

The profits are used to support the SPLM/A, buy arms and ammunition, and even to build a power base in opposition to John Garang, which, it is said, has caused a rift in SPLM/A, because those who object (including Garang) are reluctant to publicly expose it for fear of splintering the rebel movement. Sometimes a "redeeming group" may be innocently misled, but other groups may be actively committed to fundraising for the SPLM/A, and deliberately use "slave redemption" as a successful tactic for attracting Western donors.

We did speak with an eyewitness who can confirm observing a staged redemption and this testimony conformed with other reports we had from a variety of credible sources.

Interestingly, even UNICEF has been accused of "Staged abduction redemption", in their case of recycling children from IDP camps. The accusations force UNICEF to be sure to focus on proper documentation, and it wishes CSI and others lived by the importance of this aspect of the struggle.

Some Conclusions.

The Governor, or Wali, of Bahr El Ghazal is said to have told a German parliamentary delegation bluntly that although he is governor and head of security, his decisions are only hypothetical – the Sudanese Army and security do what they want.

We cannot say what these state institutions want, but the practice of Arab raiders making life hell in Dinka villages in Bahr El Ghazal is either a measure of the inability of Sudan, a state at war, to provide human security to its citizens, or it is a war strategy, one wilfully dismissive of humanitarian law as it applies to internal conflict. It would have to be one rooted in a cultural disdain for the Dinka by the Arab elite which cannot admit to itself or others that something very much like slavery is going on under their noses and so, shamefully turns a collective blind eye.

Either condition demands serious effort by the GOS to redress the situation. The support for armed raiders must stop, and the GOS must find the will and the way to look at the practice clearly, and move firmly to eradicate it.

The creation of CEAWC is a first step, but so far an insufficient one, towards ending a practice, Abduction into a condition of being owned by another person, which must be stopped. At this time, perhaps 15,000 Sudanese women and children live in such a terrible status. The GOS, focusing on the visible absence of "classical Slave markets", bristles at the use of the term Slavery more than at the plight of these women and children, and for this absolute misplacement of moral indignation there can be no sympathy whatsoever. Certainly, all our sympathy is with the women and children and their devastated communities.

That so many of these communities are preyed on by those relied on by the GOS to guard its supply-lines places the burden of responsibility on that government, and it must bring this practice to an end. It cannot rely on the efforts of CEAWC alone.