

## **Human Security in Sudan: Executive Summary**

### **1. Introduction**

On October 26, 1999, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy and the Minister for International Co-operation, Maria Minna, announced several Canadian initiatives to bolster international efforts backing a negotiated settlement to the 43-year civil war in Sudan, including the announcement of an assessment mission to Sudan to examine allegations about human rights abuses, including the practice of slavery.

There are few other parts of the world where human security is so lacking, and where the need for peace and security - precursors to sustainable development - is so pronounced. Canada's commitment to human security, particularly the protection of civilians in armed conflict, provides a clear basis for its involvement in Sudan and its support for the peace process.

#### **Charm Offensive, or Signs of Progress?**

Following the visit to Khartoum of an EU Mission, a political dialogue was launched by the European Union on November 11 1999. The EU was of the view that there has been sufficient progress in Sudan to warrant a renewed dialogue. In this view, there has been a positive change, and it is necessary to encourage the Sudanese, and push them further where there is need. It is the view of the EU that the human rights situation has improved but needs further improvement.

This view echoes, in part, that of the UN Special Rapporteur, Leonardo Franco, who has said that the GOS has adopted some measures deserving recognition and international support. Foremost among these must be the new Constitution, which the GOS, Talisman executives, and others, say protects the rights of the Sudanese people, including their right to properly shared oil revenues.

#### **Mandate**

Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy has frequently spoken out against the impact of the civil war in Sudan on human security in that country, and he strongly reiterated his concerns regarding the conflict and the human rights situation during a meeting with the Sudanese Minister of Foreign Affairs in New York in September 1999. The two ministers also discussed the role of the oil sector in Sudan. An Assessment Mission was agreed on, mandated to:

- a) independently investigate human rights violations, specifically in reference to allegations of slavery and slavery-like practices in Sudan, and
- b) to investigate and report on the alleged link between oil development and human rights violations, particularly in respect of the forced removal of populations around the oilfields and oil related development.