

The "corridors of tranquillity" have been extended several times by both sides beyond the one month period of time originally intended. In fact, they have been cited by many as having directly contributed to the long-term peace process -- such as it is --in the Sudan.⁵²

Not only do the "corridors" constitute a humanitarian ceasefire of a different order, they also set other precedents. One observer remarked that Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), as the UNICEF mission is called, has established the right of civilians caught up in war, to have access to relief aid as well as the right of outside humanitarian agencies to supply it.⁵³ This description would apply equally to the less publicized immunization ceasefires held in Lebanon and El Salvador. Sudan has also been cited as the first example in which two parties to a civil war agreed on a common plan of action to protect and supply civilians on both sides of a conflict.⁵⁴ In neither Lebanon nor El Salvador was there any formal agreement between the warring parties to the ceasefires.

These three cases -- El Salvador, Lebanon and the Sudan -- demonstrate that the concept of a ceasefire for humanitarian purposes is feasible. Beyond that, it remains to be demonstrated what humanitarian ceasefires can contribute to the ultimate resolution of conflict. This is an all-important issue. A ceasefire negotiated for the purpose of supplying humanitarian aid to the civilian population is valuable and worthwhile in its own right. The most common objection to the notion of a temporary abatement of military hostilities to fulfil a humanitarian need, however, is that once that need is fulfilled, the recipients are flung back into the path of conflict.

This irony has not gone unappreciated by those who have been involved in negotiating humanitarian ceasefires. That is why the Plan of Action for Sudan called for

⁵² See: *Ibid.*, p. 3; Also see: Robert M Press, "Cautious Search for Peace in the Sudan," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 8-14 June 1989, p. 4.

⁵³ Mohammed Abdul, "A Lifeline for Sudan," *The Washington Post*, 25 May 1989.

⁵⁴ United Nations, *Press Release*, 29 May 1989, p. 2.