Counter-Insurgency on the Cheap
Author(s): Alex de Waal
Source: *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 31, No. 102, Agendas, Past & Future (Dec., 2004), pp. 716-725
Published by: Taylor & Francis, Ltd.
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/4007044
Accessed: 05-12-2015 18:02 UTC

Counter-Insurgency on the Cheap

Alex de Waal

Darfur's landscapes have a cruel beauty, and few are more unyielding than the nomadic encampment of Aamo. It is in a stony wasteland on a plain ringed by mountains formed from ancient volcanic cores. A distant sweep of pink sand marks the course of a seasonal river, Wadi Kutum. Many years ago, I stayed there as a guest of the nazir ('paramount chief') of a clan of Arab nomads known as the Jalul. With their broad black tents pitched on the sand, camels browsing on the thorn trees, and sparse but finely worked possessions, they were the stuff of coffee-table ethnography books. Today, Aamo lies at the centre of the violence that is disfiguring Darfur: tens of thousands are already dead and hundreds of thousands have been driven from their homes. The first massacre of the conflict took place just a few miles from Aamo, when the Janjawiid militia murdered several dozen villagers who had sought safety in the town of Kutum.

I met the elderly nazir, Sheikh Hilal Musa, in 1985. His tent was hung with the paraphernalia of a lifetime's nomadism – water jars, saddles, spears, swords, leather bags and an old rifle. He invited me to sit opposite him on a fine Persian rug, summoned his retainer to serve sweet tea on a silver platter, and told me the world was coming to an end. At that time, Darfur was gripped by drought and disturbing changes were afoot. The Saharan winds were blowing sand onto fertile hillsides, and when it rained the water was cutting gullies through the rich alluvial soil along the wadi. Worse, the villagers who had always played host to camel nomads were now barring their migrations, and stopping them from using pastures and wells.

Hilal rebuked me for not speaking Arabic like an Englishman: all colonial officers had been schooled in classical Arabic, not the Darfurian Sudanese version I had picked up. He said that the last Englishman who had enjoyed his hospitality was Assistant District Commissioner Thesiger, who had served in Kutum. Thesiger was famous in Darfur chiefly as a crack shot. In those days, only British officers were permitted to own rifles with enough power and accuracy to bring down a lion. By the time of my visit in 1985, privately owned firearms were a rarity. The nazir gave me a giraffe-tail fly whisk when I left. More as a result of ecological change than colonial hunting parties, lion and giraffe have now vanished from all but the southern fringes of Darfur, where the forests stretch into southern Sudan and Central African Republic. In the semi-arid plateaux of north Darfur, as the savannas fade into desert, we saw only the occasional gazelle.

Hilal was a commanding figure, even in his eighties, thin, stooped and nearly blind. The Sufis – and almost all Darfurians are followers of one or another Sufi sect, mostly of West African origin – talk of baraka, a God-given charisma or blessing. 'Sheikhdom comes from God,' Hilal believed. 'The degrees of sheikhdom are man-made.' Rather than the formally superior title of nazir, he stuck with the lowlier but more meaningful sheikh: he was known across the vastness of Darfur simply as Sheikh Hilal. Today the name of his son Musa is known even more widely: Musa Hilal is the leader of the Janjawiid; his name is first on the US government's list of suspected war criminals.

Sheikh Hilal was unbendingly proud of his nomadic way of life. He insisted that everyone in his tribe possessed camels. 'Look at that small boy,' he said, pointing to his grandson. 'Even he owns camels.' This was probably true: even in those straitened times, Hilal's family

was reputed to have several thousand, although the sheikh was too old to ride a camel and rarely saw them. His herds were three hundred miles to the north, pasturing on the sweet grasses of the desert, after the rains. His nephew had recently sold 120 camels to provide food for hungry kinsmen, and Hilal had loaned many to poor relatives, from a herd that was shrinking faster than he knew. 'We assist each other. No Jalul will ever need to cultivate,' he said.

But only an hour's walk away, we found an encampment of Jalul who had lost their camels and goats during the drought and had settled in an attempt to farm. The local villagers, from the Tunjur group (a close relation of the Fur, the largest ethnic group in the region), had given them only dry, sandy soil, keeping the alluvium next to the wadi for themselves. Famous for its sweet dates, Wadi Kutum is among the most valuable farmland in north Darfur, and the Tunjur were careful to register it long before other farmers realised the importance of legal title to land. The Jalul farmers were resentful, scratching at the arid uplands in an attempt to grow a few heads of millet. Their sheikh did his best to keep up pretences. In the evening he served a lavish meal of goat and rice, and gave us directions to where we could find his sons and camels. When we finished, having eaten more than enough, he called out to his niece: 'Bring the next course!' There was no next course.

The British conquered Dar Fur ('Land of the Fur') in 1916, defeating the army of Sultan Ali Dinar, descendant of the 17th-century founder of the Fur sultanate, Suleiman Solong, whose long neglected grave lies in the mountains a day's drive south of Aamo. Like many of Darfur's key political leaders, Solong was of mixed ancestry, the son of an Arab father and a Fur mother. Despite talk of 'Arabs' and 'Africans', it is rarely possible to tell on the basis of skin colour which group an individual Darfurian belongs to. All have lived there for centuries and all are Muslims.

Many maps of Darfur have tribal names scrawled across wide territories, implying that some areas are inhabited exclusively by one of the region's thirty or more ethnic groups. This can be misleading: there is such a long history of internal migration, mixing and intermarriage that ethnic boundaries are mostly a matter of convenience. Individuals, even whole groups, can shed one label and acquire another. When the British overran the region, they found it convenient to suppose that paramount chiefs had precisely demarcated authority over ethnic groups and jurisdiction over the corresponding territory. Darfurians concurred with this fiction, which helped the British administer Darfur with just a handful of colonial officers. The key to making this 'native administration' system work was to award a territory, or dar, to each group. It wasn't land ownership exactly, but the paramount chiefs were allowed to allocate land rights to residents. Until the drought of the 1980s, there was enough land to provide newcomers, of whatever ethnicity, with a plot to farm.

The nomads were an anomaly in this system. Most of those conventionally described as nomads are in fact herders who occupy well-defined areas, but there were a few true nomadic groups in Darfur, such as Sheikh Hilal's Jalul Rizeigat. They moved vast distances between dry-season grazing areas in central and southern Darfur and wet-season pastures on the edge of the desert in the north. In the 1970s, the socialist government of Jaafar Nimeiri gave the Jalul a 'rural people's council' in the form of a village called Fata Borno (where we left the road to find Aamo), but this was merely an administrative convenience, a place where they could register to vote and send their children to school. For pasturing their herds, the Jalul relied on mobility, traversing the

migration routes between the farms of Fur and Tunjur villagers, grazing their camels on the hillsides. Sheikh Hilal described what can best be thought of as a 'moral geography' of Darfur. It resembled a chequerboard, with the red squares representing farms, and the white pastures his herds could graze. 'Wherever there is grass and rain, Allah provides that that is my home,' he said. Ahmed Diraige, a former governor of Darfur and, since then, a long-time opposition politician, recalls how his father, Ibrahim, a Fur shartai (shartai is another word for a paramount chief), hosted Sheikh Hilal's clan and their camels every season in his village, Kargula, on the southern slopes of the mountain of Jebel Marra. Shartai Ibrahim would slaughter a bull to welcome the Jalul, who would pasture their camels on the harvested fields, thus fertilising them, and help the villagers transport their grain to market. When he left, Hilal would present two young camels to his host. Like many other Darfurian Arabs, Hilal casually used racist epithets, such as zurga ('black'), to refer to the Fur and Tunjur farmers. The farmers in their turn described the bedouin as savages and pagans. But the two communities relied on one another, and their leading families intermarried.

Without a dar, the Jalul and the handful of other nomadic groups relied on a socio-geographical order that gave them customary rights to migrate and pasture their animals in areas dominated by farmers. This worked for decades, but by the 1980s, drought, desertification and the expansion of farms were threatening these rights. Sheikh Hilal's moral geography had been disturbed: the cosmic order had given way to chaos. But he would rather die than change.

'Native administration' was local government on the cheap. The chiefs were paid a pittance, receiving their reward through local despotism. After Sudan achieved independence in 1956, successive governments attempted to build up local services such as police, schools and clinics. The positions of sheikhs and nazirs were formally abolished and 'people's councils' set up to do the same job. But Khartoum never delivered the funds and, by the early 1980s, local government was bankrupt. If the governor of Darfur wanted to mount a police operation against bandits, he had to commandeer vehicles and fuel from two rural development projects funded by the World Bank, or from an aid agency. If he wanted to hold an inter-tribal conference to resolve a dispute, he had to ask wealthy citizens to cover the expenses.

A succession of local conflicts erupted in Darfur in the wake of the drought and famine of 1984-85. On the whole, the pastoral groups were pitted against the farmers in what had become a bitter struggle for diminishing resources. The government couldn't intervene effectively, so people armed themselves. A herd of a thousand camels represents more than a million dollars on the hoof: only the most naïve herd-owner would not buy automatic rifles to arm his herders. The villagers armed themselves in response. There was an attempt at a reconciliation conference in 1989, but its recommendations were never implemented.

It was also in 1989 that the Islamists toppled Sadiq al-Mahdi's government in Khartoum. (Sadiq had won elections in 1986, the year after Nimeiri was deposed.) The head of state was now the devout and ruthless soldier, Omar al-Bashir, who ruled in uneasy alliance with Hassan al-Turabi, the charismatic leader of the country's Islamist party. With the Islamists in power, the Darfur regional government tried to compensate for the rarity with which it caught criminals by the savagery of the punishments it meted out: execution and public display of the corpse for armed robbers, amputation for thieves. In 1994, the government brought back the old native administration council and allocated territories to chiefs. With no funds to

provide services, a suddenly renewed authority to distribute land (now becoming scarce) and self-armed vigilantes all around, this was a charter for local-level ethnic cleansing. Immediately after this administrative reform, there was another round of killings in the far west of Darfur. Much of the present conflict, then, has its origins in land rights and the shortcomings of local administration. But central government, too, is implicated in Darfur's plight, with neglect and manipulation playing equal parts.

Geography is Against Darfur

The large town of el Geneina, at the westernmost edge of Darfur, close to the border with Chad, is said to be further from the sea than any other town on the continent. This part of Darfur, popularly known as Dar Masalit after the dominant group, was only absorbed into Sudan in 1922, by a treaty between the sultan and the British. Quite recently, the sultan's grandson, holding court in a decrepit palace, used to joke that he still had the right to secede from Sudan, and he pointedly hung maps of Dar Masalit and Africa on his wall, but not of Sudan.

The train from Khartoum terminates at Nyala in southern Darfur after a three-day journey. It is at least another day's drive to el Geneina, if the road is not cut by wadis carrying rainwater from the massif of Jebel Marra. Khartoum has ignored Darfur: its people have received less education, less healthcare, less development assistance and fewer government posts than any other region – even the Southerners, who took up arms 21 years ago to fight for their rights, had a better deal. Within Darfur, Arabs and non-Arabs alike have been marginalised, and it is Darfur's tragedy that the leaders of these groups have not made common cause in the face of Khartoum's indifference.

Another geographical misfortune is that Darfur borders Chad and Libya. In the 1980s, Colonel Gaddafi dreamed of an 'Arab belt' across Sahelian Africa. The keystone was to gain control of Chad, starting with the Aouzou strip in the north of the country. He mounted a succession of military adventures in Chad, and from 1987 to 1989, Chadian factions backed by Libya used Darfur as a rear base, provisioning themselves freely from the crops and cattle of local villagers. On at least one occasion they provoked a joint Chadian-French armed incursion into pursuing them. Many of the guns in Darfur came from those factions. Gaddafi's formula for war was expansive: he collected discontented Sahelian Arabs and Tuaregs, armed them, and formed them into an Islamic Legion that served as the spearhead of his offensives. Among the legionnaires were Arabs from western Sudan, many of them followers of the Mahdist Ansar sect, who had been forced into exile in 1970 by President Nimeiri. The Libyans were defeated by a nimble Chadian force at Ouadi Doum in 1988, and Gaddafi abandoned his irredentist dreams. He began dismantling the Islamic Legion, but its members, armed, trained and most significant of all – possessed of a virulent Arab supremacism, did not vanish. The legacy of the Islamic Legion lives on in Darfur: Janjawiid leaders are among those said to have been trained in Libya.

It was in the mid-1980s, when Nimeiri was overthrown, that the Ansar exiles began to return. A few weeks after meeting Sheikh Hilal, I went in search of his sons, herding their camels in the desert. As we travelled north, we saw the tracks of military vehicles crossing the desert heading south. In 1987, returnees from Libya took the lead in forming a political bloc known as the Arab Alliance. At one level, the Alliance was simply a political coalition that aimed to protect the interests of a disadvantaged group in western Sudan, but it also became a vehicle for a new racist ideology. The politically in-

significant racist epithets of earlier times began to take on an alarming tinge in Darfur. The Alliance also latched onto the dominant ideology of the Sudanese state, the very different Arabism of Nile Valley. The war in Darfur at the end of the 1980s was more than a conflict over land: it was the first step in constructing a new Arab ideology in Sudan.

It is hard to find a news account of the present war in Darfur that does not characterise it as one of 'Arabs' against 'Africans'. Such a description would have been incomprehensible twenty years ago, when Darfurian conceptions of ethnicity and citizenship were still cast in the mould inherited from the Sultanate of Dar Fur and the string of comparable Sudanic states that stretched westwards to the Atlantic. The short but dramatic political career of one Fur politician, Daud Bolad, illustrates the way in which the terms 'African' and 'Arab' took such a hold.

Bolad was one of the leading young Islamists of his generation, but abandoned political Islam after leaving Khartoum University and joined the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), led by John Garang. Nothing could be further from the Islamist doctrines Bolad had once championed – and nothing more inimical to them – than the ideology of the SPLA. Although Garang is a Southerner and many in his movement urge a separate state for southern Sudan, he is not a separatist himself. He believes that the non-Arabs in Sudan – an alliance of Southerners and marginalised groups in northern Sudan, such as the Fur – form a numerical majority and should dominate a secular, pluralist and united Sudan. Garang has therefore recruited from exploited non-Arab communities on the fringes of northern Sudan, such as the Nuba, and the string of peoples along the Blue Nile valley close to Ethiopia. In 1992 the Sudan government launched its largest ever offensive, aiming to empty the Nuba region entirely under the banner of jihad. It failed and today the Nuba have achieved modest autonomy within the wider framework of a peace deal signed in Kenya in May.

Bolad and a clandestine network of local activists were Garang's entrée in Darfur. As he had done for the Nuba and Blue Nile, he dispatched a small expeditionary force into Darfur in 1991, aiming to begin an insurrection. It was a disaster. Bolad and his troops had to cross a vast distance in the dry season. The only water available was in deep boreholes, which were situated in villages and carefully guarded. Moreover, the territory was occupied by cattle-herding Arab groups, who were fiercely hostile to the SPLA. The government quickly traced Bolad's unit and hunted it down, using both the regular army and a militia of Beni Halba Arabs. A handful of fighters escaped and walked for months through Central African Republic back to southern Sudan. Bolad was captured and interrogated by the governor, Colonel al-Tayeb Ibrahim, a military doctor and leading Islamist known as 'Sikha' or the 'Iron Rod', because of his skill at wielding reinforcing rods during student demonstrations when he was bodyguard to the leader of the Khartoum University Islamists – Daud Bolad. There is no record of the encounter between the two. Bolad was never seen again. Worst of all, his diary was seized. In it were names and details of every member of his clandestine network.

Prisons & 'Ghost Houses'

Many disappeared into prisons and 'ghost houses', others were so unnerved by how much was known to their interrogators that they renounced their cause and were freed, although they were sure that their every movement continued to be watched. A generation of opposition leaders was annihilated or neutralised. Thereafter, radical Darfurian leaders were suspicious of the SPLA, fearing that it would swallow them whole, or misuse

them for its own purposes. But as the SPLA continued to resist everything the Sudanese army could throw at it, and gained a high international standing, they, too, learned to characterise their plight in the simplified terms that had proved so effective in winning foreign sympathy for the South: they were the 'African' victims of an 'Arab' regime.

The 'African' label may have played well to international audiences in the 1990s, but it had little purchase in Sudan. One reason for this was the prevalence of radical Islam and its appeal to many Darfurians – the result of the success of a political experiment by the regime in Khartoum, masterminded by Hassan al-Turabi. Historically, political Islam in Sudan was dominated by an Arabised elite originating in the Nile Valley, with strong links to Egypt. Theirs was a conservative movement, identified with the Arabi-sation professed by all of Sudan's rulers, both military and civilian. But Turabi broadened the agenda and constituency of the Islamist movement. For example, he insisted that women had rights in Islam, and today more than half of the undergraduates at Khartoum University are women. He also recognised the authenticity of western Sudanese and West African Islam, thus embracing the traditions exemplified by the early 19th-century Fulani jihads and the wandering Sufi scholars of the Maghreb.

In ensuring that citizenship was extended to all devout Muslims, Turabi revolutionised the status of the Sudanese of West African origin, known as the Fellata. This group, several million strong, consists of ethnic Hausa and Fulani whose ancestors were from Nigeria, Mali and Niger and settled in Sudan either on their way to Mecca or as labourers for colonial-era cotton schemes. The Fellata are famous for their piety. Until the Islamist coup of 1989, they were not recognised as Sudanese citizens; Turabi also increased the status of the Fellata sheikhs, thereby correcting a longstanding anomaly and creating an electoral constituency. In Darfur, too, he reached out to the religious leaders of the Fur, Masalit and other groups. As governor of Darfur, al-Tayeb Ibrahim made a point of praising the Fur for their piety and took lessons in the Fur language. The concept of common citizenship through common faith seemed for a time to be a route to Darfurian national emancipation.

But the Islamist promise was a sham. In practical terms, little changed. Only a handful of Darfurians were elevated to high positions in the party and the administration. The national government was relatively even-handed in its treatment of the region's Arabs and non-Arabs, but only in the context of continuing neglect. Local government was still bankrupt; banditry was still rife; drought and desertification continued to spark local conflicts that the governor could not, or would not, try to stop. And before long Sudan's 'westerners' found that their version of Islam was not, after all, accepted on its own terms: they were regarded as true Muslims only if they adopted Arab values and culture.

In the decade following the 1989 putsch, the differences between President Bashir and the mercurial Turabi became ever more apparent. Turabi had ambitions for revolution throughout Africa and the Middle East; Bashir held to the traditional view of Sudan as the possession of an Arabised elite. It was a protracted struggle, over ideology, foreign policy, the constitution and ultimately power itself. Bashir won: in 1999 he dismissed Turabi from his post as speaker of the National Assembly, and later had him arrested. The Islamist coalition was split down the middle. Most of the administration, and all of the security elite in control of the military and various off-budget security agencies, stayed with Bashir. The students and the regional Islamist party cells mostly went into opposition with Turabi, forming the

breakaway Popular Congress. Among other things, the dismissal of Turabi gave Bashir the cover he needed to approach the United States, and to engage in a more serious peace process with the SPLA – a process that led to the signing of the peace agreement in Kenya.

The Bashir-Turabi split reverberated in Darfur. Many Darfurians who had come into the Islamist movement under Turabi's leadership now left government – and decided to organise on their own. In May 2000, they produced a 'Black Book' which detailed the region's systematic under-representation in national government since independence. It caused a stir throughout the country and showed how northern Sudan was becoming polarised along racial rather than religious lines.

In describing Daud Bolad as a 'martyr', the 'Black Book' marked a symbolic rapprochement between the Islamists and the secular radicals of Darfur. Hence the unlikely alliance between the latter group, who were busy putting together the Darfur Liberation Front (renamed in early 2003 the Sudan Liberation Army, or SLA) and the Islamist-leaning Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). The rebellion should have taken no one by surprise. But observers of the Sudanese political scene – myself included – had become so accustomed to the quiescence of Darfur that we thought the militants were crying wolf when they predicted a major insurrection. Evidently, the Sudanese government was just as surprised: its peace overtures in the early months were as half-hearted as its military preparations. In April last year, the rebels attacked el Fasher airport, destroyed half a dozen military aircraft and kidnapped an airforce general. The SPLA had managed nothing of the kind in twenty years. The rebels in Darfur had mobility, good intelligence and popular support.

Critically for Bashir, the central pillar of the Sudanese state – a cabal of security officers who have been running the wars in Sudan since 1983 – was still in place. Faced with a revolt that outran the capacity of the country's tired and overstretched army, this small group knew exactly what to do. Several times during the war in the South they had mounted counter-insurgency on the cheap – famine and scorched earth their weapons of choice. Each time, they sought out a local militia, provided it with supplies and armaments, and declared the area of operations an ethics-free zone. The Beni Halba fursan, or 'cavalry', which had been used against the SPLA in 1991, was an obvious instrument to employ in Darfur. The northern camel nomads, including former Islamic legionnaires, were also on hand. Some claim that their name – the Janjawiid – derives from 'G3' (a rifle) and jawad ('horse'), but it is also western Sudanese dialect for 'rabble' or 'outlaws'. Unleashing militias has the added advantage for the security cabal that it may derail the near complete peace process with the SPLA and allow them to retain their extra-budgetary security agencies; it also immunises them against being charged in the future with committing war crimes.

Janjawiid Atrocities

The atrocities carried out by the Janjawiid are aimed at speakers of Fur, Tunjur, Masalit and Zaghawa. They are systematic and sustained; the effect, if not the aim, is grossly disproportionate to the military threat of the rebellion. The mass rape and branding of victims speaks of the deliberate destruction of a community. In Darfur, cutting down fruit trees or destroying irrigation ditches is a way of eradicating farmers' claims to the land and ruining livelihoods. But this is not the genocidal campaign of a government at the height of its ideological hubris, as the 1992 jihad against the Nuba was, or coldly determined to secure natural resources, as when it sought to clear the oilfields of southern Sudan of their troublesome inhabitants. This is the routine

cruelty of a security cabal, its humanity withered by years in power: it is genocide by force of habit.

Sheikh Hilal's world, with its stable cosmos and its relaxed reciprocity between farmer and nomad, has disappeared, as he feared it would. Unrelenting poverty has been transformed into violence by misgovernment and imported racisms. What to do now in the face of genocidal massacre and imminent famine? Legal action – trying Musa Hilal and his sponsors as war criminals – is essential to deter such crimes in future. But condemnation is not a solution. The Janjawiid's murderous campaigns must not obscure the fact that Darfur's indigenous bedouins are themselves historic victims.

As they did twenty years ago, the people of Darfur face destitution, hunger and infectious disease. Apocalyptic predictions of mass starvation were made after the 1984 drought – up to a million dead, aid agencies said, if there wasn't food aid. The food didn't come, and many died – around 100,000 – but Darfur society didn't collapse because of the formidable survival skills of its people. They had reserves of food, they travelled huge distances in search of food, work or charity, and above all they gathered wild food from the bush. Today, food reserves and animals have been stolen, and what use is the ability to gather five different kinds of wild grasses, 11 varieties of berry, plus roots and leaves, if leaving a camp means risking rape, mutilation or death? Predictions of up to 300,000 famine deaths must be taken seriously.

A huge aid effort is grinding into gear. But the distances involved mean that food relief is expensive and unlikely to be sufficient. It's tempting to send in the British army to deliver food, but this would be merely symbolic: relief can be flown in more cheaply by civil contractors, and distributed more effectively by relief agencies. The areas controlled by the SLA and JEM contain hundreds of thousands of civilians who are not getting any help. As soon as an intrepid cameraman returns with pictures of this hidden famine, there will be an outcry, and pressure for aid to be delivered across the front lines. There's no reason to wait for the pictures before acting, although it's clear that cross-line aid convoys will need to carry armed guards.

The biggest help would be peace. In theory, there's a ceasefire; in practice, the government and Janjawiid are ignoring it, and the **rebels are responding in kind**. The government denies that it set up, armed and directed the Janjawiid. It did, but the monster that Khartoum helped create may not always do its bidding: distrust of the capital runs deep among Darfurians, and the Janjawiid leadership knows it cannot be disarmed by force. When President Bashir promised Kofi Annan and Colin Powell that he would disarm the militia, he was making a promise he couldn't keep. The best, and perhaps the only, means of disarmament is that employed by the British seventy-five years ago: establish a working local administration, regulate the ownership of arms, and gradually isolate the outlaws and brigands who refuse to conform. It took a decade then, and it won't be any faster today. Not only are there more weapons now, but the political polarities are much sharper. A detachment of 60 African Union ceasefire monitors is in Darfur with a slightly larger number of African troops providing security for them. So far no one is providing security for Darfur's terrified civilian populace. If troops are to be sent from outside Africa, this should be their mission. If the local intelligence is good, and a political process is afoot, the hazards should be minimal. But reconstituting Darfur will be slow, complicated and expensive. Understanding what has been lost may be a good place to start.

Alex de Waal is the Director of Justice Africa and the author of *Islamism and its Enemies in the Horn*. A revised edition of *Famine that Kills: Darfur, Sudan 1984-85* is due from Oxford; © *London Review of Books*.

Editor's Note: Also see ROAPE 97, September 2003, 'The Horn of Conflict' edited by John Markakis.

The Betrayal of the Intellectuals *by Ali Moussa Iye*

The Ethiopia-Eritrea War *by Leenco Lata*

TPLF: Reform or Decline? *by Medhane Tadesse and John Young*

State Collapse in Somalia: Second Thoughts *by Ken Menkhaus*

Sudan: Liberation Movements, Regional Armies, Ethnic Militias & Peace *by John Young*

Anatomy of a Conflict: Afar & Ise Ethiopia *by John Markakis*

Somaliland: Choosing Politics over Violence *by Mark Bradbury, Adan Yusuf Abokor, and Haroon Ahmed Yusuf*

Women & Conflict in Darfur *by Adan Azain Mohammed*

Briefings: 'Djibouti: From French Outpost to US Base' *by Amedee Bollee;* 'Food Crisis in Ethiopia: Drought or Poor Economic Policies?' *by François Piguet;* 'Sudan: Prospects for Peace' *by Justice Africa;* 'Peace in the Horn this Year?' *by Lionel Cliffe;* 'Sudan: Oil & War' *by Jemera Rone*

Reviews: *The Black Book of Sudan* reviewed by Abdalla Osman El Tom & M A Mohamed Salih; *Emma's War: Love, Betrayal & Death in the Sudan* by Deborah Scroggins reviewed by Peter Woodward; *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars* by Douglas H. Johnson reviewed by Lam Akol.

Europe: Partner or Exploiter of Africa? The G-90 & the ACP

Paul Goodison & Colin Stoneman

Following the failure at the WTO Ministerial meeting in Cancun the European Commission (EC) began a period of reflection on the causes of the breakdown of trade negotiations. One important area which the Commission felt contributed to the breakdown in Cancun was the belief of a substantial grouping of developing countries – the G-90 – that they had little gain and much to lose from a new round. On the basis of this analysis the EC looked to develop a series of proposals to give G-90 countries a clear stake in a successful conclusion to the Doha Development Round.

With this in mind, speaking in the Caribbean in April 2004, the EU Trade Commissioner, Pascal Lamy, indicated that the EC 'could defend the view that the G-90 be treated where possible in a similar manner to LDCs in the DDA modalities'.[1] According to Commissioner Lamy this would in large part extend the treatment accorded least developed countries (LDCs) to 'any small economy, landlocked developing country or commodity-dependent country', provided that they are 'particularly weak or vulnerable'.[2]

This was the starting point for the EC's proposal that the G-90 should effectively 'get the round for free', with these economies not being asked to make further tariff-reduction commitments in the context of the Doha Development Round. This proposal, along with the long-standing EC proposal that other developed countries and advanced developing countries should adopt EBA[3] style trade preferences in favour of LDCs, was taken up in the 9 May 2004 joint letter of