

## STATISTICS AND BACKGROUND

**Independence:** 1 January 1956 (from Egypt and Britain)

**Population** (1997 estimate): **32.6 million**

**Location:** Northern Africa, bordering the Red Sea between Egypt (N); Eritrea and Ethiopia (E); Kenya, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (S); and Libya, Chad and the Central African Republic (W).

**Size:** 2,505,810 km<sup>2</sup> (967,000 square miles)

**Major Cities:** Capital - Khartoum [Khartoum, Omdurman and Khartoum North]; Juba, Wau, Malakal, Atbara, Kassala, Wad Medani, Nyala, el-Fasher, el-Obeid, Port Sudan.

**Languages:** Arabic (official), Dinka, Bedawi, Nuer, Fur, Hausa, Zande, English, and various other Nilo-Saharan, and Afro-Asiatic languages.

**Major Ethnic/Linguistic Groups:** [Afro]-Arab (c.40%), Beja, Dinka (c.12%), Fur, Nuba, Nubian, Nuer, Zande/Azande. The Arab group is ethnically diverse, but bound by language and religion. The Dinka are the largest single ethnic group.

### Religion

The media's shorthand simplification of "Muslim-Arab north, Christian-African south" is inaccurate. There are thousands of Muslims in the south of Sudan, and millions of Christians and believers in traditional African religions in the north.

**Muslim (Sunni) c.60-70%** - Islam is the state religion, but many Sudanese Muslims are more influenced by tolerant Sufi philosophies than by the absolutist attitudes of the National Islamic Front. Degrees of orthodoxy are variable. In Darfur, sorghum beer (*marissa*) is a long-established nutritional resource consumed by otherwise devout Muslims.

**Traditional beliefs c.35%** - Belief in traditional African religions persists among converts to monotheism.

**Christian 5-15%** - Growing adherence to Christianity is reported among southerners, Nuba and other marginalised peoples in Sudan, as they have been increasingly subjected to second-class citizenship and discrimination on account of their perceived "backwardness". Many are converting to Christianity to resist the forcible imposition of Islam by northerners who regard believers in traditional African religions as having no culture. However, the south can not be considered Christian by culture, since customary practices such as polygamy have long been an intrinsic part of southern cultures, even though they are contrary to Christian doctrine.

### Money

- **Currency:** The Sudanese pound (£Sud) was replaced in mid-1999 by the Sudanese dinar, which is worth £Sud10 and had been in circulation for several years alongside the old currency.
- **Exchange Rate:** US\$1 = 250 dinars (September 1999)
- **Gross Domestic Product** (1997): c.\$3.8 billion

- **Real GDP Growth Rate** (1997 estimate): 4.0%
- **Inflation Rate** (1997 estimate): 65.0%
- **Current Account Deficit** (1997): c. -\$807 million
- **Major Trading Partners:** Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Italy, European Union
- **Exports** (1997 estimate): \$634 million
- **Imports** (1997 estimate): \$1,260 million
- **Trade Deficit** (1997): c. -\$626 million
- **Main Exports:** Cotton, livestock, meat, hides, gum arabic, other agricultural products
- **Main Imports:** Arms, food, petroleum products, machinery
- **Total External Debt** (1999): c.\$20 billion
- **Arrears to the IMF:** c.\$1.6bn

### Energy Overview

**Total Energy Consumption** (1996E): 0.0690 quadrillion Btu

**Energy Consumption per Capita** (1996E): 2.3 million Btu

**Energy-related Carbon Emissions** (1996E): 1.04 million metric tons (0.017% of world carbon emissions)

**Carbon Emissions per Capita** (1996E): 0.34 metric tons per person/year (v. 5.5 metric tons in US)

### Oil & Gas

- **Oil Reserves:** 262.1 million barrels (proven January 1998). By the year 2015 the total current estimate of recoverable resources of 750 million barrels will have been exhausted unless new fields are found and developed. (Talisman now claims the recoverable reserves may be up to 950 million barrels)
- **Crude Oil Production:** 12,000 barrels per day (1998); 136,000 b/d in September 1999.
- **Oil Consumption:** 30,000 b/d (1998 estimate)
- **Natural Gas Reserves:** 3 trillion cubic feet (1998 estimate)

### Electricity

- **Generation Capacity:** 500 megawatts (1996)
- **Generation / Consumption:** c. 1.3 billion kwh (1996 estimate)