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**POLICY PLANNING CASE STUDY
CEASEFIRE REFLECTIONS: SUDAN**

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CEASEFIRE IN SUDAN**

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Introduction

This document has been developed out of a conversation with PILPG Senior Peace Fellow and Strategic Advisor Andrew (Drew) Mann and is one in a series of expert interviews on ceasefire negotiation and implementation with military and policy experts. These ceasefire case studies are part of a range of work products produced by the PILPG Ceasefire Policy Planning Ukraine Working Group. The full range of work product and more information about the Working Group is available [here](#).

Mr. Mann has over 35 years of government service, primarily with the U.S. Department of State. Mr. Mann retired as a Senior Foreign Service Officer in 2017 having worked on assignments in nine countries, as well as in the United States and with the United Nations. As a political officer, he spent much of his career in countries transitioning from conflict, such as Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan (Darfur), and Bosnia.

Although a Political Officer during his Foreign Service career, Mr. Mann frequently worked on legal issues. He was detailed to the Office of the Legal Advisor - European Affairs at the United States State Department. Mr. Mann was subsequently seconded as an Expert-on-Mission to the Office of the Prosecutor, International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in 1994. While in Afghanistan in 2007, he served as the Deputy Coordinator in the Rule of Law Office at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul.

Set out below is a summary of the key points that emerged from a discussion with Mr. Mann, during which he recalled his time spent (late 2007-early 2008) in the Darfur region of Sudan as a Foreign Service Officer in the years following the Darfur Peace Agreement. The discussion addressed the challenges to implementing a ceasefire in Sudan, achieving engagement with different stakeholders, and what constitutes achieving a successful and lasting ceasefire. From Mr. Mann's experiences in Darfur, there arose a number of takeaways that may be applicable to the implementation of a ceasefire in Ukraine.

Role in the Ceasefire Process

In Darfur, Mr. Mann's primary role in the ceasefire process was with the U.S. State Department as an observer to the Ceasefire Commission, which was under the leadership of the African Union by the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement ("Ceasefire Agreement") of 2004 as part of an initial effort to address the conflict in Darfur. In his role, Mr. Mann attended and contributed to Ceasefire Commission

meetings and an international observer, met with different individuals and groups involved in the conflict, and worked alongside his colleagues at the United States Agency for International Development in visits to internally displaced persons camps.

The time Mr. Mann was in Darfur was challenging, with political kidnappings and attacks on peacekeeping missions. The ability of American diplomats to operate in the field was severely restricted due to security concerns and ultimately the field office in Darfur was closed down in early 2008.

Background

Darfur, situated in the western part of Sudan in northeastern Africa, has been entangled in almost continuous conflict since the early 2000s. The Darfur conflict is a multifaceted issue with several underlying causes, including ethnic tensions, the urban-rural divide, and competition for resources between herders and farmers. The roots of the conflict can be traced back to British colonial times when Darfur was integrated into Sudan. At that time, the river-tyne Arabs, who were of mixed ethnicity with the local population, held positions of power while the Darfuris, who were viewed as more ethnically African, were marginalized. This ethnic division was further aggravated by the tensions between the traditionally Arab herders and the settled agriculturalists, who were adversely affected by the herds passing through their lands.

Moreover, the Darfuri people felt neglected by the government in Khartoum, which was accused of ignoring their socio-economic and political development. The Sudanese government's concentration on the northern region of the country and the lack of representation for the Darfuri people in the government further exacerbated the situation.

In 2003, the conflict erupted when two African rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), launched an insurrection in response to their allegations of marginalization by the Sudanese government. The government responded with violence by their proxy militia known as the *Janjaweed*, and the conflict subsequently involved nearly two dozen rebel groups. The ongoing violence has resulted in the displacement of millions of people and has caused the deaths of an estimated 300,000 individuals within just five years (2003-2008), according to the United Nations.¹

¹ Louis Charbonneau, *UN says Darfur dead may be 300,000; Sudan denies*, REUTERS (Apr. 22, 2008) available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSN22308543>.

Ceasefire Efforts

Efforts to establish peace in the Darfur region have included the 2004 Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement (negotiated by Chad), which aimed to enable humanitarian aid delivery and halt hostilities, and the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement (negotiated by the African Union supported by the U.S.), which attempted to address the root causes of the conflict.

The 2004 Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement

The Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement, signed on April 8, 2004, in N'Djamena, Chad, was an early attempt to address the escalating conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan.

The Ceasefire Agreement had several objectives in relation to the conflict in Darfur. Firstly, it sought to bring an immediate end to the fighting between the Sudanese government and the two main rebel groups, SLM/A and JEM, which was seen as essential to establish a conducive environment for further peace negotiations and the potential resolution of the conflict. Secondly, the agreement aimed to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to affected populations in Darfur. The conflict had caused a severe humanitarian crisis, with widespread violence, displacement, and famine. It was critical to ensure that aid agencies could access those in need and distribute assistance without interference. Thirdly, the protection of civilians was identified as an essential goal of the Ceasefire Agreement. The conflict in Darfur had seen numerous human rights abuses, including targeted killings, forced displacement, and sexual violence.

The agreement sought to establish a framework for political dialogue between the warring parties, with the aim of addressing the root causes of the conflict and paving the way for a lasting resolution. Unfortunately, the Ceasefire Agreement was unable to end the conflict.

Monitoring and Implementation

Two key efforts were established to implement and monitor the Ceasefire Agreement: the African Union Mission in Sudan and the Ceasefire Commission.

The African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) was a peacekeeping operation initiated by the African Union in 2004 to address the humanitarian crisis and violence in the Darfur region. The mission's primary goal was to monitor and ensure the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement.

The mission consisted of military observers, armed troops, and police personnel from various African countries. AMIS, however, faced numerous challenges, such as logistical difficulties, lack of resources, and limited mandate.

The Ceasefire Commission was established in 2004 and aimed to bring representatives of the Sudanese government and the Darfur rebels together with international observers and the African Union mission, to implement and monitor the ceasefire. The Ceasefire Commission was reaffirmed in the Darfur Peace Agreement in 2006. The Commission was chaired by the AMIS head with an EU military representative holding the second chair respectively. Weekly meetings were held to discuss recent events, issues, and possible resolutions.

The monitoring and implementation strategy employed in Darfur was more ad hoc than systematic with the Commission serving as a platform to facilitate communication between the representatives of the government, the SLM/A faction, and other parties to discuss incidents, complaints, and potential resolutions arising from the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement. However, the Commission's ability to address certain incidents was limited due to the absence of representatives from key factions, such as JEM.

While large-scale attacks had decreased by 2007, smaller incidents of violence still occurred. The Ceasefire Commission empowered the government or African Union troops to investigate, collect information, and submit reports on these incidents. This process was not highly formalized, and claims verification and incident reporting were handled on a case-by-case basis.

The 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement

In 2006, the United States government, under the leadership of Deputy Secretary of State Robert B. Zoellick, actively supported the African Union's efforts under Salim Ahmed Salim, Special Envoy of the African Union, to facilitate a peace process and bring together the various parties involved in the conflict. Thus, a new peace agreement was negotiated, known as the Darfur Peace Agreement, which was intended to provide a comprehensive resolution to the conflict.

The 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement reaffirmed and incorporated elements of the 2004 Ceasefire Agreement, such as the Ceasefire Commission. The Darfur Peace Agreement sought to provide humanitarian relief, disarm and demobilize the Janjaweed militias.

Despite the efforts put into negotiating the Darfur Peace Agreement, the peace agreement faced numerous challenges, as it was not accepted by all parties involved in the conflict. The Peace Agreement aimed to involve the Government of Sudan, JEM, and the Minni Minawi-led SLM/A faction. However, JEM backed out of the agreement at the last minute, citing concerns over the disarmament of government-supported *Janjaweed* militias and dissatisfaction with their demands for a regional government and a new vice-president not being met. This left the SLM/A Minni Minawi faction and the Sudanese government as the only signatories of the agreement. The Darfur Peace Agreement's impact was, therefore, constrained. As a result, violence continued in the Darfur region, and subsequent attempts to establish lasting peace have been made since the Darfur Peace Agreement through various agreements and negotiations.

Monitoring and Implementation

Implementation and monitoring mechanisms to enforce the Darfur Peace Agreement included AMIS, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, and the continuation of the Ceasefire Commission established in 2004.

In January 2008, the United Nations and African Union deployed a hybrid peacekeeping mission, known as the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), to replace the AMIS. The UNAMID's mandate included monitoring the ceasefire, protecting civilians, facilitating humanitarian aid delivery, and other tasks. However, similar to the AMIS, the UNAMID encountered various challenges, including a lack of cooperation from some parties to the conflict, ongoing violence, and limited resources.

The African Union forces on the ground, primarily from Nigeria and Rwanda with other African countries contributing few number of troops, had varying levels of effectiveness. Some countries took their assignments seriously, conducting thorough investigations and acting decisively, while others were more passive and unwilling to take action. As a result, there were pockets of rigorous enforcement in some areas and virtually no enforcement in others, allowing rebel groups to operate with impunity in certain regions.

To monitor the situation on the ground, the U.S. State Department established a presence in Darfur, sending Foreign Service Officers, including Mr. Mann, to observe and support the ongoing Ceasefire Commission and report on the situation. These representatives were also tasked with liaising with the United

States Agency for International Development, the African Union, and later with officials from the UNAMID.

By the time Mr. Mann arrived in September 2007, the African Union had already established military base camps throughout Darfur. These were instrumental in further reducing the number of attacks.

Lessons Learned

The war in Ukraine highlights the importance of understanding the possibilities and limitations of a ceasefire agreement. A ceasefire can serve a limited purpose, but at a minimum, maintaining non-fighting status on all sides is crucial. A number of key lessons can be learned from the ceasefire efforts in Sudan, elements of which may be useful to consider in the Ukrainian ceasefire context.

Participation of Key Stakeholders

The Ceasefire Commission in Darfur faced several specific challenges during its operation, which may be relevant when considering Russia's war in Ukraine. The Commission, despite its ambitious goals of disarming combatants and improving humanitarian conditions, struggled due to the limited representation of warring parties at the table. This made it difficult to achieve lasting peace and stability. There may be similarities in the challenges faced when attempting to enforce a ceasefire agreement between Russia and Ukraine amidst the complex armed actor landscape in Ukraine. Although the ethnic and religious aspects may differ, the need for cooperation and commitment from all parties involved remains crucial to achieve peace. Ensuring that all warring parties are represented and actively involved in the peace process is vital for the success of a ceasefire agreement.

In addition to failing to involve key stakeholders in ceasefire negotiations in Darfur, inconsistency in enforcement emerged and created areas where ceasefire provisions were largely ignored. Therefore, it is clear that any successful ceasefire commission in Ukraine must involve all relevant actors and be governed by rigorous operating procedures that are systematic and standardized.

Inconsistency of Ceasefire Enforcement

Another challenge that arose in Darfur was the varying commitment and effectiveness of the forces on the ground. Therefore, if a peacekeeping mission

were to be employed in Ukraine, clear rules of engagement must be established to ensure that all forces on the ground are held to the same standard and are effectively and uniformly addressing violations of ceasefire provisions.

Third Party Involvement

A successful element of the ceasefire efforts in Darfur was the involvement of third parties. Turning to outside actors such as the African Union and ultimately the UN was necessary to provide a sufficient military security force to try and ensure demobilization, as the parties involved did not trust individual countries to be honest brokers. The importance of the involvement of a reputable third party in peace negotiations cannot be overstated.

Regional Inclusion

There appear to be several additional similarities across the Darfur conflict and Russia's war in Ukraine, particularly in regard to the perceived disregard by the central government towards specific regions. Despite the absence of a pronounced religious or ethnic divide in the Ukraine conflict, parallels can be drawn through the exclusion felt by both the inhabitants of Darfur and those residing in Crimea and the Donbass area. For example, in the Darfur conflict, the people felt neglected by the central government in Khartoum, as they received little economic and political support. Similarly, the Russian-speaking people in Crimea and the Donbass may feel a sense of alienation from Kyiv, perceiving a lack of opportunities and support in various aspects of life.

Ensuring that regions like Darfur, Crimea, and the Donbass receive adequate support and opportunities from the central government could help mitigate the sense of alienation and potentially ease tensions. By focusing on these parallels, policymakers might be better equipped to identify solutions that address the underlying issues driving conflict in these areas.

Emphasis on Lasting Peace

Another crucial element to consider is the purpose of the ceasefire and how long it will last. Ceasefires can be implemented for limited purposes, such as allowing the flow of humanitarian relief to prevent famine and disease outbreaks. However, a ceasefire must ultimately lead to the development of lasting peace. In Darfur, the subsequent steps to enable the development of lasting peace did not proceed following the ceasefire agreement, leading to an unstable peace environment.

Conclusion

The Darfur conflict underscored the complexities and challenges of negotiating and implementing a successful ceasefire agreement. Key lessons can be drawn for Ukraine amidst Russia's war, including the importance of involving all warring parties, establishing clear rules of engagement for peacekeeping forces, and engaging reputable third parties to facilitate negotiations. Addressing the sense of alienation experienced by regions in conflict, such as Crimea and the Donbass, and ensuring their adequate support from central governments, may contribute to easing tensions and fostering lasting peace. Ultimately, ceasefires should not only serve immediate, limited purposes, but must also lay the groundwork for the development of long-term peace and stability, as demonstrated by the shortcomings in the Darfur ceasefire agreement.