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[73] Chazan and others, p. 45.
[74] Chazan and others, p. 43.

conflict state as well. Here I mean that the post-colonial state in Africa is at cross-roads and that a post-colonial, post-conflict state like Sudan is at the epicentre of this crisis.

Evidence of this crisis can be observed in the brief history of Sudan above. We notice constant failure of successive governments in the post-colonial period to stop the divisions that were taking place then between the North and the South and among the Sudanese people. This systemic failure led to *en masse* dissatisfaction, in the country as a whole, which certainly culminated into revolts that led to the outbreak of the civil war in the 1980s.

These features are not only characteristic to Sudan but common to post-colonial African states.

In analysing the reintegration of child soldiers in Sudan therefore, the aim of this thesis is manifold; to show the complexity of the issue and the challenges facing it that would help in understanding why reintegration is continually failing; and to show the crisis of the post-colonial, post-conflict African state –a crisis that often manifests in ethnic conflicts over power and access to resources which inevitably 'leads to the proliferation of child soldiers not only because of the prevalence of civil conflicts (like that in Sudan) but also in failing to bolster education and employment opportunities for young people', in such cases 'children are rendered particularly vulnerable to recruitment by rebel movements and offered comparable opportunity, protection and gains by being members of armed groups'[75].

The period after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, is one that put an extreme amount of pressure on the government of Sudan; it saw the temporary division of the country into south and north; a coalition government that had to share resources and a country that had to rebuild its infrastructure a new and ensure that peace is maintained. As a result, the post-CPA Sudan is a state with diverse priorities. In trying to find its place, the government is in many instances, "lost" in what I call a priority-crisis, which tends to favour infrastructural development to

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[75] Jo De Berry, 'Child Soldiers and the Convention on the Rights of the Child', *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 2001, 92 -105 (p. 94) <doi:10.1177/000271620157500106>.

issues of human rights and child rights hence largely contributing to the failure of reintegration of former child soldiers.

The fact that Darfur (an area in western Sudan, refer to map of Sudan above) is still in conflict deals a bigger blow to Sudan and exerts more pressure to the "young" government as it has to mobilise resources to help stop the fighting in the area. The fact that the government is caught up in the conflict adds to the state-crisis. These factors largely divert the government's focus on more significant issues of peace building such as reintegration of former child soldiers. In shoving this problem to the side, as shall be outlined in the coming chapters, the government will have an even bigger problem to deal with in future as such children get involved in irregular vigilante groups, are involved in raiding villages, stealing and a host of other vices. They also constitute a large percentage of juvenile delinquents in the country.

Yet the worst effect of this neglect in Sudan is seen in the way that ex-child soldiers are being re-recruited by irregular armed groups in Darfur, Chad and in northern Uganda by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) where active conflict pursues.

Given the factors above, the reintegration of former child soldiers, its progress, challenges and mostly setbacks can better be understood through the lens of the crisis of post-colonial, post-conflict and even post-CPA Sudanese state.

This paper seeks to use this argument as a framework for analysing the reintegration phenomenon. This kind of premise also begs the question how can the government of Sudan best deal with the reintegration issue? I argue that given the widespread involvement of children in the war in Sudan and the limited capacity of the government, both in financial resources and child rights experience, reintegration of children becomes a global problem/issue. In not excusing the state for failing to realise successful reintegration of children, it is clear that the yoke of reintegration needs to be shared with other national, regional and international organisations (which largely comprise the international community) that have experience in dealing with the same in other parts of the continent and the world at large. Thus I will also take a global approach and examine the vitality of the role played by international organisations in Sudan when it comes to reintegration.

2.3   Methodological scope

This research is largely based on analysis of data, from first hand official and non-official documents. A number of primary sources are used e.g. the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of Sudan, the Constitution of Sudan as well as a host of other government documents. International legal instruments like the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Geneva Conventions etc, which Sudan is a signatory to, are also used in the analysis.

Vital to this research are also reports of national and international organisations working in Sudan, media reports and articles on the situation of child soldiers, magazines, online news sites and many other relevant materials. The bulk of the work will be composed of an analysis of data drawn from secondary sources namely relevant books, journals and academic papers.

My experience, having lived and worked in Sudan adds to the 'credibility' of the information given in the following chapters when it comes to accounting for certain cultural practices, daily lives of the people in the country and generally the situation of children particularly that of child soldiers in the country.

The periodisation used here is that starting from 2005, the time of the signing of the CPA to 2010 when the first 'democratic' general elections were held in post-conflict or post-CPA Sudan and a year before the much-awaited Sudanese referendum (in 2010) where the South will have the chance to decide on self-determination as espoused in the CPA.

For pragmatic reasons, interviews were not conducted as part of information gathering. Nevertheless, this hiatus has been catered for by the use of information obtained form different biographies of former child soldiers and 'credible' documents produced by local, national and international organisations working in Sudan and which have conducted interviews with child soldiers and former child soldiers. Only a number, relevant to this thesis will be used.

2.3.1 Definition of the Research Question

Sudan's history is one dogged by conflicts, civil wars, fought on many fronts with diverse impetuses. The hardest of these was that which started in the early 1980s and was only brought to an end in 2005 by the signing of the CPA.

The body of research on the political makeup of Sudan, its economic, social and even cultural orientations is burgeoning. The conflict in the country has also been relatively well covered in the last years. Generally, the human rights situation in the country has left a lot to be desired although observers have attributed this to it being engulfed in conflict for a long period of time and hope that the situation will change so long as peace is maintained.

Children's rights have been of concerned to the nation given that a significant proportion of its population are children. It is estimated that 40 per cent out of its total population (which is estimated at 42 million) are children below the age of 14.[76]

The exploitation of children in the Sudanese conflict although alarming, has not received the attention it deserves. Most research on children, particularly on child soldiers mostly revolves around the need to bar their use in armed conflict. In cases where children have been involved in armed conflict, research has emphasised their disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration back into society (the communities where these children belong) without sometimes delving deeper into what really constitutes these processes in reality. The questions of how children get enlisted into armed forces and groups and why they decide to take up arms have also been relatively well covered.[77]

However, only a modest number of researches have tackled reintegration save for none delving deeper into the nitty-gritty of the phenomenon. As a matter of fact, no research has questioned why

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[76] Central Intelligence Agency-USA, 'CIA - The World Factbook' <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html> [accessed 6 August 2010].

[77] David M. Rosen, *Armies of the young: child soldiers in war and terrorism* (New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press, 2005); De Berry, 92 -105; Verhey; Ilene Cohn and Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, *Child soldiers: the role of children in armed conflict. A study on behalf of Institut Henry-Dunant.* (Oxford University Press, 1994); United Nations, *Children and armed conflict* (United Nations, 26 March 2009) <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N09/282/44/PDF/N0928244.pdf?OpenElement> [accessed 19 July 2010]; Peter Warren Singer, *Children at war* (University of California Press, 2006); Michael G. Wessells, 'Children, Armed Conflict, and Peace', *Journal of Peace Research*, 35 (1998), 635-646 <doi:10.1177/0022343398035005006>; International Save the Children Alliance, Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers and Rädda barnen (Society), *Stop using child soldiers!* (Published by Rädda Barnen on behalf of the International Save the Children Alliance, 1998); Rachel Brett and Irma Specht, *Young soldiers: Why they Choose to Fight* (International Labour Organization, 2004).

reintegration processes are stalling. Even when they are deemed to be happening, children are sometimes rejected by their families for different reasons; others are considered outcasts by their communities and left for dead while those who are happily 'reintegrated' seem to be lacking a source of livelihood.

In an attempt to cover this lacuna, this research aspires to answer the question why the reintegration of child soldiers is failing. Failing is hereby meant by not producing the intended results. The claim that reintegration is failing naturally begs the question, is there a situation where reintegration is perceived to be succeeding and what does it encompass. This question has also not been fully addressed in the existing literature although several attempts have been made to this effect.

Among fundamental factors brought forward as components of "successful" are; family reunification and acceptance of a former child soldier as part of the family and larger community, former child soldiers undergoing some sort of psycho-social support which is perceived to be effective by an accredited psychologist and/or social worker, and that a former child soldier has an appropriate opportunity for education and/training and a strategic source of livelihood. It is rare to find cases where all these factors are present.

In taking Sudan as the object of research I intend to show that these factors are not the only ones that comprise 'successful' reintegration and that a situation where all these factors are present and complement each other in a former child soldiers life are almost impossible to find but should be the ultimate goal of reintegration. The failure to provide child soldiers with the opportunities that enable them rebuild their lives over again, is what this paper deems as the basis of failure of reintegration efforts in most post-conflict countries. It is with this premise that this thesis ponders the question, 'why is reintegration failing in Sudan?' Posing such a leading question, it is hoped it that the necessary insights that go a long way into covering the existing desideratum in research on child soldiers particularly when it comes to DDR will be provided.

2.3.2 Who is a Child Soldier?: The Problematic of Universal Definitions

In examining the phenomenon of child soldiery in Sudan given the long period of conflict the country has been engulfed in, it is natural that many children are born and grow up in conflict. Conflict becomes then the only life they know. This fact makes it difficult to differentiate between a child and an adult as both groups suffered trauma in one way or the other while in combat.

Defining a child from this perspective becomes a thorny issue. In fact, in the case of Sudan, it is normal that most child soldiers spend all their childhood in combat and most may no longer be 'children' at the time of demobilisation: a point that complicates the scope of approach when it comes to the issue of reintegration.

This paper takes into account the controversy brought about by conflict particularly when it comes to reintegration where most persons, previously recruited into armed conflict as children are no longer children, i.e. under 18s at demobilisation and therefore at reintegration. However, it pays special regard to the status of children, their vulnerability, innocence and the uniqueness of their needs at demobilisation and eventual reintegration.

For the purposes of scope, this paper limits its understanding of a child soldier to 'any person under 18 years of age who forms part of an armed force (or group) in any capacity, and those accompanying such groups, other than purely as family members, as well as girls recruited for sexual purposes and forced marriage'[78].

For a comprehensive understanding of child soldiery at the reintegration stage in the Sudanese context, a child soldier will be understood as 'anyone younger than 18 (years old) who has participated in armed forces or groups – either on a volunteer basis or by coercion – directly or in a supporting function where participation includes fighting, guarding, cooking, or serving as a porter, messenger, spy or sex slave'[79].

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[78] United Nations Security Council: Report of the Secretary General February 2000, 'The Role of The United Nations Peacekeeping in Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration', 2000, note 7 <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/291/43/PDF/N0029143.pdf?OpenElement>.
[79] UNICEF, p. 9.

In taking the age of under 18, as the point of departure and therefore persons under that age as children, it is important to clarify the term, "child."

The term child basically refers to a young person, from the age of birth to the age of full physical development.[80]

Common views characterise this stage as one of immaturity - lacking in mental and physical development. Nevertheless, it is important to note that childhood also encompasses a stage of tumultuous changes especially at adolescence. As a matter of fact, 'adolescence is a time of vulnerability with the uncertainties and turbulence of physical, mental and emotional development'[81]. These features additionally make children under 18 years old vulnerable. For example, this is a period when most girl child soldiers are sexually exploited.

Additionally the period of childhood is calibrated with age sets and age groups which play a significant role in defining the actions of children at the different stages of development. Bennet points out that age grades (social divisions of a physical process of development) and age sets (social groupings with various characteristics of a corporate entity) are two institutions that have a direct bearing on the use of children in armed conflict since they both function to coopt young people to the service of society.[82] Socially, he adds, age grades are commonly divided into three- child, junior and elder.[83] The child-grade is basically characterised by immaturity, physically and mentally while the elder-grade is generally perceived as the norm-setting age to which all children should be educated. The junior grade, which this paper is more concerned with, is a hazy one. According to Bennet, 'people at this grade can no longer be treated as children but they still lack the maturity of adults'[84].

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[80] A. S. Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary - New Edition*, 5th edn (Cornelsen + Oxford, 1995), p. 185.
[81] Brett and Specht, p. 3.
[82] T.W Bennet, 'Using Children In Armed Conflict: A Legitimate African Tradition?' (Essex, UK: Institute for security studies, 2000) <http://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/Issues/Texts/Soldiers002.htm> [accessed 8 August 2010].
[83] Bennet.
[84] Bennet.

This view of a certain group of children as somewhat children but not adults varies from community to community and makes it difficult to pin down a particular age, universally, at which a child is considered an adult.

Therefore, in taking a straight 18 approach[85], it is not to say that I believe that all persons in the world under 18 years, Sudan included, are children! No. In fact in most communities in Africa adulthood comes earlier than 18 years of age.

Among the Maasai of Kenya, for example, boys are taken from their communities to be taught to be *morans* (worriers) between the ages of 14 and 18. During this period, a boy undergoes various initiations rites de passage after which he is considered an adult and granted certain privileges like the right to marry. The important fact here is that adulthood can either come at the ages of 14, 15, 16, 17 or 18 depending on how fast the set of Morans get acculturated to the initiation rites.

In Sudan, among certain sub-tribes of the Dinka[86], initiation ceremonies (*gar*) which involve scarring of the forehead are done on boys between the ages of 14 and 18.

On the contrary, there are many communities in Africa that regard persons of 20 years and over as children, for example, if one is still dependant on their parents or guardians even at the age of 30 they will be considered children. This perception applies mostly to boys than it does to girls. The Nuer[87] of southern Sudan for example, rank their men into two groups - adults or non-adults. The deciding factor being initiation after which one is considered an adult but without which, one remains a non-adult.

For these reasons, it is difficult to wholly embrace an age, in this case under 18 as a universal definition for children.

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[85] The straight 18 approach is normally used in light of the CRC which (strictly) defines a child as any human being below the age of 18.

[86] Francis Mading Deng, *Tradition and modernization: a challenge for law among the Dinka of the Sudan*, 2nd edn (Yale University Press, 1987).

[87] The Nuer are a Nilotic group that mostly inhabits southern Sudan. A significant number of them are also found in Ethiopia. The Nuer are pastoralists and cattle are at the centre of their daily lives. They complement pastoralism with agriculture and fishing. It is said that their culture and tradtion is similar to that of the Dinka and other Nilotic groups in Sudan like the Shilluk. For a comprehensive account of the Nuer, see, E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940).

All these factors considered, rather than use the straight 18 approach to emphasise its universality, I use it to emphasise the complexity of espousing such a definition across-the-board.

The under 18 approach is also limiting when it comes to examining reintegration in Sudan as the conflict in the country lasted a long time and most children, recruited under the age of 18, say age 7, are no longer children at demobilisation more than say, 20 years after their recruitment.

These group of persons, even though "adults" when the war ended, were recruited as children, and fought as child soldiers and were just as traumatised as other child soldiers today. It might be in fact that they more than anyone need more help to be rehabilitated and reintegrated back into society once demobilised.

The issues surrounding child soldiery are multi-faceted and require in depth analyses. However that is beyond the mandate of this paper which limits its scope, for reasons explored above and to necessitate thorough scrutiny, to persons under the age of 18 at demobilisation and consequently, reintegration. The age of under 18 also emphasises the vulnerability of children and needs that are only special to them.

At reintegration, it is hoped that helpful measures directed to child soldiers will help them salvage their lives if not their childhood.

Chapter 3:   The Child Soldier Phenomenon and the Sudanese Context

3.1   The Child soldier Phenomenon

Children have been used in war since time immemorial.[88] Writings about boy soldiers in the aftermath of the American civil war (of 1774) indicate the involvement of children. In fact at the end of that war, the nobility and sacrifice of the young boys who participated in battle was celebrated. David Rosen writes that, 'boy soldiers who survived intact were respected citizens whose contribution to civic life was enhanced by their experience of war.'[89]

Singer acknowledges the involvement of children in early times but emphasises on the limited role they played. He argues that when children served in ancient armies such as the enrolment of Spartan boys into military training, at ages seven to nine, they typically did not serve in combat. Instead, he adds, they carried out more menial chores, such as herding cattle or bearing shields and mats for more senior warriors.[90]

The arming of the *Hitler Jugend* (Hitler Youth) when Allied armies entered Nazi Germany in the spring of 1945 also stands out as one of the instances when children fought at the frontline of battle with their adult counterparts. Singer however point outs that that 'was a desperate gambit to hold off the invasion until new "miracle" weapons (like the V-2 rocket and the Me-262 jet fighter) could turn the tide.'[91]

An argument that I find feeble as it provides a leeway for the enlistment of children under the pretences of keeping them as reserves or having them not participate in combat. More often than not, armed rebel commanders who recruit children into their forces have claimed that it was out of need for manpower or that these children only carried out 'menial' tasks. In fact, Museveni's

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[88] Richard van Emden discusses the plight of boys who fought as soldiers in earlier major wars. For a comprehensive account, see, Richard van Emden. *Boy Soldiers of the Great War* (Headline Book Publishing, 2005).
[89] Rosen, p. 6.
[90] Singer, pp. 9-10.
[91] Singer, p. 14.

National Resistance Army (NRA) fighting in Uganda in the 1980s claimed 'humane' grounds for having children in the group. The group claimed that most of the NRA children were orphaned, displaced or unaccompanied and that they were taken in so that they would get food and protection. Whether this was the case or not, one cannot be sure.

Such claims, even in the context of warfare in earlier times, mask the cruelty that these children went through during war. The fact that in those days children who participated in conflict were considered heroes and nobles, presents us with a different side of children's involvement in conflict as that given in contemporary humanitarian accounts.

Rosen reminds us that that in actuality, the present views about childhood as innocence and as a protected state only emerged in Europe during the middle ages and that before that, an attitude of indifference (as can be understood from the examples above) towards children prevailed.[92] The genesis of human rights and human rights awareness may have different roots but it has certainly, largely contributed to highlighting the involvement of children in armed conflict world wide. It is clear from media- and international human rights reports that the phenomenon has greatly increased since the end of the cold war. This increase has been attributed to;

The changing nature of warfare. That recent wars are intra-state and largely target civilians. Situations of conflict in contemporary times create security vacuums that feature an increase in transnational organised crime. Traditional wars, it is argued, were self-limiting, rule-bound in a number of ways: politically-in having clear political objectives; temporally-in having well-defined beginnings and ends that resulted in victory or defeat; spatially-in the existence of geographically bounded battlefields; humanely-in that they were fought according to a set of commonly accepted rules that among other things, clearly distinguished between civilians and combatants.[93]

The availability of small arms and their proliferation with nation states. The premise here is that arms technology has advanced thus making weapons light to carry and easy to use even by

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[92] Rosen, p. 7.
[93] Rosen, pp. 10-11; for more information on the differentiation between traditional and contemporary wars, please see Mary Kaldor, *New and old wars* (Stanford University Press, 2007); The United Nations, *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict* (United Nations, 2007) <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/457/60/PDF/N0745760.pdf?OpenElement> [accessed 16 July 2010].

small girls and boys. The fact that certain weapons are automatic means that less training is required before use hence encouraging participation of children in conflict. Weapons commonly used include the AK-47 and M-16 assault riffles. Opponents of this argument point out that the most popular weapons used by child soldiers today such as the Kalashnikov assault riffle and the AK-47, have been available since 1949 and were the main riffles used by national liberation groups and insurgents long before the child soldier crisis hence availability and lightweight features cannot be the only factors encouraging child soldier use.[94]

This is a valid point; however, it is important to point out that more and more civilians today, are getting hold of assault riffles as protective weapons. One reason for this is the failure of state authorities to protect civilians in times of conflicts hence civilians are 'forced' to take up arms for their own protection.

Vulnerability and innocence of children. Most armed groups recruit children due to the fact that they are vulnerable and easy to manipulate. Various reports on child soldier use point out the fact that many commanders prefer children as they are easy to manipulate and follow orders with least resistance thus easily turning them into "killing machines"[95].

Despite the validity of these arguments, the context of conflict varies from one region to the other and so do reasons for the enlistment or conscription of children into armed forces/groups.

Let us examine the reasons that drew children into conflict in Sudan.

3.2   The *Jenajesh*[96] of Sudan

Thousands of child soldiers are said to have been recruited and used by armed forces, government backed militias and armed opposition groups in Sudan. The exact number of these children is not known as only a small percentage was formally released in the aftermath of the signing of the CPA. Some were randomly released as armed groups feared being criminalised or to be seen to have used children, such children were not included in formal DDR programmes.

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[94] Rosen, pp. 14-16.
[95] Killing machines, is a pejorative term used to refer to child soldiers who are indoctrinated to fearlessly kill at all costs, are loyal to their commanders and easily manipulated to commit atrocities.
[96] Jenajesh, is a word used in Sudan to refer to child soldiers. It is largely influenced by the Arabic language.

In 2003, Amnesty International reported forced recruitment of children as child soldiers mostly by southern militias allied to the Government of Sudan. Such recruitment was said to mostly have been around the Bentiu area (Bentiu is the capital of Unity State, geographically part of southern Sudan-refer to map). Further reports by the organisation state that youths were picked up in Khartoum for apparent recruitment into armed forces without any opportunity to notify their families.[97] As recent as 2009, reports from the United Nations (UN) confirmed recruitment and use of 101 children by the SPLA but could not give a conclusive figure as registration exercises were still underway.[98]

3.2.1 Why and How they got Enlisted into Armed Forces and/or Armed Groups

The fact that the war in Sudan lasted so long means that most children were born during warfare and lived through it. Thus, war became the normality, the only situation they knew and which comprised a large part of their lives. As a result of this, schools were closed down, family ties broken as fathers and sometimes mothers had to join in and fight leaving their children with a responsible relative or sometimes in the custody of an elderly child, poverty levels increased and seeds of bitterness sowed amongst opponents.

The existence of warfare meant that the traditional family structure was broken and parents were no longer bread winners but sometimes children, particularly older children who were left behind and had to take care of their younger siblings. Sometimes their only choice was to join armed groups that looted food from gardens and homes of others for their survival in the "bush" (in combat). This is how some boy soldiers ended up in armed conflict.

Crops and animals comprised the bases of livelihood for many families, pillaging of the same by armed groups, meant that most families had nothing to eat, sell or barter hence poverty levels rose. For those who were already poor, or those with big families typical of Sudanese peoples, this

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[97] Amnesty International, 'Amnesty International - Library - Sudan: Preliminary conclusions of Amnesty International's mission', 2003 <http://www.mafhoum.com/press4/131S30.htm> [accessed 19 July 2010].
[98] United Nations, note 100.

meant that food reserves were quickly exhausted. Economic decline, exacerbated by war increased poverty levels pushing adults and children alike into war.

Such a situation was not particular to Sudan as it is a common occurrence in armed conflict. For instance, Museveni's National Resistance Army (NRA) is said to have had large numbers of orphans and unaccompanied children who simply 'tagged along' for food, protection and survival.[99] The situation in Sudan for the SPLA wasn't any different.

Forced recruitment. This entails the threat or actual violation of the physical integrity of the youth or someone close to him or her.[100] The long period of war in Sudan meant that combatants from both sides were killed and slowly armed groups ran out of manpower. This shortage led them to recruit 'strong' young boys into their groups. These boys were trained and slowly but surely became part of these armed groups.

In the North, Khartoum government forces were reported to have kidnapped child soldiers in schools and homes and delivered them for training.[101]

Most girl soldiers, who joined armed forces, had been abducted to be used as wives and cooks in the camps while others actually fought in the war.

The limited number of girls compared to boys in Sudan can be attributed to the fact that most girls found deserted or wondering around in search of food or shelter were abducted and kept as adopted daughters by some families with the hope that they would one day get married and fetch them (the families that abducted them) bride price. They were therefore abducted and kept (to the extent that one could talk about them having been protected) for their value as objects of wealth acquisition.

Coercive or abusive recruitment. This refers to situations where there is no proof of direct physical threat or intimidation, but the evidence supports the inference of involuntary enlistment. For instance at the onset of one of the most tragic of all Sudanese civil wars - between the late 1980s and 1992 some 12,500 Sudanese boys wandered across two thousand kilometres of desert, thick forests and swamps between Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya.

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[99] Furley, p. 28.
[100] Cohn and Goodwin-Gill, p. 24.
[101] Furley, p. 30.

Humanitarian workers speculated that they had been removed from their families at very tender ages by SPLA rebels trying to ensure a future supply of fighters. The criterion for selection into this children's militia was said by some reporters to be the presence of two molar teeth.[102]

Most of these children (who later came to be known as the *lost boys of Sudan*) were lured into fighting by promises of being taken to school in Ethiopia. On arrival they realised that educational facilities were limited or non-existent. So, in the name of education, these children were given military training and indoctrinated into being *jenajesh* (child fighters/soldiers). They belonged to the *Jesh a mer* (Red Army) while the adults belonged to the *Jesh a suad* (Black Army). They were taught how to shoot, to dismantle and put together a gun, to launch rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and to follow orders. They were trained to fight and to fight like soldiers for they belonged to Jesh a mer. Precisely; they were turned into "killing machines."

"Voluntary recruitment." When parents, siblings, or other family members are involved with/in the military, joining seems natural, particularly if this is combined with a 'religious, ethnic or ideological element'[103] to the family involvement.

In northern Sudan, it is reported that apart from children being recruited from schools, family members played a big role in convincing them to join government forces. They were driven by the belief of fighting the *abid* (slaves) who were revolting against the government and by the fundament of finally making Islam the main religion in Sudan and Arabic (not English) the main language in the country. Theirs was not only a fight to eliminate the slave but one that would ensure a monotheistic state with Islam at its midpoint.

In the South, most children joined SPLA, not just because they wanted to help their fathers and uncles but because they had seen their sisters raped; their mothers, fathers and other kin brutally murdered by northern allied- and armed forces and they wanted to avenge their deaths. In memoirs of a child soldier, "warchild," Emmanuel Jal attests to the fact his joining the SPLA was just because

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[102] Cohn and Goodwin-Gill, p. 28.
[103] Brett and Specht, p. 24.

he wanted to help his father fight the Arabs and punish them for taking his mother away from him. But as the war continued matters got worse and he was filled with vengeance and hate. He writes:

> Slowly I forgot everything except my hatred for the Arabs. Night after night I'd listen to tales of mothers being raped, sisters taken, and villages destroyed, feeling my anger harden even more inside me. It felt like a spear twisting in my chest whenever I thought of the *Jallabas* (Arabs).[104]

These reasons are not only common among child soldiers but adult soldiers from both warring groups. From his attestation, we notice feelings of helplessness, powerlessness and voicelessness which characterised the period he had not joined the army. In staying away and watching from a distance, he felt trapped and the only way to influence certain factors was by joining the armed group, which he did. Such feelings drive children to join armed conflict and may sometimes *prima facie* be seen as 'voluntary.' I believe it is because their choices are limited and feelings manipulated as they are only filled with bitterness towards the opponent. At such a young age it is difficult to control such strong feelings.

Peer Pressure. The peer group that young people belong may be influential in pressurising members of the group to join armed forces. In Sudan, especially where child soldiers were viewed as heroes fighting for the protection of their land and religion (as was the case in the North) and fighting for liberation of their peoples (as in the South); others were easily influenced to join.

This case is not *sui generis* to Sudan as cases of child soldiers all over the continent reveal this characteristic. For example Ugandan ex-girl child soldier, China Kaitetsi, reveals her excitement at joining the NRA was one with peer influences. She remembers;

"I was excited, because now I would be seeing the action that I had heard so much about from the older kids."[105]

Identity formation. Researchers have predicted that adolescents in certain circumstances forge their sense of identity on the basis of nationalist ideology.[106] Although this has not been

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[104] Jal, p. 63.
[105] China Keitetsi, *Child soldier* (Souvenir, 2004), p. 116.

proven in the case of Sudan, it could have played a big role in motivating children on both sides (especially those who joined northern forces) to get enlisted.

With all these factors stated, it should be noted that there are international instruments that forbid the recruitment of children into armed forces and groups, most of which Sudan is a signatory to. There are also national legal instruments that the country has put in place to stop the recruitment and use of child soldiers. How effective they are and the commitment of the government of Sudan to realise the provisions of these instruments is another issue.

We shall hereby examine those instruments in brief in order to try and get to the bottom of issues surrounding reintegration.

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[106] Cohn and Goodwin-Gill, p. 42.

Chapter 4: Child Soldiery from a Legal Perspective

4.1 International Humanitarian Law and the Child Soldier: The Scope of Application

Most rules governing the conduct of states and warring factions have their basis in international law. States' practices and international conference resolutions of such organisations as the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) evolve to acquire the status of customary international law which binds even those states that have not ratified or consented to certain international treaties.

Most rules of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) are found in the four 1949 Geneva Conventions and the two 1977 Additional Protocols (APs), as well as states' practices and resolutions of International Conferences of the Red Cross.

Article 3, common to all the four 1949 Geneva Conventions (henceforth, common article 3) extends a measure of protection to civilians. Common Article 3 of the fourth (IV) Geneva Convention extends these measures to armed conflicts of a non-international character. It states as follows;

In the case of armed conflict not of an international character occurring in the territory of one of the High Contracting Parties, each Party to the conflict shall be bound to apply, as a minimum, the following provisions:

(1) Persons taking no active part in the hostilities, including members of armed forces who have laid down their arms and those placed hors de combat by sickness, wounds, detention, or any other cause, shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without any adverse distinction founded on race, colour, religion or faith, sex, birth or wealth, or any other similar criteria. To this end the following acts are and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place whatsoever with respect to the above-mentioned persons:

(a) violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture;

(b) taking of hostages;

(c) outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment;

(d) the passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples.[107]

Here it is important to realise that children are protected as civilians and not as combatants as is the case of child soldiers.

The Additional Protocols of 1977 tried to cater for this setback but succeeded to only put certain limitations on the freedom to recruit children; Article 77 (2) points out;

> The Parties to the conflict shall take all feasible measures in order that children who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities and, in particular, they shall refrain from recruiting them into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years the Parties to the conflict shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest.[108]

As a whole there is no rule, either in the 1949 Geneva Conventions or the APs that explicitly prohibits the participation of children (those considered under the age of 18) in armed conflicts in their capacity as combatants.

Additional Protocol (AP) II of the 1977 Geneva Convention is fundamental as it functions in situations of non-international armed conflicts. Of particular importance is Article 4 (3) (c) which states that;

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[107] International Committee of the Red Cross, *Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949*, Common Article 3 <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/FULL/380?OpenDocument> [accessed 16 July 2010].

[108] International Committee of the Red Cross, *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977*, 1977, Article 77 (2) <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/FULL/470?OpenDocument> [accessed 16 July 2010].

'Children who have not attained the age of fifteen years shall neither be recruited in the armed forces or groups nor allowed to take part in hostilities'[109].

From the wording of this article, it is clear that the burden of respect for the rules of war forbidding recruitment of children, largely lies with leaders of armed forces/groups who have the responsibility and choice to either recruit or not recruit children. This, 'perhaps reflects the practical difficulties of regulating or controlling the self-willed activities of those under eighteen'[110].

Furthermore, the conventions discussed above, are limited in scope by the point that most of them anticipated conflict/s of international character and yet those being presently experienced are of non-international nature where mostly AP II would be operational but most states have not ratified it. The problem, then, as pointed out by Cohn et al., is that 'Additional Protocol II is often unratified by the state in conflict, Common Article 3 places no limits on the recruitment or participation of children, the breaches of rules are committed by NGEs (Non-Governmental Entities), the level of strife is debatable, the application of human rights provisions is in doubt, and their reinforcement for various reasons, impossible'[111].

Different to other countries Sudan ratified the APs in mid 2006, a year after the signing of the CPA. Before that not much could be done as the country was in conflict and diplomatic issues were dormant and controversial. It could also be argued that the government was avoiding signature of such documents that would incapacitate it in various ways so as to lose ground in the war; for instance not to recruit under 18s would run mean risking having a shortage of military personnel.

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[109] International Committee of the Red Cross, *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II), 8 June 1977*, 1977, Article (4) (3) (c) <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/FULL/475?OpenDocument> [accessed 17 July 2010].
[110] Cohn and Goodwin-Gill, p. 64.
[111] Cohn and Goodwin-Gill, p. 66.

4.2   The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and Child Soldiers

The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the most instrumental document when it comes to the rights and freedoms of children. It is one of the widely signed and ratified documents involving 193 parties and having been signed by 140 states as of July 2010.[112] Even though the CRC defines a child as every human being below the age of eighteen years,[113] article 38 maintains fifteen years as the age criterion for child soldier recruitment. It states;

> 1. States Parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for rules of international humanitarian law applicable to them in armed conflicts which are relevant to the child.
>
> 2. States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities.
>
> 3. States Parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of fifteen years into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years, States Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest.
>
> 4. In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.[114]

The CRC basically builds on the APs I and II to come up with comprehensive provisions for children involved in armed conflict. While incorporating most of the provisions of Article 77 (2) of

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[112] 'UNTC' <http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-11&chapter=4&lang=en> [accessed 17 July 2010].

[113] United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 1990, Article 1 <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm> [accessed 17 July 2010].

[114] United Nations, Article 38 (3).

AP I, article 38 reiterates in the provisions of article 4(3) of AP II albeit less progressively. It calls for action only when states take a 'direct part in hostilities.'

Being a human rights instrument, the scope of application of the CRC is limited to only state actors meaning that non-state actors can basically get away with violations. This is contrary to International Humanitarian Law which applies to both categories of actors.

In the case where a state has ratified both the CRC and the Additional Protocols (like that of Sudan), article 41 of the CRC ensures that no contradiction exists to diminish the protection that should be given to children.

4.3   Optional Protocol on the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict

The Optional Protocol was meant to correct the shortcomings of the CRC especially in its age definition, where the CRC's article 1 terms a child as any person under the age of 18 while article 38 (2) and (3) put the age limit of recruiting children into armed forces at 15.

Article 1 of the Optional Protocol, calls upon states to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 do not take a direct part in hostilities while Article 2 forbids compulsory recruitment of under 18s. Article 3, raises the minimum age of voluntary recruitment from 15 as stated in the CRC to 18 and calls upon states to adhere to the standards set therein.

In my opinion, there is still a lot of ambiguity in the language of these conventions that provide a leeway for armed groups to enlist children. For example, that children should not take a **direct** part in conflict after being enlisted! It is difficult to control the activities of armed forces once one is enlisted, child or adult, they become soldiers and they are bound by the rules of the game. Moreover in cases of combat, such children, though 15 or under 18, must protect themselves even if it means using the weapons at their disposal.

Precise and concise wording in these conventions would help clear up confusion and totally barn the use of child soldiers once and for all.

4.4   Legal Instruments in Sudan and Child soldiers

4.4.1   Sudan and the CRC

Sudan ratified the CRC in 1990 without reservations. Implementation of the CRC was however hindered by the presence of war in the country in the aftermath of its signature.

4.4.2   The Interim Constitution of the Sudan and Child Soldiers

There is no explicit mention of children involved in armed conflict and how to assist them in the interim constitution. Instead there is a general clause lamping together the rights of children with those of women. Note 32 (5) of the interim constitution states;

The State shall protect the rights of the child as provided in the international and regional conventions ratified by the Sudan.[115]

In vowing to protect the rights of children, it can be assumed that the Sudanese state is in agreement with protecting children form enlistment into armed conflict. With this clause missing in the constitution however, it is difficult to hold the government responsible for its actions.

Sudan has neither signed nor ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which was adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), presently the African Union (AU, since 2001) in 1990 which came into force in 1999. However, it ratified the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPRs) commonly known as the Banjul Charter, on 18 February 1986[116].

Just like Sudan's interim constitution, the Banjul Charter has no explicit mention on child rights but contains general individual rights which also apply to children. It also does not have specific mention to children involved in armed conflicts.[117]

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[115] The Government of the Sudan, 'The Interim National Constitution of the Republic of the Sudan' <http://www.sudan-embassy.de/c_Sudan.pdf>.
[116] University of Minnesota Human Rights Library, 'Ratification of International Human Rights Treaties-Sudan' <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/research/ratification-sudan.html> [accessed 18 July 2010].
[117] For more information, see the Banjul Charter.

4.4.3 Southern Sudan Child Act, 2008[118]

The landmark Child Act came into force on 13 October 2008 after being signed by the president of southern Sudan, making it the first ever children's Act in southern Sudan.

The Act was enacted for the purposes of promoting and protecting children's rights in southern Sudan given that most laws have ignored children. Accordingly, it defines a child as any human being under the age of eighteen years and therefore a minor.

Further, the Act prohibits the exposure of children to economic exploitation and child labour and mentions service of children with the police, prison or military among those prohibited.

Recruitment of children as stated in the Act encompasses compulsory, forced and voluntary recruitment into any kind of regular armed force or group. Particular to children and armed conflict, it gives 18 years as the minimum age for conscription or voluntary recruitment into armed forces or groups. Note 32 (2) (3) and (4) reiterate on the Government's commitment to prevent recruitment and in cases where it has occurred to help reintegrate children into normal social life. It states:

> (2) The Government shall ensure that no child shall be used or recruited to engage in any military or paramilitary activities, whether armed or un-armed, including, but not limited to work as sentries, informants, agents or spies, cooks, in transport, as labourers, for sexual purposes, or any other forms of work that do not serve the interests of the child.
>
> (3) The Government shall provide protection, rehabilitation, care, recovery and reintegration into normal social life for children formerly associated with armed conflict including children from regular and other armed groups and children victims of armed conflict, having due regard to the special needs of girls and their dependents.
>
> (4) Where armed conflict occurs, the Government shall ensure that children's rights are protected in accordance with the provisions of this Act and international humanitarian law.[119]

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[118] Government of Southern Sudan.
[119] Government of Southern Sudan, note 32.

Though the document does not delve deeper into specificities of how to reintegrate children, it recognises their involvement in armed conflict as "abnormal" and that of no involvement as "**normal** social life." This point is imperative to this paper as it shows that the government of southern Sudan realises just how damaging involvement into armed conflict is.

Even though it does not use to term 'child soldiering' we know from the definition above that involvement of children into armed conflict comprises child soldiering.

The Act becomes the first legal document to explicitly barn and criminalise the recruitment of children into armed forces and groups. To this effect it states:

'Any person involved in the recruitment of a child into an armed force or use of a child in any activity set forth above, commits an offence and shall upon conviction, be sentenced to imprisonment for a term not exceeding ten years or with a fine or with both.'[120]

The move by GoSS to enact such a document is plausible; the onus as has constantly been reiterated in this paper is not only to pass laws but to ensure that they are upheld, this is what will see the actual protection and fulfilment of children's rights.

4.4.4 The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and Child Soldiers

On the rights of children, the CPA states that:

'Every child shall have, without any discrimination as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, national or social origin, property or birth, the right to such measures of protection as are required by his/her status as a minor.'[121]

From this statement, it is clear that the CPA recognises a child as a minor and calls for his/her protection. Protection is an all-embracing word that put in context; we can say protection of children from involvement in armed conflict.

On DDR, the CPA, just like the CRC views the overarching objective of the process as one aimed at contributing to an enabling environment to human security and to support post-peace-

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[120] Government of Southern Sudan, note 33.
[121] Government of the Sudan (CPA), note 1.6.2.15.

agreement social stabilisation across the Sudan, particularly in war-affected areas.[122] To this effect, the CPA called for the demobilisation of all child soldiers within six months of its signature.[123] The CPA also mandated the integration if all Other Armed Groups (OAGs) to either join the Sudanese government's armed forces, namely the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) or the SPLA by January 2006.[124] Although SAF denied recruitment and use of children in its ranks, it is reported that approximately 19,000 soldiers were thought to have been under 18 during the integration exercise of 2006.[125]

According to the coalition to stop the use of child soldiers, the SPLA admitted that it had child soldiers in its ranks and made high-level commitments to end their recruitment and use. However, even as they gave their word, it was reported that 47 children were present in the Kilo 7 barracks in Bentiu (unity state) in July 2006, and they were not released until July 2007.[126]

UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund) estimated that a total of 20,000 children from rebel forces in the southern Sudan were disarmed, demobilised and reunited (whether they were accepted and well reintegrated is not reported) with their families.[127]

Despite that there were an estimated 2,000 children still associated with the SPLA, mainly in non-combat roles in hard-to-reach areas (as per the UNICEF's report of 2006).[128]

Under the CPA, the National Council for DDR was established in February 2006 and a DDR Commission for southern Sudan created in May 2006.[129] Through this commission, field commanders continue to receive training on child protection (for example, one such training took place in 2007) which is said to have strengthened their commitment to demobilise children from armed forces. As a result of these efforts, a joint Military Committee Action Plan was established to address issues of abduction, rape and sexual violence especially in war-affected areas. It is also

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[122] Government of the Sudan (CPA), See Part III note 23.1.
[123] Government of the Sudan (CPA), note 24.9.
[124] Government of the Sudan (CPA).
[125] United Nations Security Council-2007, *Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Sudan*, 29 August 2007, note 6 <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/492/69/PDF/N0749269.pdf?OpenElement>.
[126] 'Coalition to stop the use of Child Soldiers' <http://www.child-soldiers.org/home> [accessed 10 June 2010]; United Nations Security Council-2007, note 45.
[127] UNICEF - Press centre, 'UNICEF welcomes child demobilisation in Southern Sudan' <http://www.unicef.org/media/media_33579.html> [accessed 9 June 2010].
[128] UNICEF - Press centre.
[129] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, p. 319.

mentioned that the commission facilitated the release of 25 children from SPLA bases in Bentiu (the capital of Unity State), southern Sudan and reunited them with their families in the north.[130]

Why then is reintegration not working in Sudan notwithstanding all these efforts by government and non-governmental organisations? The following chapter of this thesis will delve deeper into the reintegration process of former child soldiers in Sudan and specifically ponder why the process is just not working or in the few cases where success has been realised it has only been modicum and not all-rounded.

4.5   The erosion of Innocence: Child Soldiers as Criminals?

In international armed conflicts, children who participate in hostilities as combatants cannot be prosecuted when captured as they are protected as Prisoners-of-war (PoWs) by the Third Geneva Convention.

Those who do not participate in combat are considered civilians and entitled to the protection granted by the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949) and the API (1977) as well as human rights law.

In reiteration, the protection accorded to children in non-international conflicts is enshrined in Common Article 3 of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, AP II and human rights law.

On the use of children in armed conflict, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (henceforth the "Rome Statute") includes conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years or using them to participate actively in hostilities that are either of an international character (Art 8 (2) (b) (xxvi)) or that are non-international in nature (Art 8 (2) (e) (vii)) as war crimes.[131]

This means that those adults who recruit children into hostilities should be held accountable for their actions.

Whenever an apt link can be drawn, those adults found guilty of controlling soldiers including child soldiers can be prosecuted for the atrocities committed by those soldiers. This is known as the doctrine of command responsibility.

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[130] United Nations Security Council-2007, note 45.
[131] The International Criminal Court under the auspices of the United Nations, *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, 2002, Article 8 <http://untreaty.un.org/cod/icc/statute/romefra.htm> [accessed 3 August 2010].

While there are clearly set out rules to try adults who command their subordinates to commit atrocities, one wonders what happens to children who voluntarily join armed forces and commit atrocities without being forced?

In the event of an international conflict, both protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions prohibit the imposition of the death penalty for children under 18 at the time an offence is committed. On the other hand, as observed in several conflicts worldwide like that in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Sri Lanka, children have been perpetrators of many crass atrocities during hostilities on civilian populations where many of their victims have been children. In other cases, children have been commanders of armed forces during combat where they have commanded atrocities hence committing crimes against humanity.

Legally speaking, such child soldiers, like any other soldiers are responsible for violations of IHL and should be held accountable for their actions.

There are different schools of thought on this issue. One is championed by those who argue that children are incapable of distinguishing between right and wrong especially in situations when they act under pressure particularly from adults.

For example McCarney argues that children are inept to understand what genocide constitutes since they are so traumatised by their experiences in war to be able to distinguish between right and wrong. Additionally, he adds that, 'the power dynamics of social norms which demand the obedience of children to adults has to be taken into account when determining their *intent* to commit atrocities'[132].

Numerous testimonies of child soldiers have revealed that there are circumstances where they were threatened with death and forced to kill even their kin. In such cases it is difficult to determine the individual role played by a child in a conflict as most of them act under duress.

On the other hand, there are those who are of the opinion that those children suspected of having committed atrocities should be investigated and charged for their actions or else impunity will

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[132] Karin Arts and Vesselin Popovski, *International criminal accountability and the rights of children* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 97-98.

encourage the use of children in armed conflicts to commit atrocities. Human rights organisations such as Amnesty International (AI) support the prosecutions of such child soldiers between 15 and 18 years of age as long as the courts concerned implement fair trial guidelines in full and the possibility of the death penalty or life imprisonment without possibility of release are exempted from the charges.[133]

In case where child soldiers are suspected of having committed war crimes or other atrocities, international legal instruments are not specific on the rules to be followed in prosecuting them.

The furthest any international instrument has gone in trying to address the issue, is the CRC which in article 40 (3) (a) requires that states parties establish a minimum age below which children shall be presumed not to have the capacity to infringe the penal law.[134]

Article 17 (4) of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (CRWC) reiterates on the same point, in similar wording. These instruments, both of which Sudan is bound by, fail to clearly spell out the 'age of criminal responsibility'[135] thus leaving it upon states to decide. The major setback of article 17 is that often states decide to set very low ages of criminal responsibility.

The principle of *doli incapax* (the rule in most common international laws that consider children, mostly between ages of 7-14 as lacking the capacity to commit a criminal offence unless proven otherwise) has constantly been violated and continuously ignored by states hence its ineffectiveness in international customary law.

In countries like Sudan where the age of criminal responsibility is relatively high[136] a functional juvenile justice system is lacking to deal with child offenders hence child rights are still violated.

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[133] Amnesty International, 'Child Soldiers: Criminals or Victims?' (Amnesty International), p. 9 <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/IOR50/002/2000/en/f1883757-dc60-11dd-bce7-11be3666d687/ior500022000en.pdf> [accessed 21 July 2010].

[134] United Nations, Article 40.

[135] Age of criminal responsibility is understood as that age when a person under the age of 18 can be considered to understand and differentiate between right and wrong and consequently take responsibility for their actions. Where a wrong is deemed to have been committed, the appropriate criminal investigation can be conducted.

[136] The age of criminal responsibility in Sudan is 14 years old making i tone of the countries in the world to have such a high age as a minimum.

In cases where a child is arrested on grounds of being suspected of a crime her/his best interests are rarely considered thus violation of the CRC which in its Article 3[137] calls for the protection and care of children in actions to do with them including actions by courts of law in order to ensure that their best interests are considered. Some states have even gone further and termed cruel prosecution of children as being in their best interest arguing that subjecting them to hard punishment might teach them to take responsibility for their actions. While there might be sense in teaching children to take responsibility for their actions, hard punishment is uncalled for especially when these children do not understand the intensity of those actions or when they were simply following the orders of an adult. Moreover records show that most young offenders are mostly petty offenders although this is different when it comes to situations of armed conflict where child soldiers may have been involved in atrocities.

Article 26 of the Rome Statute states that, 'the Court (here meant by the International Court of Justice (ICJ)) shall have no jurisdiction over any person who was under the age of 18 at the time of the alleged commission of a crime.'[138]

This makes it difficult for states parties to bring cases of under 18s before the international court. The only way this could be done is by prosecuting children in the *ad hoc* Criminal Tribunals established by the ICJ, for example the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) which have so far been silent on the issue of child soldiers and no children have been brought to any of the tribunals.

The fact that international instruments prohibit the use of child soldiers in armed conflict and readily spell out measures for adults who use children and who command children to execute atrocities but fail to categorically put into place measures to prosecute them is incomprehensible. Prosecution should be limited to cases where it can be proved beyond reasonable doubt that they were in full control of themselves and aware of the consequences of their actions, makes it difficult

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[137] United Nations, Article 3.
[138] The International Criminal Court under the auspices of the United Nations, Article 26.

to prosecute children who commit atrocities. What is worse is that this failure might encourage the use of children by adults to commit carnage in armed conflicts.

Chapter 5:   The Conundrum of Reintegration in Sudan

5.1   Why is reintegration failing in Sudan?

The reintegration process is viewed as the final and probably most important component of the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) process. As important as it is, this process has not received the attention that it deserves, neither in scholarly debates and literature, nor by governments. Hence, it continues to encounter various challenges in the world over even in countries like Sudan where cultural and traditional practices exist to help reintegrate children back into their respective communities. **Why**?

I argue that the process is complex as it has many facets central to which is the arduous burden of turning 'a soldier back into a child'[139]. This in well highlighted in the landmark Machel report which points out that the reintegration process has wide-ranging aims, different for each boy and girl involved including building emotional trust and reconciling them with their respective families and communities, providing access to education and developing a means of livelihood.[140] The process therefore needs to be comprehensive and long term.

A community-based approach in which families and communities play a central role in supporting former child soldiers is mostly advocated for. I argue, with reference to Sudan that this is not always enough and although it plays an important part in reintegration, it is only but a component of a large array of needs that need to converge for an ex-child soldier to be successfully reintegrated.

Among the Dinka Bahr el Ghazal of Sudan, on return of a former child soldier, a spear master (*beny bith*) [141] is usually called upon by the child's family to perform certain rituals. A specific day for the celebration/ritual is selected both by the beny bith and the child soldier's family.

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[139] Singer.

[140] The United Nations, note 94.

[141] The spear master is more of a traditional witch doctor who is believed to be supernatural. He speaks to the gods and spirits and whatever he says, it is believed, will happen. This is the person to whom people go to when they are sick, or if one needs to do something that is almost impossible. The spear masters are still strong at the moment in Sudan as the government also recognizes them as part of traditional governance.

During the celebration, a goat or bull is slaughtered and the bile of the animal smeared on the forehead of the child. Smearing of the bile signifies that that particular day belongs to the child. The child also jumps over the goat or bull three times. This indicates that he is leaving all impurities behind. During the ritual, the beny bith commandeers the animal to pass urine which signifies that the child has been cleansed and accepted back to the community.

This ritual is performed in order to free the ex-child soldier from bad spirits of the dead - those she/he might have killed and those killed in the war. The blood of these animals is symbolic in that it is believed to cast out demons and appease the dead for them not to harm the child. The rituals also cleanse community members from possession by the spirits of the dead. Only then can a child associate with relatives and community members once again.

The significance of these rituals and practices to the child's emotional and psychological wellbeing is clear: they help soften links between the community and the child hence acceptance in the long run; they help the child have the surety of the backing of the community and a sense of belonging as well as give her/him the chance to have a new beginning.

While from a psychological, social and emotional perspective, families and communities strive to bring some sort of 'normalcy' to former child soldiers, the fact that most families remain poor and the economic situation in Sudan ailing; lack of employment, lack of vocational training centres, lack of proper health care facilities etc, makes reintegration a far-away dream for many.

Needless to mention that as a result of war most of these children missed out on education and even though young, say 13 or 14 years old, there is no way they are going to feel comfortable in lower classes like standard/primary one or two with younger children of 7 or 8 years old (literally half their age).

For these reasons, communal efforts are very helpful but have to be complemented with other factors like education or vocational training that are also vital for reintegration. [142]

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[142] See also, Alcinda Honwana, 'Codesria bulletin' (Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa, 1999), p. 12.

Too often, reintegration efforts inappropriately single out children who in the past were recruited, thereby perpetrating stigma.[143] Such separation has proved detrimental in a number of ways.

In Sudan, several schools were established in the South in the aftermath of the conflict specifically for child soldiers. This situation meant that these children were isolated from others given that the major criterion for joining was a past of involvement in the armed conflict.

Though meant for the betterment of former child soldiers, separating them made them targets of mockery from other children (as it was clear, whoever went to these schools was once a *jenajesh*). They were described in pejorative words that branded them as being barbaric, killing machines and cannibals (capable of eating anything, including human flesh). Some of these children succumbed to mockery as they were psychologically affected and dropped out of school.

On the other hand, due to lack of enough schools in Sudan, it proved difficult to isolate and attend to the needs of child soldiers separately as other children started joining such schools and soon the population was mixed. In such schools it was, and still is common to find ex-child soldiers lamped together at a corner on their own, most of them having no 'friends' to play with as too often they are older than those in the same class (school grade/level) or sometimes others avoid associating with them due to their past.

This pattern seems to be recurrent in areas affected by child soldiery. A former boy soldier in Uganda attests to this, he remembers;

> Other children insult me and when I try to fight them they run to the teacher's office. The teacher says 'If your head is confused because you were abducted, don't come and disturb others'. Then the teacher beat me up. I went back with my parents and now it's a bit better.[144]

The fact that sometimes these children tend to be put together with younger one's due to the pragmatic reason of having missed out on education and to catch up they have to join lower classes

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[143] United Nations Security Council-February 2009, note 95.
[144] 'Voices of Child Soldiers | Child Soldiers Global Report 2008', boy, 14, formerly abducted by the LRA <http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/content/voices-child-soldiers> [accessed 19 July 2010].

where the average age is normally much lower than theirs, leads to former child soldier drop-outs. For the simple reason that these children them feel ashamed and left out. Those who do not drop out find their way of surviving most of the time by turning into bullies.

The latter phenomenon is well illustrated in the importance of drinking-water in schools. In an attempt to keep children in schools, the government of Sudan and other partners struggle to sink boreholes or wells near school locations so that pupils do not have to leave school during break-times to look for water to quench their thirst. In most cases water points are far and children have to walk long distances and may not return to school due to fatigue and other reasons.

So during break-times, due to the high number of pupils who try to get water from the same borehole, the older boys and girls tend to make their way first and faster to the water points than the younger ones. This is because they are strong enough to pump-out water from the borehole or well. In such spots it is common to find former child soldiers at the forefront as they are considered fierce and stronger. They tend to pump water for themselves first and then for their counterparts, usually considering their friends first or those from whom they're soliciting for friendship.

In such cases, it is evident that educational efforts meant to help reintegrate children tend to fail as they either drop-out of schools or are pre-occupied with other petty things like bullying others and soliciting for friendships in order to at least have 'their place' in schools, that they do not get the best out of education.

School-going has in some instances proved disadvantageous not only to former girl child soldiers but to girls in general. Due to culture and traditions that undermine girl-child education, most girls remain at home to do household chores like fetching water, cooking, cleaning, taking care of younger ones among many other things.

It has become more evident that formal education structure may not provide the best reintegration option for certain groups of former child soldiers. For instance, girls who gave birth to babies or boys who became fathers while in combat and are therefore mothers or fathers at demobilisation. In such cases, vocational training should be encouraged.

The setback in such cases (in line with my theory on post-colonial, post-conflict and post-CPA Sudan) is that the government is preoccupied with mobilising resources to build primary (let alone secondary) schools to even think of prioritising vocational centres which would otherwise benefit such children.

In areas where the need for vocational centres has been identified, most centres are owned and run national or international non-governmental organisations. These organisations more often than not do not follow one curriculum of teaching synchronised by a central body like the ministry of education. Since most of them have different donors and partners who tend to dictate the content teaching, sometimes irrelevant subject areas in the context of Sudan tend to be taught simply because donors fund them. For this reason, it is common to find large scores of trained hairdressers in Sudan, where hair saloons are a rare thing to come by. Where as tailors, carpenters and masons are on demand in the job market and training them in such areas would be more practical!

The girl child soldier problem. In most Sudanese communities, girls are viewed as property. In fact one mother is reported to have compared her daughter to a commodity that is taken to the market to be sold to the highest bidder.[145]

Furthermore, in describing the place of Dinka women, Mading Deng writes that they (women) provide the means to the more male-oriented goal of permanent identity and influence and that their destiny is almost universally marriage. He adds, 'the Dinka say that the woman is a stranger who will leave her lineage to serve the ends of another lineage.'[146] These perceptions of women are common in most parts of Sudan.

If this is the case for ordinary 'normal' women, one can only imagine the negativity in perception of girls who return from combat. Most of them suffer rejection as they are seen to have been tainted and dirtied and therefore worthless. In situations where former girl child soldiers have babies, matters are even more difficult. They are often stuck at crossroads - whether to return to

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[145] Faith Miyandazi, 'Sudan: The Irony of Abduction' (Regional Programme for East and Central Africa: Save the Children-Sweden, 2007) <http://sca.savethechildren.se/East_Central_Africa/Puffs/Sudan-The-irony-of-abduction/> [accessed 18 July 2010].
[146] Deng, p. 9.

their families or stay with the fathers of their children (who may sometimes be former boy soldiers, commanders or regular soldiers). Often these girls are still in relationships as most depend on their partners for their livelihood and that of their children. In such cases, demobilisation in the first place is even difficult as such girls prefer to stay with their 'husbands' for the sake of an 'assured' livelihood and the wellbeing of their children (growing with both parents).

Moreover, as seen in the above statement about Dinka women, a woman literally belongs to the family of her 'husband.'

In some cases where traditional elders intervene, a solution may often be found to enable the man (who has fathered the children) pay dowry for the girl and enable the two to be formally bound in marriage. Such situations deal demobilisation a harder blow as issues of best interest of the mother-girl-child soldier come into play as well as those of her child/children. While the girl cannot leave her children, she also needs to be provided with a reasonable basis to find her way and help in fending for them. Save for how can she do this when she has to take care of the same children, her 'husband', the homestead, and to some extent, the community in which she belongs - mostly the larger clan where she is married or lives with her children? What then happens in the case of death of the husband who in most cases is the 'breadwinner?' One can only wonder what will happen then to these girls.

Such are the factors that complicate demobilisation and reintegration. In such cases a community-approach is normally encouraged but where the place of a woman is second to that of a man, then it is common that her rights will be violated and probably her best interests thrown to the wind. Interest that she has not only to compromise but to make do without for the sake of her children, her belonging, which she gets by accepting to stay in her marital home and albeit in a small way, a chance to reclaim her lost dignity in the name of 'motherhood' and that of 'being somebody's wife'.

At reintegration, such issues tend to be ignored and former child soldiers regardless of gender and specific needs tend to be lamped together as 'ex-combatants' hence, failure of the reintegration process.

Some experts have singled out that "Girl mothers require special attention to have access to education and livelihood support, in such forms as day care for their children."[147]

Generally, this may not be a bad strategy if such facilities were available in the required proportions throughout the world, unfortunately they are not, least of all in the so-called developing world, Sudan included. Firstly, day care services are as scarce as oases in a desert in Sudan as most women prefer to take care of their children by themselves or get help from their kin.

Secondly, where day care services are available, they are so expensive that most middle class families cannot afford them, least of all girls. Again, here we notice a problem of one-solution-fit-all circumstances, where organisations operating under the banner of 'internationalisation' tend to dictate what should be done in the world over (for example the provision of day care centres), not recognising the differences that exist in various societal contexts.

As if that is not enough, sometimes these girls suffer psychological stress as some of them were sexually abused, raped, gang raped, impregnated and overworked while in combat. They therefore not only require extra psychosocial counselling, but also testing for Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) like HIV/AIDS and others and treatment in the event of positive results.

Then again, in recognising the uniqueness of the experiences of former girl child soldiers, it is easy to forget boy child soldiers who were sexually exploited while in combat.

Singer reminds us that the assumption that only girls were subjected to sexual exploitation during a war is true but largely hinders a holistic approach to the reintegration issue as it excludes boy children who were also sexually abused. This assumption has made it difficult for ex-boy soldiers, who mostly shy away from admitting they were sexually abused to access treatment or psychosocial help.

Vocational training as an option. In some parts of Sudan vocational training has played a significant role in the reintegration process. Scores of girls and boys have been graduated as carpenters, tailors, hairdressers, masons etc and have been employed in relevant firms.

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[147] The United Nations, note 98.

The major setback is that only a limited number of these children can secure employment at the end of their training while most are left jobless.

There is also a severe dearth of centres or programmes from which these children can acquire capital to start their own businesses and be self-employed. Most of them end up doing petty jobs at market places and getting meagre pays.

Child participation. Most scholars have noted that in designing reintegration programmes most governments rarely consult affected children. This lack of participation means that most programmes are bound to be insensitive to the needs of children and eventually fail, as they fall short of addressing fundamental issues. Most governments and organisations have a DDR package containing what is to be done to each child and fail to acknowledge that each child's experience in combat is unique and deserves particular attention. For example some children, prefer vocational training to primary, or formal education for that matter. Since "rules that have to be adhered to," former child soldiers are pushed into primary schools with children half their age and for various reasons, some of which are mentioned above, they drop out.

To add insult to injury, denial by GoS, not to have used children in it ranks made demobilisation and resultant reintegration efforts in the immediate aftermath of the signing of the CPA difficult as most child soldiers in northern Sudan were not subjected to formal DDR processes. This meant that most of them went back to the community without any form of assistance.

Even though the SPLA admitted having used children, there was a somewhat reluctance to admit that girls were part of the group. This is because most commanders and other members wanted to retain girls as their wives. This factor made it difficult to formally demobilise girls and continues to impede reintegration efforts to date.

This feature is not specific to Sudan. In Mozambique for instance, it was reported that 40 percent of 2000 child soldiers found at RENAMO (Mozambique National Resistance) bases in 1994 were girls while at demobilisation, females comprised only 1.5 percent of the combatants.[148]

Due to children's vulnerability, the experience of child soldiering often results to trauma. Trauma refers to an emotional shock which may generate lasting effects on the child. Research has revealed that a large percentage of child soldiers suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a matter of fact, research conducted on child soldiers in the Republic of Congo (RC) found out that, in varying degrees, 40% of them could not sleep (suffered insomnia), 50% had nightmares, 28% felt threatened (by other people) and 25% remained quiet (suffered from some sort of mutism which made them to withdraw and isolate themselves).[149]

In Sudan most children suffer what can be termed as a 'human-to-human trauma'[150]. This means that they have witnessed the physical killing of a human being (in most cases close relatives like parents, sisters and brothers, or close friends) by another. In such situations, scientists recommend family protection as a remedy for rehabilitation.

In cases where parents have died, former child soldiers are normally entrusted to the guardianship of a close relative or sometimes a 'chief'[151].

In taking care of such children, relatives or community members more often than not interpret their experiences in the bush as having put them through a hard life, having survived it to them means that they have passed the litmus test of being self-reliant. They often expect former child soldiers, especially boys to assist in fending for the family. In some cases it may auger 'well' and children can combine laborious chores with going to school or for training. Other times, children cannot keep up

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[148] Sarah Aird, Boia Efraime Junior and Antoinette Errante, 'Mozambique: The Battle Continues for Former Child Soldiers' (Youth Advocate Program International Resource Paper, 2001) <http://www.yapi.org/old/publications/resourcepapers/MozCS.pdf> [accessed 18 July 2010].

[149] ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour Laetitia Dumas; International Labour Office, 'Wounded Childhood : the use of children in armed conflict in Central Africa', 2003, pp. 51-52 <http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Publications/lang--en/docName--WCMS_116566/index.htm> [accessed 18 July 2010].

[150] Boothby Neil "Children, War and Trauma" in Rädda Barnen, *Children in Emergencies such as Armed Conflict and/or Natural Disasters* (New York: Swedish Save the Children, 15 April 1986), p. 15.

[151] The term chief in Sudan does not necessarily refer to a person of political authority at the local village level but in most parts, it is used to refer to s person who is rich, gentle and kind to others.

and they escape. This leaves them with no forms of protection and makes them susceptible to re-recruitment.

In cases where former child soldiers manage to access psycho-social help; there is normally no form of follow-up after a given period of time to monitor their progress. Assistance ends with their release from DDR centres. This greatly deters their reintegration as such children continue to suffer war related trauma many years after their demobilisation or after the end of war.

These points, coupled with the fact that demobilisation and reintegration processes take long leaving most children frustrated and disillusioned, make former child soldiers susceptible to re-recruitment.

5.2   Re-recruitment of Former Child Soldiers: the Danger Posed by Darfur

5.2.1   Synopsis of the Conflict in Darfur

"Darfur" is a word combination of the Arabic word *dar* (home, abode) and the name of the main ethnic group, the Fur, which are said to have inhabited the region since the middle ages. The region is divided into three states: northern Darfur (Shamal Darfur), western Darfur (Gharb Darfur) and southern Darfur (Janub Darfur). The region is largely an arid plateau with the north characterised by sandy deserts and the south, bush forests.

In terms of administration, Darfur was an independent sultanate until 1874 when its then Sultan, Muhammad 'Ali was overthrown. He was overthrown by a slave trader al-Zubayr Rahma Mansur who was later also overthrown in a religious rebellion headed by Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi in 1885. The invasion of the Sultanate by Anglo-Egyptian troops saw its capture in 1898 and Darfur came under the control of the Anglo-Egyptian condominium.

Darfurians traded mostly on slaves; 'the trade was managed by Sultans who levied taxes on traders and export duties on slaves sent to Egypt, and took a share of the slaves brought into Dar Fur'[152]. As time went by, it is said that some household slaves rose to prominent ranks in the sultan's

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[152] See Dr Mohamed Hassan Fadlalla, *The Problem of Dar Fur* (iUniverse, 2005), p. 55.

courts and exercised power over the local population. This upset the traditional class of the Fur which fostered a counter-Mahdiyya opposition. The sultanate briefly revived itself after the overthrow of the Mahdist State by Anglo-Egyptian forces, and maintained an independent existence until its final conquest and incorporation into the Sudan in 1916.[153]

The trans-African pilgrimage route to Mecca passes through Darfur, and as it is common to life, returning pilgrims sojourned or settled, enriching the local variant of Islam. This contributed to Darfur being overwhelmingly Muslim even without being comprised of Arabs.

This fact rules out the possibility of a religious war which partly characterised the long civil war between southern and northern Sudan.

Moreover, it is said that the Islam practiced in different parts of Darfur adopted local characteristics. Collins Robert notes that, 'the Islam practiced by the Fur and Masalit had adopted many African syncretic rituals in their observance that distinguished the indigenous Islam of Western Darfur from the more orthodox Islam of the Darfuris east of the Jabal Marra practiced by the Birgid, Mima, and Berti which has traditionally marked the divide between Islamization and Arabization in Darfur'[154].

Due to interaction and intermarriages, Arabic became the main language in the region. Slowly it began to be used in schools, market places and the royal courts rendered it the lingua Franca of the region. The wide acceptance and use of Arabic provided no motivation to learn the Fur language and there were fears of its extinction.

What we see happening presently in Darfur is said to have its genesis in the 1980s, when against a backdrop of environmental degradation, a drought hit the region and land became a contentious issue and a reason to take up arms against each other. Traditionally, it would be normal in such a region for tribal wars, cattle rustling and crop theft to occur. However what Darfurians, (Gos) and the people of Sudan in general took for granted was the presence of more 'sophisticated' weapons in the area. The politically unstable situation in neighbouring countries like Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR) allowed for a proliferation of arms into the region. Guns, machetes

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[153] Johnson, p. 139.
[154] Collins, p. 274.

and other fighting equipment could cheaply be acquired across the borders from Libya and rebels from neighbouring countries could be hired to lend a hand in looting and raiding.

With a persistent drought and a failed security apparatus, the situation slowly got out of hand and the government's weakness to remedy the state of affairs and its manipulation of the ethnic fabric of the region gradually shifted the nature of the conflict and ethnicity took centre stage.

The chaotic situation was infused with sinister calls for Arab supremacy evidently from the Northern government and Libya. The power of Pan-Arabist ideology (as we have seen in chapter 1), however fictitious its actual base might have been, connected local groups to a wider international community that gave room for a mobilisation of support for the internal conflict in Darfur at the time.

Preoccupied with the war in the South at the time, GoS dismissed the fighting in Darfur as merely tribal and assured the world that the situation was under control. With no help from the central authority, different tribes, people and groups that were affected by the attacks took matters into their own hands and defended themselves, their families and property (again, failure of the state to effect and mobilise security apparatuses). This resulted to the formation of the first rebel group, the *janjaweed*, mainly comprised of the Rizeigat, Taisha, Habbanyia, Misseiria and Baqqara.[155] The word janjaweed locals say refers to a man on horse-back.

By 1989, 5000 Fur had been killed and 40,000 of their homes destroyed, as against 400 Arabs killed and 700 tents burned.[156] Low intensity conflict continued until early 2003, when a number of interacting factors led to the formation of two anti-government political and military resistance movements, the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).[157] The two militia groups emerged mostly to counter attack the janjaweed, the main group that was terrorising the locals especially non-Arabs.

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[155] Alex De Waal, 'Who are the Darfurians? Arab and African Identities, Violence and External Engagement', *Journal of African Affairs*, 2005, 182-205 <doi:10.1093/afraf/adi035>.
[156] Douglas Hamilton Johnson, *The root causes of Sudan's civil wars* (James Currey Publishers, 2003), p. 140.
[157] Fadlalla, p. 59.

5.2.2 Re-recruitment of Former Child Soldiers by Armed Groups in Darfur

Following a string of 'victories' in 2003 from the SLM and JEM, it is reported that the government in Khartoum adopted a scorch earth strategy that heavily relied on the janjaweed and regular government armed forces. The intention to sweep-off the local population was clear as new strategies and techniques were put into practice:

First aircrafts would come over a village, as if smelling the target, then return to release their bombs.[158] With open rear ramps, transport aircrafts would drop bombs onto targeted civilians. Combat helicopters would then follow targeting any buildings like schools, houses or mosques, still standing.

To ensure that the job was well done, the janjaweed would arrive either on their own or in the company of regular army troops, surround the targeted area and unleash their hate. It is during these ordeals that girls and women were raped and branded with hot iron so as to be recognized later as 'tainted', leaving them permanently tormented.

Valuables were stolen, animals either rustled or killed, houses torched down and anything that was still alive killed. Children being light were sometimes tossed into burning houses and girl children abducted. Reports by survivors stated that verbal insults such as *Zurqa* ("Black") and *abid* ("slaves") were hurled at them.[159]

The use of 'sophisticated' war machinery such as transport planes, Antonovs, guns and others points to the involvement of a superior power with some capacity (legal capacity) to afford and acquire such weapons in the conflict. It would be extremely expensive for a local militia, with no source of funds, in a poverty stricken area like Darfur to afford such artillery.

Moreover, given that the janjaweed were operating in the company of regular army troops is suspect and evident of government participation. That the attacks were well meditated co-ordinated and only launched on selected villages indicates a clear intension to sweep off a certain people.

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[158] M. W. Daly, *Darfur's sorrow: a history of destruction and genocide* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 283.
[159] Daly, p. 283; Gérard Prunier, *Darfur: the ambiguous genocide* (Cornell University Press, 2007), p. 100.

The government has been unable to halt the ongoing conflict in Darfur. The Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) of 2006 was only signed by one faction of the SLM, SLM-Minnawi and the government of Sudan. It was rejected by JEM (Justice and Equality Movement) and other factions which claimed that the DPA failed to sufficiently address issues of power-sharing, representation in government, disarmament of the Janjaweed militia and provide for a victim's compensation fund. Thus it failed to bring about a permanent and total ceasefire in the area.

Given that reintegration efforts mostly in the South take long and children are left in reintegration- and internally displaced persons' (IDPs) camps for long makes them susceptible to re-recruitment. The on-going conflict in Darfur provides fertile ground for their re-recruitment not so far away from home.

The UN reported the recruitment and use of 487 children by various armed groups operating in all three Darfur states with a majority taking place in the Western state. The fragmentation and proliferation of opposition armed groups have created fertile ground for recruitment, with over 14 Sudanese and foreign armed groups identified in the region for recruiting and using Children.

These groups include, Chadian rebel forces, government forces including Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), government of Sudan-allied militias (Janjaweed), Central Reserve Police, the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)/Minni Minnawi, SLA (Abu Gasim)/Mother Wing, SLA (Free Will), SLA (Abdul Wahid), the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM(Peace Wing)), and the Popular Defence Forces.[160]

The fact that poverty levels in Darfur like else where in Sudan are high and that rebel groups pay, makes joining these groups even more attractive.

Prunier states that, "recruits were paid what amounted to a good salary in the economic circumstances of the region; $ 79 a month for a man on foot and $117 if he had a horse or camel."[161]

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[160] United Nations, note 101; United Nations Security Council-2007, note 101.
[161] Prunier, G. *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide* (London: Hurst & Company, 2005&2007), 98.

Officers-i.e. those who could read or who were tribal commanders (*amir*) could get as much as $233.[162]

Armed groups in Darfur and the neighbouring countries of Chad, Central African Republic (CAR) and Uganda (northern Uganda) are not the only ones recruiting children. In some states, the SPLA has been reported to be including previously registered children in troop movements prior to the children being officially released. Participation of children in SAF has also been witnessed in the areas around Abyei.[163]

5.3 Reintegration of Former Child Soldiers: A Global Challenge

Given that child soldiery is not only an issue in Sudan but in many nations of the world, makes it a global problem.

On DDR, the CPA called for the mobilisation of adequate financial and logistical support by the international community including governments, governmental agencies, humanitarian organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).[164] It further called upon organisations like UNICEF, the ICRC and other international organisations to assist in the child component of the DDR in Sudan.[165] The call for support from the international community signifies the novelty as well as universality of the DDR phenomenon. Appealing for help from the international community shows that Sudan recognises the importance of involving other international players in matters concerning children in the country.

Moreover, given that the rights and freedoms of children are enshrined and protected in IHL instruments, international conventions, covenant declarations and rules just goes to show how global reintegration really is. The reaction of people in different parts of the world has proved helpful and bolstered cooperation among them in order to rid 'the world's children' the risk of enlistment in armed conflict.

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[162] Ibid., 98.
[163] United Nations, note 100.
[164] Demobilisation, Disarmament, Reintegration and Reconciliation Government of the Sudan (CPA), Annexure 1. Part III, note 24.12.
[165] Government of the Sudan (CPA), note 24.11.

Hopes to combat the vice are kept alive more by the global response we are witnessing to mass human catastrophes that tend to overshadow local undertakings; 'when the world's public reacts; it also demands a meaningful response from governments'[166] (the government of Sudan included).

In this vein it is important for the government to work with NGOs, active in Sudan, that champion a child-rights approach and which have expertise on child- and human rights like UNICEF, Save the Children Alliance (SCA), ICRC and others to ensure that reintegration is successful.

In Sudan however, there is no cohesive coordination of reintegration activities between the government and non-governmental organisations (local or international). Operations tend to be done by individual organisations in their own terms hence multi-standards. Additionally, governmental funds directed towards reintegration are scarce thus heavy reliance on international humanitarian organisations. This has proved helpful at times but other times, it has been detrimental to reintegration as sometimes these organisations have limited capacities and not familiar with existent cultures and perceptions. As Singer points out, outside governments and agencies have been ill prepared to deal with the increased number of children in war. For example, within the US (United States) government, the responsibilities for backing disarmament and demobilisation efforts are disjointed, spread out over a number of federal agencies, and often have little pragmatic expertise on how to respond to the growing use of child soldiers.[167] Thus bogus mechanisms which don't help children as anticipated tend to be put in place. Their emulation without prior regard to context is what in my opinion has been even more detrimental to reintegration activities.

On the other hand, many international organisations working in Sudan have different goals and objectives. Sometimes these goals vary distinctly from those of government and staff of such organisations is expelled.

Security hiccups also hinder the smooth running of international organisations.

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[166] Namzi Baquer M. "Children as Zones of Peace" in Rädda Barnen, p. 12.
[167] Singer, p. 187.

The ICRC for example has been working in Sudan since 1978[168]. Its roles include, *inter alia*, tracing relatives of unaccompanied refugee children including child soldiers, supplying household items, fishing kits, tools, seed and food to thousands of displaced people and providing them and residents with access to clean drinking.

In 2009, for instance, two of the CRC's expatriate staff (one of whom was released on 6 February 2010 after 89 days in captivity) was kidnapped in Western Darfur and eastern Chad.[169]

The GoNU should as a matter of international responsibility and in show of *bona fides* (good faith) ensure maintenance of ample security for the staff and property of such organisations in order for them to work optimally. It should also work hand-in-hand with these organisations to ensure that the families of former child soldiers are retraced and children not only reunited with their families but also that they are well reintegrated.

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[168] The ICRC, 'The ICRC in Sudan' <http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/sudan> [accessed 12 August 2010].
[169] The ICRC.

6. Conclusion and Suggestions for Future Research

An examination of the history of Sudan has revealed that problems that emanated during the colonial period were consequently carried forward to the post-colonial era. These problems were not aptly addressed by successive post-colonial governments and these led to their expansion and later civil wars. It took a long period of negotiations, characterised by disagreements that further resorted to war and hatred among the warring factions, simply put, between northern and southern Sudan. Even after the signing of the CPA, the refusal of the northern based government of Sudan to sign the Abyei boundaries treaty resulted to fighting in the area that spread so fast to the neighbouring areas showing just how fragile the peace in Sudan still is.

It is important as discussed in the theories of conflict and conflict resolution above, that parties to the CPA continuously engage in dialogue and negotiations aimed at minimising their incompatibilities so that with time, sustainable peace may be achieved.

Additionally, it is clear that a situation of war cannot ensure sufficient protection of children. As revealed in the various chapters of this thesis, the existence of war provides fertile ground for the conscription of children into armed forces and especially by irregular armed groups. The prevalence of peace in Sudan is therefore an important constituent that will prevent the exposure of children to conflict and consequently stop their recruitment.

The problematic of using one universal definition of children as persons under 18 years old and therefore former child soldiers as those persons younger than 18 who have participated in armed forces or groups – either on voluntary basis or by coercion – directly or in a supporting function where participation includes fighting, guarding, cooking, or serving as a porter, messenger, spy or sex slave, cannot be ignored.

Different cultures view children differently and their beliefs, traditions and contexts determine how they define a child. These definitions vary widely from one society to another. In this regard, it is difficult to tag a number and use it for children universally.

Nevertheless, the fact that Sudan has ratified international instruments like the CRC which recognise persons under 18 years as children means that it is bound *de jure* by those instruments.

Ratification of international child rights instruments means that states parties undertake to protect children (under 18s) within their jurisdiction from exploitation and abuse, including protection from recruitment and enlistment into armed groups and forces. Post-conflict or not, a state is bound by these treaties and conventions and failure to uphold them equals a breach of international law. The commitment to uphold child rights at all times is lacking in Sudan. This lack of commitment, at times cased by what I have called a priority crisis is what causes a post-conflict state like Sudan to shove the issue of reintegration of former child soldiers to the side ignoring their plight. Among other factors this leads not only to failure in reintegration but also to constant abuse of children's rights.

The factors that pulled children into armed conflict in Sudan were numerous; poverty, the presence of war, the appeal to a sense of patriotism, the urge to revenge past grievances, the list is endless! The fact that the CPA brought a considerable share of peace is remarkable but this, as illustrated in the life cycle of conflict, does not mean that Sudan is in a state of no conflict, it is to a certain degree still in conflict. These issues have not been fully addressed, for example poverty is still the main incentive that leads to the re-recruitment of former child soldiers.

For progress in reintegration to be realised, it is crucial that the root causes that drove children to conflict in the first place be addressed. This is the only way that the lost childhoods of these children can be restored and recruitment and the temptation of indulgence into armed conflict be stopped.

In spite of the existence of traditional approaches that provide an important cornerstone to former child soldiers' psychological and emotional healing and enable their acceptance back into respective communities, on their own, are not enough to ensure optimal reintegration.

As discussed in this paper, what I call effective reintegration cannot be realised if traditional approaches are not complemented with such vital life-skills-acquisition mechanisms as education and/or training and eventually employment.

Additionally, in some tribal groups where it has been found out that a child soldier was involved in killing a member of another tribal group or clan, compensation is usually demanded. Failure to pay the demanded amount, either in cash or in kind leads to revenge attacks in the name of retribution. In such cases, an institutionalised form of assistance for poor tribes and or clans would be a step in avoiding internal conflicts.

The observable fact of child soldiering as we know it today is a relatively new one. Although Africa has been hard hit by it, child soldiering is not *sui generis* to the continent but common in the world over. Internationalisation of the issue, although unconstructive to countries and therefore children at times, can be a good platform to share experiences and promote best practices when it comes to devising reintegration programmes. Local, national and especially international organisations can play an instrumental role in sensitising the world of the consequences of child soldiering.

Nevertheless, the global nature of the issue does not and should not give governments an escape channel to abscond their duties to their people.

Though young, in the sense that most of its territory (except Darfur) is emerging from a long period of conflict, the republic of the Sudan needs to prioritise the needs of children, especially vulnerable groups of children like former child soldiers at this stage of peace building if peace is to be maintained within its borders. Not addressing the issue of child soldiers has so far proved detrimental to the government as it's national security is jeopardised.

This is seen in the way that former child soldiers are hired by various tribal groups to raid other neighbouring tribes. It is also common to find former child soldiers in vigilante groups. Most of them claim lack of employment or apathy as a cause for their involvement in crime.

Out of frustration and sometimes confusion of how to rid themselves of the torments of war, some of these children resort to alcoholism, and drug use and abuse. Some of them become juvenile delinquents, a growing phenomenon in Sudanese town centres.

Article 2 (a) of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) prohibits the recruitment of children in armed conflict. In detail, it out rightly prohibits:

'All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.'[170]

From this article, and other legal instruments discussed in this thesis, it is clear that involvement of children in armed conflict is damaging to their wellbeing in many ways, worst among them is the ripping off of their precious childhoods.

On the other hand, the fact that children have been used in armed conflict and in some cases have been perpetrators of the worst forms of violence cannot be thrown out of the window since this might encourage the use of children to commit atrocities. To this end, there is need to put in place laws that bar adults from using children as well as those that make it possible to prosecute young offenders for atrocities they have committed in armed conflicts so long as their best interests is taken into consideration. And they are subjected to fair trial without the possibility of being subjected to a death sentence or life imprisonment without possibility of release.

Some organisations like ACT (the Action Plan Project for Children in Armed Conflict) have taken a bold step and called for the 'establishment of a specialised international tribunal on War Crimes against Children'[171] as a result of the increase in the number of child perpetrators of war crimes. The establishment of such a court, it is hoped will discourage the use of children in hostilities as well as bar children themselves from committing atrocities.

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[170] International Labour Organisation (ILO).
[171] Bennet.

Nonetheless, the reintegration of former child soldiers back into their respective societies is quintessential to restoring this lost childhoods. As this paper has shown, there is neither one single and perfect way to approach reintegration nor are there a perfectly knitted set of rules laid down for reintegration. Instead, several, fundamental factors unique to particular contexts need to be identified and engaged and if need be, tweaked, to the needs of former child soldiers in those contexts.

In the same vein, reintegration and all the processes and activities involved in rehabilitation former child soldiers, should not be seen as independent variables. Rather, they should be perceived as part of an overall strategy that works towards restoring the lost opportunity of childhood and securing a future for this group of children.

Shortcoming of this research and suggestions for future research:

A major impediment to effective reintegration pointed out in this thesis is that children are rarely involved when designing DDR programmes. Their opinion is hardly ever sought. An impediment to which, for pragmatic reasons, this paper has succumbed to, to a certain extend. In an attempt to delve deeper into the reintegration question, it would be valuable if future researches in this area included interviews from children, government officials and humanitarian workers as part of their research methodology.

Literature on child soldiers has also largely ignored comparative in depth research carried out over time. Different accounts of child-and former child soldiers from different countries are normally given, but rarely a comparative study of what happens to children in post-conflict situations after being reunified with families in a given period of time. Research in this direction would shed more light not only on the DDR processes but also monitor adaptation of former child soldiers to their new environments.

This, I believe will provide a solid basis for the sharing of experiences and probably lead to best practices not only in reintegration but in dealing with issues surrounding child soldiers in general.

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