

MEANS OF ETHNOPOLITICAL CONSENSUS IN REPUBLIC OF SUDAN

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Abstract

Republic of Sudan has a complicated history of ethno-political conflicts, including a decades-long civil war and ongoing tensions between its diverse ethnic groups. To achieve sustainable peace, efforts have been made to promote ethno-political consensus, which involves building bridges between its different components. This article explores the means of achieving this consensus by addressing some elements including negotiations, power-sharing agreements, federalism, constitutional reforms, and reconciliation process. Ultimately, it argues that achieving consensus is essential for sustaining peace and development, and it requires concerted

efforts by all parties to overcome historical divisions and work towards a bright future for the country.

Keywords: ethno-politics, consensus, negotiations, power-sharing, reforms, reconciliation.

* Introduction

The Republic of Sudan has a diverse and complicated political landscape. Its population is made up of various ethnic, religious, and linguistic groups, each with its own distinct cultural and political identities. And for Sudanese political leaders and institutions, achieving ethno-political consensus among these groups has been a significant challenge. These challenges have been exacerbated by Sudan's history of civil wars and

conflicts in its various regions, economic hardship, and political instability. Despite these obstacles, efforts have been made to build ethno-political consensus and achieve long-term peace and stability in Sudan.

In order to address these issues, we will investigate the various methods and strategies used to achieve ethno-political consensus in Sudan, beginning with a historical overview of the Sudanese political landscape and the challenges of ethno-political consensus. This will include an examination of Sudan's major ethnic and religious groups, as well as their political identities, as well as an examination of the historical and contemporary factors that have contributed to the giving process's challenges.

Given the current situation in Sudan, where the country is transitioning from a dictatorship to a democracy regime and attempting to achieve long-term peace, this topic is critical because it aims to understand the various methods of reaching consensus and how to overcome the challenges that come with it. This will be accomplished by conducting a critical examination of the various mechanisms being used to achieve

peace and ethno-political consensus, as well as providing a proposal to achieve this goal using a number of means including but not limited to: consensual democracy, negotiations, federalism and power-sharing, constitutional reform, and community dialog and reconciliation.

*** Consensual democracy - A theoretical conceptual approach**

Pluralistic societies have become an obsession for political leaders as well as researchers, owing to the contradictions and divisions they bear, which may lead to the emergence of conflicts that threaten national unity, requiring these countries to seek a model that accommodates these differences and achieves a kind of stability and inter-compatibility within sectors. Consensual democracy is a model that will be illuminated from a theoretical standpoint for our studies in this topic.

The concept and emergence of consensual democracy; The term "consociationalism" can be traced back to the writings of the German philosopher Johannes Althusius (1557-1638), who used the Latin term "consociational" in his writings. Consociational models first appeared in European countries near the end of

the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, beginning in the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, and Austria. That is, they were designed, particularly in some multinational and multilingual countries, to achieve stability within a political framework that did not confine itself to "majority democracy," which may be marginalized. Ethnic minorities, thinkers, and politicians since the 1950s and 1960s built the idea of consensual democracy, most notably Gerhard Lehmbruch and Gabriel Almond, Arend Lijphart (Bishara, 2018).

There was no agreement among researchers and specialists on a specific and precise concept of consensual democracy, and where the difference on the label stood out, we find that it has undergone several designations, most notably the following:-

1- Lijphart named it 'consensual democracy' in his book 'consensual democracy in a pluralistic society' (Lijphart, 2006).

2- Limburg describes it as "relative democracy," stating that it is a strategy for managing conflicts through cooperation and harmony among different elites rather than competition

and taking the majority opinion (consensual agreement) (Ayad, Mohamed Samir, 2013).

3- Others define it as "granting the political forces that express the interests of the constituent sects of society the right of veto and mutual reciprocity in order to stop the decisions of other political forces, regardless of the size of the bloc, when they take decisions that harm their interests, with the assumption that there is a societal division and conflict that can only be contained through This form of judgement."

** The main pillars on which consociational democracy is based*

In his book "Consensual Democracy in a Plural Society," Lijphart identified four basic pillars on which consociational democracy is based: broad coalition, mutual veto or "consensual majority" rule, proportionality as a basic criterion for political representation, and sectoral independence.

1- Broad coalition or coalition government

It is the important feature and the main pillar of consensual democracy, as the rule through this coalition takes several forms of an expanded coalition government in the parliamentary

system, or an expanded council, or a group of political leaders, or a broad coalition of the president and other high-ranking officials in a presidential system, and this is Coalition in pluralistic states, which is a stable option linked to the desire to move away from the exclusionary approaches that are called majority systems (Lijphart, 2006, p. 48).

2- Mutual veto

The veto refers to the right of objection, and it is a consensual mechanism that supplements the broad coalition mechanism, as the latter cannot provide absolute protection because the coalition must make decisions that must be approved by a majority vote. If the minority's participation in the coalition allows it to present, I consider it, but it clashes with the majority's rejection, hence the idea of completing the consensual building with three other pillars. According to John C. Calhoun, the mutual veto, or minority veto, comes to the fore, and it is synonymous with the concept of the mutual majority.

The concept of a mutual veto raises many questions and sparks debate. Critics of consensual democracy argue that it may limit the possibility of establishing a

dictatorship of the majority, but it also paves the way for the establishment of a dictatorship of the minority, which acts as an impediment to the progress of the state's business and projects, as is the case in Lebanon and Switzerland.

3- Proportionality

Proportionality or proportionality has two important functions that are complementary to the principle of the great coalition first, it works as a means to allocate appointments in the civil service and scarce financial resources in the form of government subsidies among the various segments, another important function related to the decision-making process itself where "all groups influence the decision in proportion to its numerical strength, meaning that all political sectors along with their representation in decision-making bodies must be proportionately represented. And according to Lijphart, relativism in consensual democracy is reflected in two principles: the first is the fair distribution of jobs in public administrations and of resources to the various sectors that form the broad coalition in a way that reflects their importance and true size within the pluralistic society, and the second is the proportional involvement of all

groups (majority and minority) in the mechanisms and decision-making positions (Al-Solh, 2007).

4- Sectoral autonomy (ethnic groups and federalism)

This principle refers to allowing minorities to govern themselves in matters that do not affect other groups in the region, as well as their participation in decisions affecting the public interest (Bouqaeda, 2016).

Hence, this characteristic or principle is linked to the extent to which each sector of a pluralistic society can manage its internal affairs independently, regardless of its geographical scope or cultural, sectarian, or ethnic composition. Partial independence removes sensitive and destabilizing issues from the larger political arena, lowering the likelihood of such issues being exposed to racial competition. As a result, this sectoral provision provides a fair guarantee for minorities' rights, ensuring that their important issues are not decided at the discretion of the majority. Consociational democracy, through this feature, seeks to recognize and transform sectoral divisions into elements for building a stable democracy, rather than to eliminate or weaken them (Amir, 2013).

In general, we find that one of the most important requirements for consensus in a coalition government capable of achieving consensus and stability is that the following conditions be met:-

- 1- The elites' ability to absorb the diverse interests and demands of the sub-groups they represent;
- 2- the ability to bridge divides and collaborate with rival sub-group leaders;
- 3- the commitment of elites and groups to maintaining the existing system's cohesion and stability.
- 4- assuming that these elites are aware of the dangers of political division.

These points are only concerned with the political elites' realism and openness, and they can also be categorized as political elite convictions (Bishara, 2018, стр. 13).

**** Favorable conditions for consociational democracy in Sudan***

It is critical to investigate the appropriate conditions for establishing and maintaining consociational democracy, as well as the significance of consociational democracy in specific cases. Although these factors are neither necessary nor sufficient to explain the success of consociational democracy, the preferred factors are

derived inductively rather than deductively following a comparative study of various consociational systems. throughout the years (Karima Makahliya, Abdul Hamid Qarfi, 2021).

1- Absence or lack of majority groups: the absence or lack of a group with a dominant majority in the concerned society is the first factor for the smooth operation of consociational democracy, according to consociationalism as a theory. Based on the foregoing, it could be concluded, that the unequal size of Sudan's ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups creates obstacles to consociational democracy, with a dominant majority on the one hand and a small minority on the other, so this factor also refers to the Sudanese ethnic, linguistic, and religious composition, which is not conducive to effective consociationalism.

2- Number of minority groups: the appropriate number of groups in pluralistic societies helps maintain the effectiveness of consensual democracy, given that a pluralistic society composed of a few groups has the opportunity to successfully practice consensual democracy compared to a society that has a relatively larger number of groups. Here comes the role

of the pluralistic balance of power, the sectors that make up these societies, and we mean by the pluralistic balance of power that it contains two separate elements: the balance, or semi-balance, of sectors and the presence of at least three sectors.

3- Population size: the original cases of consensual democracy, which are the Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium and Austria with small population sizes, expressed the need for the condition of population size, which is a favorable condition for consensual democracy. This population size directly enhances the spirit of cooperation between housing and indirectly increases the chances of democracy. Consociationalism, by reducing the burdens of decision-making making it easier to govern the country, where political leaders can know each other personally, similar to Gambia, Rwanda and Burundi, than in countries of greater size such as Nigeria, South Africa, Mali, Algeria and Egypt (Rashid, 2019).

4- External Threats: external threats to the state constitute an opportunity for cohesion, and thus this cohesion enhances the success of a consensual democracy that is successful or aspiring for success.

5- Social and economic equality:

despite the social and economic differences within all components of African society, as evidenced by the unequal distribution of resources and human and technological development, some poor sectors can be easily distinguished from the richer ones.

6- Geographical concentration of sectors:

geographical concentration of sectors is critical to the continuity of consociational democracy. Clear boundaries between segments of a pluralistic society have the advantage of limiting exchanges of contacts and thus reducing the chances of potential permanent animosities breaking out into actual hostility (Karima Makahliya, Abdul Hamid Qarfi, 2021, стр. 496).

From this point of view, one way to achieve ethno-political consensus in

Sudan is through inclusive dialogue and negotiation between different ethnic and political groups. This can involve creating a platform for representatives from different groups to come together and discuss issues of concern, and work towards finding common ground and finding solutions that are acceptable to all parties.

*** Negotiation**

The ongoing negotiations and the power-sharing agreements: in this regard, ethno-political groups can come together to negotiate and find common ground on key issues. This can involve compromise and concessions from all parties. Where several attempts have been made in order to achieve a consensus agreement between the conflicting parties, the last of one of it was the (*Sudanese Peace Agreement – Juba agreement*)*

* The Sudanese Peace Agreement/ Juba peace agreement, signed on August 31, 2020, in southern Sudan, by the Sudanese government headed by Abdallah Hamdok and in the presence of the head of the Sudanese Sovereignty Council, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, with the Sudanese Revolutionary Front, which includes the five main Sudanese rebel groups, led by the Justice and Equality Movement and the Liberation

Movement Sudan, both from the Darfur region in the west, and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North, which is leading a rebellion against the Sudanese government in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. The agreement aims to achieve stability and peace in Sudan after decades of multiple civil conflicts, which claimed the lives of more than 300,000 people and displaced more than two and a half million,

After months of negotiations, a small group of Sudan's military and civilian political actors signed a Framework Agreement (FA) in December 2022 to relaunch the country's transition to civilian government. Sudan's first attempt at transition was violently overturned in October 2021 by the same military signatories. This time, supporters of the agreement hope to persuade the Sudanese people that the agreement will pave the way for both civilian rule and a functioning government, putting Sudan on the path to transformative democratic change.

The December agreement marked the end of Phase I of the deal, which included an opaque and exclusive negotiation process directed by the beleaguered United Nations-African Union-Intergovernmental Authority on Development tripartite mechanism, with strong backing from the US, the UK, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. It also marked the start of Phase II, which is expected to result in a final agreement and the formation of a civilian government. When the agreement was signed on December 5, the signatories promised

that Phase II would be completed within a month. However, the fact that it did not officially begin until after the Christmas and New Year's holidays, when representatives of the diplomatic community returned to Khartoum, demonstrates the extent to which the process, from start to finish, is primarily an international construct, one that is dependent on a constituency made up of the international community and is supported in order to facilitate the aims of said community (Khair, 2023).

Among these objectives are bringing pro-Moscow paramilitary leader General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (also known as Hemedti) to heel and establishing a political process in which the international community can finally engage and redirect suspended financial support to a new government. The problem is that, aside from the blatant disregard for domestic legitimacy, this agreement achieves none of these objectives.

Since signing of the Framework Agreement—which occurred with much applause from the international community—the generals have made

according to estimates, especially after the widening of the conflict in Darfur since 2003.

no concessions or good will gestures regarding human rights abuses or the sham trials of protesters, where child defendants have almost certainly been tortured, nor have they curbed violence against protesters during ongoing demonstrations. Certainly, in Sudan's troubled Darfur region and in its next powder keg in the east, conflict has not abated since the signing of the deal but has instead flared up in what is surely both a sign of the limitations of a Khartoum-only process and a dramatic harbinger of things to come. Meanwhile, the Sudanese people's everyday concerns about rising living costs and increasing poverty are not even mentioned in the political considerations or the process resulting from the agreement. Instead, Phase II—which is optimistically referred to as the final phase—aims to hold workshops on perennial headline issues only in Khartoum and among a selected audience, creating a process that is relevant to only a small proportion of the Sudanese people (Text of the framework political agreement document, 2022).

Phase II attempts to address, through dialogue, the very issues that underpin Sudan's enduring militarism: a lack of security sector reform, the

rejection of genuine transitional justice, failed peace agreements, restive regions threatening to secede (this time, the East), and a lack of economic accountability. However, Burhan has previously stated that he will not allow civilian oversight of armed forces reform, which is undoubtedly a critical component of any such reform. Meanwhile, the review and revision of the contentious Juba Peace Agreement may be abandoned in a cynical attempt to include former rebels in the deal. And the regime continues to tolerate loud secessionist voices in the East, and members of the country's former Empowerment Removal Committee and their families have already been threatened—and even attacked—on the eve of Phase II (Khair, 2023).

The framework agreement most egregious flaw is that it has brought out the worst in Sudan's political actors, whether military, civilian, former rebel, or traditional leader. It has heightened tensions between Burhan and Hemedti, which could lead to an armed confrontation if the stakes are high enough, and it has re-enforced Sudan's cardinal weakness: its political settlements only create winners and losers, resulting in a minority

government of elite interests rather than a government for all.

In general, there are five outstanding issues concerning the framework agreement: justice and transitional justice; security and military reform; the review and evaluation of the peace agreement; the dismantling of the regime that took power on June 30, 1989; and the issue of eastern Sudan. And the following frame sheds light on these outstanding issues that have been the source of contention between Sudanese parties who signed the political agreement and those who oppose it:-

1- The demise of the Bashir regime

Only one of the five outstanding issues, the dismantling of the regime of June 30, 1989, was discussed by the framework agreement's parties (the regime of ousted President Omar al-Bashir, 1989–2019).

On January 9, a conference was held to discuss the dismantling of the Al-Bashir regime, which there is no major disagreement between the civil and military parties, and the recovery of funds and property from former regime elements, which is a point of agreement among the framework agreement signatories. The Declaration of Freedom and Change (the Central

Council), other political forces (the original Democratic Unionist Party, the People's Congress), civil society organizations, and armed movements united under the banner of the "Revolutionary Front" have signed the agreement. This agreement is opposed by the Forces of Freedom and Change (the Democratic Bloc), which includes armed movements led by Jibril Ibrahim, Minni Arko Minawi, and other civil political forces, as well as the Communist Party, Coordination Committees of the Resistance (activists), and the Sudanese Professionals Association.

2- The transitional justice

This issue is necessary because it is a priority for any future stability and, as jurists say, is also related to ending the state of continuous impunity. It appears complicated, given that these grievances date from the 1989 coup to the signing of the framework agreement in December 2022 and include many victims from across the country, including victims of decades-long wars in the states of Darfur, Blue Nile, and South Kordofan. This in addition to the victims of popular protests of December 2019, when demonstrations against the Bashir regime erupted, have

passed through the rights of the victims of protests following the actions of army commander Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan in October 2021, who numbered approximately 122 dead in addition to thousands of injured, according to the Sudanese Central Committee of Doctors (non-governmental).

3- Military organs reform

It is regarded as one of the most complex issues that may complicate or cancel the framework agreement, given that the military institution recognizes the need for reform within it but rejects civilian and political intervention in the reform process as a military matter. At the same time, the country's political and civil forces demand a single national and professional army that does not interfere in politics (Abdulrahim, 2023).

4- Reviewing the “Juba Peace Agreement”

After President Omar al-Bashir was deposed and a new transitional period began in August 2019, the "Juba Peace Agreement" was reached in 2020 with the armed movements fighting Khartoum. In addition to other arrangements, the armed movements have a share of political power in

Khartoum under the peace agreement signed in South Sudan's capital, Juba (Al-Ali, 2021).

However, the agreement was not fully implemented as required, prompting many parties to call for its review, particularly because it did not include all armed movements led by the "Sudan Liberation Movement" led by Abdul Wahid Nour and the "People's Movement" led by Abdul-Aziz Al-Hilu. As a result of the complications that have been imposed on the recent framework agreement, the "Juba Peace Agreement" is now one of the outstanding issues that must be resolved in the final agreement on the Sudanese crisis.

5- Addressing the issues of eastern Sudan

At times, the last outstanding issues take on a demand and tribal dimension, and their dilemma lies in a large portion of the eastern Sudan region's demand to cancel what is known as the "Eastern Sudan Path" in the Juba Peace Agreement.

The Sudanese parties' dialogue on this issue yielded no solutions, and the "Forces of Freedom and Change" believe that the issue of eastern Sudan is simple and can be resolved quickly with the participation of stakeholders.

The "*East Path*" is another point worths to be mentioned, which is a signed agreement between the government and two factions from eastern Sudan, the "Beja Opposition Conference" and the "Popular Front for Peace, Liberation, and Justice" that provides for 30 percent representation of the two factions in the region's executive and legislative authority, but it has yet to be implemented (Sudan, 2006).

Forces in eastern Sudan, led by the "Supreme Council of Beja Optics", reject this path and demand its abolition, and the council implemented several closures of the Port Sudan (east) port in protest of what it describes as "developmental marginalization and rejection of the eastern path within the peace agreement signed in Juba." year 2020.

*** Federalism and power-sharing**

Federalism as an effective system of government to manage social and national diversity has gained wide fame and various applications in the ancient and modern histories of nations and peoples, and it is at present the most appropriate formula for managing the new Sudan and consolidating the pillars of peace,

development, and stability for the country.

The federal system embodies the principle of legal pluralism, which provides the constituent states of the federal state with a greater sense of self-entity. Unless a state law conflicts with the constitution or a national law affects the interests of territories or population groups outside the state, each region has legislative power in its geographical area in the areas of family, social care, health, social development, maintaining security, and strengthening the social fabric, without interference from the center. And in the matter of religious relations, some legal provisions are regional in force due to a dominant regional will (as happened in southern Sudan prior to secession), and in matters where an exception from the general application of the legal system may be mentioned, what is said about legal pluralism can be mentioned in the field of education, information, guidance, and all a matter that may affect the social entity of the region and is intended to highlight the distinguishing features of the region.

While in the matter of power-sharing, the economic and financial relations are considered as the true face of the stability of federal relations at all

levels, and resource conflict is the foundation of the various relationships between groups that accepted the formation of the federal state.

Based on Sudan's experience, the conflict and current conflict are based on the idea of increasing the share of the states in order to carry out their role in the burdens of local development, despite the fact that there is a weakness in basic infrastructure and that there are also several gaps in legislation and tax bases, which has raised debates about this experience due to its accompanying shortcomings. And the center's control over the equitable distribution of resources that achieves national stability and development by focusing on the provision of basic necessities and the achievement of development characteristics, as well as directly on organizational structures. We also believe that federal and state policies and legislation governing workforce employment and distribution should be reconsidered (Al-Adgham, 2020).

The rights of state entities under the federal government must be considered in the division of resources and powers, the most important of which can be summarized as follows:-

1- That the criteria for dividing the federal government and state entities be clear and equitable.

2- The need for resource allocation to match the standards of the federal government and state entities in order to close the gaps in the extent of varying levels of poverty, wealth, growth, and development.

3- Ensuring that the main issue is represented in the gradual implementation of the division of resources and powers, so that state governments reach the level of development qualification in terms of infrastructure availability and qualified human forces to carry out the burdens of development. Development can be carried out fairly and without quotas (Al-Kersani, 2002).

The Sudanese federal experience contains a number of positive and negative factors, that constitute current and future constraints, problems, and challenges to the experiment's success, and we must address them in some detail:

Firstly: The positive factors

1- It worked to strengthen the sense of responsibility and national, regional, and local belonging through popular, Shura, and administrative political participation, which is directed

relatively to confront the challenges and problems of various local issues and to provide solutions to them in the light of the general directives of the national central state;

2- at the state and local levels, multi-purpose agencies were established, facilitating the process of positive interaction between the government and the public's efforts;

3- the administrative shadow was shortened by bringing the management of local affairs closer together and providing services to local communities in cities and rural areas, which in turn led to increased participation, albeit in a nominal form, for the local population in decision-making and resolving various problems and conflicts;

4- helped to lemmatize the export of political and administrative leaders from the less developed states to the center by providing state and local leaders with the motivation to practice a kind of authoritarian empowerment of the residents of the states and localities (Abdullah, 2021, pp. 149 - 191).

Secondly: The negative factors

1- The instability of the organizational and functional structures as vessels of authority, responsibility, and

accountability as a result of the rapid rhythm of legal, administrative, and political reforms, changes, and developments in the national, regional, and international arenas, which increased the enormity of the structures and jobs and led to sagging and the terrible and continuous revenue gaps of the state and local budgets in exchange for the large expenditure on services, development, protection, and security and the management of the totalitarian political system, and then the high need for central federal support. Here, Dr. Adam Al-Zein Muhammad, who is considered one of those who practiced the experiment practically and theoretically through studies and papers, sees: "The federal system as a system of government is inherently expensive, because the state governments repeat the same structures and characteristics of the central agencies—an executive, legislative, and judicial apparatus."

2- The overlapping of powers between the federal, state, and local agencies has created problems in coordination, planning, and cooperation between the system's agencies at the federal, state, and local levels. He still suffers from the problem of harmony between administrative and political work under

the one political system and the failure to reach a great political consensus that leads to common values and constants between the various colors of the political, social, and economic spectrum of Sudanese society.

3- The federal system had an effect on state unity by dividing state sovereignty in the judiciary and legislation, but the solution is that this sovereignty continues from the nation, which also does so in the regions, as well as the increase and strengthening of state powers, which leads to difficulty in government control over them.

4- The imbalance in the criteria for establishing states, localities, and administrative units resulted in a significant increase in their number beyond the organizational capacity of the state's spatial space, which in turn resulted in a lack of economic sufficiency, which affected service management and development by increasing irrational political participation in legislation and implementation and placing a great burden beyond the capacity of financial resources. administrative units and violate the principle of fair political representation based on population density for the people of

states and localities, as well as other economic, social, administrative, security, and geographical criteria.

5- The dominance of regional, tribal, factional, and other civil activities under the unified political system had negative repercussions on the effectiveness of the system.

6- The conflict over power and wealth in its various forms and the struggle towards jobs, privileges, administrative goals, and political goals led to the sublime disruption of the central rule of the state, which is the mother of all, the homeland of all, and the holder of supreme or supreme sovereignty.

7- The Sudanese federal experience a democratic or shura sense in the process of selecting and appointing political and administrative leaders, holding them accountable, and keeping a close eye on them for not activating the three organs of legislative, executive, and judicial authority.

8- The dominance of tribal and regional tendencies, civil and military factions, and faction warfare had sometimes negative repercussions on the overall administrative system's integrated and unified performance, particularly when filling senior administrative and political positions

on this basis, which deepened regional and tribal fanaticism and ethnicities and contributed to the fragmentation of the sense of national unity and the integration of national construction. in terms of power and wealth.

9- There is poor coordination between the states and the executive and legislative bodies with regard to common problems between them on the one hand and between the states and the federal government on the other hand (Al-Shalali, 2018).

*** Constitutional reform**

The concept of establishing a permanent constitution in Sudan was legislated by a constitutional text in theory, but not in practice. That political circumstance did not allow for the stability of constitutional principles, and they were subject to change, amendment, or cancellation in many periods of Sudan's modern political history, as evidenced by previous transitional governments' attempts to implement the experience of democracy or military governments whose policies are inconsistent with stability, which are those constitutional principles as a source of constitution legislation. The reason for those constitutions' lack of stability is that the constitution is limited to the political

strategy of the system of government, i.e., that end was not crowned with success (Al-Sheikh, 2015).

The demand for a permanent constitution was stipulated by the Sudanese constitutions, starting with the Interim Constitution of Sudan of 1956, that the Constituent Assembly (parliament) draw up a permanent constitution, as well as in the contractual constitution of Sudan of 1973 at the first meeting of the People's Assembly stipulated this, and in the amended Interim Constitution of Sudan of 1985 or 1987 stipulated in Article 56/a thereof that the Constituent Assembly should draw up a draught permanent constitution and strengthen the matter, as previously in previous constitutions, and the idea of a permanent constitution was transferred to the Sudan Constitution of 1989 and the Sudan Interim Constitution of 2005, which witnessed the implementation of the federal system but did not see the reality of implementation, where the demand remained even after the secession of the south in 2011, which was discussed in the dialogue forum of Sudanese 2014 (Khaled, 2014).

Hence, the interim and transitional constitutions were

accompanied by legislation based on Sudan's government system, whether parliamentary or presidential, which resulted in the constitution not being proved and thus leading to political instability, which in turn led to conflict and instability under federal rule during the National Congress' rule.

**** The constitutional document after the revolution of December 11, 2018, and the vacuum followed***

In the absence of any proposals aimed at resolving Sudan's political crisis, the draught constitution proposed by the Interim Committee of the Bar Association has received widespread support from national and international parties. The support for the draught, which attempts to establish a constitutional framework for governing the remainder of the transitional period, comes at a time when there are divisions among political parties preventing the formation of a civilian government and protests and strikes are intensifying, denouncing the deterioration of living conditions.

On August 8, 2022, the Provisional Committee of the Bar Association invited most of the weighty parties to a seminar, which was also attended by representatives of

Western embassies, the United States, and the UN, as well as ambassadors from the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and others. Leaders of armed movements and representatives of parties allied to the regime of deposed President Omar al-Bashir also attended. This was interpreted as an attempt to broaden the base of participation to avoid the mistakes of the government, against which the army turned on October 25, 2021, and which excluded parties that were part of the ousted Bashir regime in April 2019. And at the same time, unprecedented meeting was held at the House of Lawyers to announce the new constitutional document. International officials and ambassadors from the Quartet (America, Britain, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE), as well as ambassadors from Norway, Canada, France, Sweden, Spain, and others, attended the seminar on the Transitional Constitutional Framework Norway, Canada, France, Sweden, Spain, and others, attended the seminar on the Transitional Constitutional Framework. It was announced that the main purpose of the seminar was to discuss the possibility of agreement between the political, professional, and revolutionary parties on the new constitutional arrangements

and to find common ground among Sudanese on constitutional issues.

The central council of the Freedom and Change coalition, the former ruling coalition, strongly supports the proposed draft, but it is widely believed that coalition representatives are the owners of the current constitutional proposals, given the marketing of the draught by its leaders and their desire for it to be adopted as an approved document to manage the transition period. The proposals also received support from parties outside Freedom and Change, whose representatives were present at the first workshop. Noting that the technical committee tasked with drafting the proposed constitution sought to engage all politically influential forces and those bearing arms, the draught constitution was submitted for consultation to movements that had not signed a peace agreement with the transitional government led by Abdel Aziz al-Hilu and Abdel Wahid Muhammad Noor. Local experts and international houses of expertise were also brought in to draught it.

The draught sets the framework of the transitional constitutional declaration in 12 chapters and 76

articles, which provide, among other things, the formation of a civil government and a national security and defense council with civilian leadership, as the texts included issues related to the nature of the state, which must be civil and democratic. It provides for federal rule through three levels of government (federal, regional, and local), as well as issues related to governance structures and the independence of the judiciary. The document also states that the Bank of Sudan reports to the Council of Ministers, after the previous document made it report to the Sovereignty Council, which appoints the governor and his deputies (The Republic of Sudan, Gazette Published by Authority -issue No. 1895 KH .on 3/10/2019, 2020).

Furthermore, the proposed document may address some of the failures and shortcomings of its predecessor, as it focuses on the rights and freedoms and the subordination of all regular forces to the full civil authority, provided that there are three regular forces at the level of the Sudanese state, namely the armed forces, the police, and the General Intelligence Service. The draught constitution does not specify the

number of members of the Sovereignty Council, under which it is the head of state, and its presidency will be periodic to exercise the functions of the Prime Minister, the judiciary, the Constitutional Court, and the Auditor General. comprehensive and conditional, and abolish the punishment.

This is in addition to the fact that the draught constitution addresses the formation of a cabinet of 25 ministers, equally divided between the sexes, and that it must answer to parliament for its work. It also provides for a review of all laws within the first six months of the signing of the constitution to repeal or change anything that is contrary to the rights and freedoms of the people. However, the most important problem remains, which is the lack of a legislative council to authorize this document. Since the beginning of the revolution in December 2018 until now, there is no council has been formed to complete the structures of the transitional authority (Aljazeera.net, 2022).

*** Community dialogue and reconciliation**

This axis approaches post-conflict reconciliation from two perspectives: the general path, which is

closely linked to the peaceful political process, documenting the cessation of violence, political dialogue, and transitional justice, and the more specific path, which is related to the role of the other axes in promoting reconciliation and civil peace. Reconciliation can be achieved not only through a specific program, but also through every developmental and reform effort that follows the conflict. Through reconstruction, development, and continuous communication activities, work is being done to deny the reasons for returning to conflict by developing formulas for peace that contribute to reducing anger and lack of justice, bringing points of view closer together, and rebuilding trust between conflicting parties.

The term "reconciliation": the definition and application of this term "reconciliation" vary from country to country and circumstance to circumstance, and its definition and application are modified according to the circumstances and entanglements of each conflict. As a result, we must first define the terminology and use what fits the general framework of Sudan's ethnopolitical conflict, while also ensuring that the term itself, or any other term related to devising a plan to

exit it, does not constitute a dispute in and of itself. Experiments have shown that using a single term alone can indicate agreement in one location and time while adding to the rift in another location and time. Accordingly, those concerned must define the terms and resort to consensual ones, dropping or deferring the contentious and replacing it in a way that increases the chances of reconciliation.

While *National reconciliation* is a political project that aims to restore peace and social security in the country while also maintaining political stability. So, in times of crisis or war, the goal of the state is to find the best way out of the situation. Typically, this state method is to import the solutions developed by similar ones who focus on countries to get out of their crises, but some countries find solutions on their own, based on the fact that success in another country does not always translate to success in one's own, particularly in developing countries (Al-Toumi, 2020).

The experience has shown that achieving political stability, even if by any means, is an important and external factor in improving the state's internal status if it is achieved, because the difference between a state that

enjoys political stability and another that does not is very clear, particularly for reasons resulting from the political vacuum, deterioration of the security situation within the state, and the spread of violence among its people.

In general, national reconciliation is linked to societal dialogue, as they constitute two sides of the same coin and are considered complementary to each other. While they are also linked to a number of factors that must be taken into consideration, as represented in a number of the following points:-

- 1- Reconciliation and transitional justice
- 2- Reconciliation, bridging the social rift, and rehabilitating areas devastated by war or even areas that have been marginalized
- 3- Reconciliation, development, and reconstruction
- 4- Reconciliation and building partnerships

** Reconciliation and military, political, governance, and legal reform*

The seeds of reconciliation germinate in a comprehensive, consensual political solution. The peaceful political agreement to end the conflict carries with it a message to the

conflicting parties to accept the other party at all levels. Therefore, it constitutes a solid ground for starting work gradually from the top of the pyramid to its base, and most importantly, from the base of the pyramid upwards. Peaceful consensus, the transitional political process, and democratic practices must have a greater reflection on the participatory base. The involvement of local communities and civil society from day one is the basis for becoming the primary bearer of the national and social reconciliation process.

In Sudan, reconciliation and community dialogue has been used to address ethno-political conflicts and promote reconciliation between different ethnic and political groups. For example, in Darfur, community dialogues were used to bring together different groups that were involved in the conflict to discuss their differences and find common ground. These dialogues helped to break down barriers and promote understanding between communities.

In Sudan, reconciliation has been used as a way to address the long-standing tensions between different ethnic and political groups. For example, the Comprehensive Peace

Agreement (CPA) of 2005, which ended the civil war between the north and the south, included provisions for reconciliation and the establishment of a national reconciliation commission. This commission has been working to promote reconciliation between different groups and address the root causes of the conflict.

Overall, community dialogue and reconciliation are crucial tools for achieving ethno-political consensus in Sudan. They help to address conflicts, build relationships, and promote understanding between different groups. By engaging in these processes, Sudan can work towards a more peaceful and inclusive future.

*** Conclusion**

It's important to note that achieving ethno-political consensus in Sudan is a complex and challenging task that requires the cooperation and commitment of all parties involved. It also requires a strong and independent institution to manage, monitor, and evaluate the process of dialogue, negotiation, and implementation of agreements.

It's also worthy to mention that the current context of Sudan is complex and dynamic, and the country is facing multiple challenges such as

economic and political instability, lack of security, and humanitarian crisis. Therefore, achieving ethno-political consensus will require a comprehensive and multifaceted approach that addresses not only the political dimension but also the economic and social dimensions. Thus, building ethno-political consensus in a country like Sudan can be a complex and challenging task, as it is a diverse country with a history of ethnic and political conflicts. Some ways to build ethno-political consensus in Sudan could include:-

- 1- Encouraging dialogue and peaceful communication between different ethnic and political groups.
- 2- Promoting inclusive policies and programs that benefit all members of society, regardless of their ethnicity or political affiliation.
- 3- Building trust through transparent and accountable governance and institutions.
- 4- Supporting initiatives that promote cultural and linguistic diversity, and encouraging the celebration of the cultural heritage of different groups.
- 5- Developing and implementing policies that address the root causes of ethnic and political conflicts, such as

poverty, inequality, and marginalization.

6- Encouraging the participation of women, youth and all marginalized groups in the political process.

7- Implementing power-sharing arrangements, such as federalism or consociationalism.

Hence, ethno-political consensus is a long-term process and it requires the commitment and cooperation of all the Sudanese parties. and work closely with civil society organizations, media, and academic institutions to build a more inclusive and peaceful society.

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