

Violence, and the fear of it, impact immediately on the people's use of the land, and result in food insecurity, which in turn propels movement, or displacement. The World Food Programme's Annual Needs Assessment for the year 2000 has identified the Pariang/Ruweng County area and the oil area around Duar and Koch, land south of the Bahr El Ghazal river and the site not of Talisman operations but of those of the Swedish oil company, IPC/Lundin, to suffer the highest food shortages directly linked to insecurity: "An estimated 30-40% of the population will have no harvest this year since they were forced to move away from their land at different times during the cultivation period."

The WFP is convinced that the insecurity in Western Upper Nile, also known as Unity State, owes everything to the initial fighting between militia factions over control of the oilfields and the fighting around GOS garrison towns now that the factions have united "to start a full-scale war against the export of the oil out of the South."

The October 26 Policy Statement declared that if it becomes evident that oil extraction is exacerbating the conflict in Sudan, or resulting in violations of human rights or humanitarian law, the Government of Canada may consider applying economic and trade restrictions. The Assessment Mission to Sudan would "help inform the Government of Canada in their examination of such options."

Dr. Jim Buckee, President and CEO of Talisman Energy, wrote at length to the Minister of Foreign Affairs responding to the major points of the Policy Statement, and assured him that "corporate ethics has always been a strong internal priority at Talisman."

With respect to encouraging the GOS to allow for independent experts to examine allegations of forced removals, Dr. Buckee reported that he had raised this point with the Sudanese ministers for Energy and Foreign Affairs and with Dr. El Turabi and had received positive assurances. He also made the point that no Talisman executive or worker had ever seen any evidence of forced removals in and around the oilfields, and the company looked forward to co-operating with the Assessment Mission as it pursued this aspect of its mandate.

Similarly with respect to initiating discussions on the equitable and peaceful use of oil revenues, he pointed to the new Sudanese constitution as providing for the revenues to be properly shared, and informed the minister that Talisman has suggested to the GOS that the IMF could be very instrumental in any verification process, particularly to guarantee that oil revenues neither go to defence spending or allow for this to increase.

Concerning the need to urge the GOS to recommit to progress under IGAD towards peace in Sudan, Dr. Buckee was convinced that everyone is tired of the war and genuinely want to accelerate the IGAD peace process, the slowness of which was in fact causing frustration among Sudanese leaders.