



Moatinoon for Peace Culture Journalism

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## Triangles of Eastern Sudan: Sides of War and Angles of Peace

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### Introduction

Two triangles connect the eastern region of Sudan with three neighboring countries: Egypt, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. These triangles symbolize eternal relations that have spanned history, interspersed with tensions, conflicts, stability, wars, and peace. The nature of these relations depends on the influencing factors of each era or stage and the associated demographic, geopolitical, and economic changes. These changes define the characteristics of each historical era or stage.

We will not delve into events from the distant or recent past but rather focus on the current reality in its most prominent manifestations and consequences. Before independence from the colonizer and the drawing of political boundaries for these countries, these triangles existed geographically, devoid of their political dimension.

The Hamra-Hamdayet-Um Hajar triangle is the core linking three countries (Sudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea). Since the mid-20th century, it has been characterized by instability, internal wars, and conflicts among them. This triangle is intersected by the Setit River, which flows into the Atbara River and then the Nile. The colonizer set its boundaries, leaving behind many security, political, and social complexities after its departure, in addition to border tensions. Given that the situation in this triangle impacts the overall scene in the Horn of Africa and the security of the Red Sea, it's essential to examine the complexities and intersections that always lead to tensions and conflicts with the geopolitical transformations affecting it.

At the same time, the Halayeb triangle, the flank linking Sudan and Egypt, remains a measure of the nature of relations between the two countries. Unlike the first triangle, the sovereignty dispute over Halayeb continues between the two states. While Egypt has held control over it by force since the attempted assassination of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak by Islamists, it was part of Sudan and considered an electoral constituency for the Sudanese parliament during democratic eras. Despite its relative geographical distance, this triangle influences the other in political and security contexts, which we will address in a separate paper.

### Contradictory Relationships

The scene seems confusing to observers and requires unraveling the images of political and social relations within a single framework to read them from different angles. This analysis will not spare one from the maze game they will drown in.

Looking back a bit, the Eritrean revolution against Ethiopian colonization received full popular support from Sudanese people. In contrast, official support oscillated on the tightrope of bilateral relations between Sudan and Ethiopia, varying between supporting and restricting the rebels. A model of this

oscillation is summarized by Dr. Badreldin Hashim in a Sudanese article, citing "Bellele Belachew Yihun" in his article "Ethiopia's Troubled Relations with Sudan between 1956 and 1983": "The most problematic periods in Sudanese rule with Ethiopia were during the governments of Azhari, then Sirr Al-Khatim Al-Khalifa, and then Nimeiry. During these times, Sudan's support for Eritrean rebels doubled, prompting Ethiopia to retaliate by supporting southern Sudanese rebels to deter Sudan from direct intervention in an internal issue of a sovereign state."

The author also notes the improvement in official relations between the two countries during Nimeiry's era in the early 1980s: "Nimeiry's government invited Ethiopia for peace talks, and Sudan tightened restrictions on Eritreans within Sudan, halted media campaigns against Ethiopia, and sought to convince the Ethiopian government to expel opponents of both governments active in each other's countries. As a goodwill gesture, Sudan invited Ethiopia to attend the Sudanese Socialist Union conference in Khartoum in January 1980, without inviting the Eritrean Liberation Movement as it had before. All previously stalled joint committees were reactivated."

In 1974, the Ethiopian army overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie following a widespread famine-induced unrest. The army established the "Derg" regime, shifting its allegiance eastward, after Ethiopia had been aligned with the West during the Cold War era between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, Sudan emerged from its eastern experience with a sea of blood following the failed coup of Major Hashim al-Atta, affiliated with the Sudanese Communist Party. President Jaafar Nimeiry then fully aligned himself with Washington, leading to dramatic geopolitical transformations in the region.

Sudan strongly supported Eritrean revolutionary organizations and armed popular movements opposing the Derg regime in Addis Ababa. This continued support, despite changing political regimes in Sudan, culminated in the success of the People's Front for Democracy and Justice, the leading Eritrean revolutionary movement, in controlling all Eritrean territories. They continued their struggle alongside the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front to overthrow Mengistu Haile Mariam's regime in 1991, after the rebels entered Addis Ababa. Eritrea achieved independence through a referendum in 1993, completing the Hamra-Hamdayet-Um Hajar triangle.

Returning to the nature of Ethiopian armed popular movements resisting the Derg regime in Addis Ababa, these movements were ethnically and regionally based, while Eritrean movements were nationally based. The names of these Ethiopian armed movements clearly reflect their nature and bases: the Oromo Peoples' Democratic Organization, the Amhara National Democratic Movement, the Southern Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Movement, and the Tigray People's Liberation Front. In contrast, Eritrean revolutionary movements were characterized by their national and ideological orientations, not based on ethnicities, despite their mosaic ethnic composition. Nonetheless, significant ideological differences led to fierce battles among these movements at historical junctures, shaping the current reality of Eritrea.

## **The Sudanese Scene**

Sudan's motives, both official and popular, varied in aligning with parties in Ethiopian and Eritrean conflicts before and after independence. The general Sudanese popular support for the Eritrean revolution appeared emotional, based on popular relations and cultural and social intermingling between eastern Sudanese and Eritrean tribes, a fact that cannot be overlooked.

Mona Abdel Fattah writes in an article titled "Sudan and Eritrea: The Bet of Relations between Unity and Integration" on the "Independent Arabia" website: "Eritreans do not feel like strangers in eastern

Sudan; the cultures, ethnicities, and histories of both sides have been closely intertwined since ancient times. Perhaps the most important factor explaining why eastern Eritreans are an integral part of eastern Sudan is that, apart from refugee issues, Eritreans did not flee back to their country but remained in Kassala or nearby cities, and many of them live in Khartoum."

However, this is not the whole truth, as other, stronger factors contributed to the Sudanese popular support for the Eritrean revolution. These factors coincided with the rise of national liberation movements across Africa and the independence of many colonized countries. Simultaneously, the dominance of Arab nationalist thought with its socialist background attracted several Eritrean movement leaders. Many resided in Arab countries and were able to move comfortably to formulate and establish supportable visions by Arab regimes and peoples, aiding the preparation for the Eritrean revolution.

Eritrean researcher Suleiman Fayid writes on the anniversary of the revolution's launch: "Eritrea has a great history deeply rooted in history, filled with remarkable heroic deeds. Its national struggle since the 1940s has undergone various stages and forms, rising and falling. Despite all the challenges and conspiracies, the people's dedication was immense, their sacrifices boundless. This people escalated their organized revolutionary struggle, leading to the establishment of the Eritrean Liberation Front on July 7, 1960, in Cairo by Eritrean intellectuals and students, led by the martyr leader Idris Muhammad Adam - may Allah rest his soul. The armed struggle began on September 1, 1961, led by the heroic martyr Hamid Idris Awate - may Allah rest his soul - under the banner of the Eritrean Liberation Front, aiming to liberate the land and people and establish a democratic Eritrean state with national sovereignty."

The second factor closely linked to the Eritrean revolutionary movement's rise is the evolution of the Sudanese political movement that led the struggle for independence. This movement was not isolated from national liberation movements across Africa and the world; instead, it had connections and contributions to these movements. Thus, it's unsurprising that the Sudanese political movement supported the Eritrean revolution from its inception, with varying degrees of support based on the ideological and philosophical principles of each political party. Overall, it created a motivating environment for the Sudanese people, particularly those in the east, to act as a social incubator, with many Sudanese joining the revolution.

The situation differed for Ethiopia for several reasons: Ethiopia was an independent state occupying Eritrean territories, and there was a lack of cross-border social and cultural ties like those between Sudan and Eritrea. A prominent contradiction is the relationship between the Sudanese Communist Party and the Eritrean revolution, even during the Marxist regime led by Mengistu Haile Mariam.

The relationship between Sudan and Ethiopian armed revolutionary movements was more official than popular, receiving governmental support at various stages, depending on the nature of relations between the ruling regimes and their agendas at each stage. Ethiopia reciprocated by supporting armed movements opposing the central authority in Khartoum, such as hosting and supporting the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement before the self-determination referendum outlined in the Sudanese peace agreement in "Machakos," while Sudan supported the Tigray People's Liberation Front and rebellious movements against the Ethiopian central authority in the "Beni Shangul-Gumuz" region.

The Islamic National Front's coup in Sudan in June 1989 coincided with the peak of liberation battles fought in harmony by Eritrean and Ethiopian revolutionary movements to overthrow the Derg regime in Addis Ababa. Within months, the Derg's defenses began collapsing like dominoes, with Sudanese

military intelligence and logistical support playing a crucial role in supporting military operations on the battlefield.

Lam Akol Ajawin writes in his book "SPLM/SPLA: Inside an African Revolution" about the support provided by Sudan to the Eritrean and Ethiopian rebel movements, stating:

"In the last stages of the Eritrean struggle and the Ethiopian revolution, Sudan was an essential supporter, providing critical logistical and military assistance to both movements. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front received vital support in terms of weapons, intelligence, and training from Sudan, which helped them topple the Derg regime."

It is significant to remember that the Sudanese Armed Forces possessed one of the strongest military intelligence services in the area and throughout Africa prior to the Islamic Front's coup d'état in Khartoum. Since gaining independence, it has maintained close ties with numerous national liberation movements throughout Africa, with numerous movements ending up in the Sudan.

According to non-current stories of these relations, military intelligence did when rebels in the Congo seized two gold trucks bound for the Belgian colony, and the rebels were forced to cross Sudanese territory to escape the pursuit of Belgian forces, and they contacted the Sudanese Armed Forces, which moved a force from Juba to the western Equatoria border and returned via gold shipment. The gold shipment travelled from Juba to downgrade its travels within the General Command rather than the Central Bank, without the knowledge of the political authorities, and was made up of two parts: one from Algerian revolutionaries and the other from Congolese revolutionaries.

### **Sudanese coup and alterations in triangle ribs**

As previously stated, with the fall of the "gendarmerie" system, the features of the triangle became obvious, and its earliest forms were accepted as equal-rib triangles at the official level in the early years. At the time, all political governments were vying for power, though the Khartoum regime, led by the Islamic Movement following a coup d'état, was nearly two years ahead of the rest.

Only a few years ago did the Khartoum administration reveal its expansionist cross-border face, beginning with the support of terrorist Eritrean organisations to destabilise the young State. The other great country emerged when regimes in Khartoum attempted to kill Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. The East's triangles burned here, and the picture transformed in the triangle, which became equilateral and then equal-legged.

In her essay (former source), Mona Abdel Fattah writes: "Sudanese-Eritrean relationship characterized by the charge and conflict. Eritrea supported the military action of the southern and northern Sudanese opposition in response to Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki Khartoum's 1994 accusation of aiding Islamic militants in his nation. Former Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir accused Eritrea of "treason" in October 2002, after army positions along the Sudan-Eritrean border were attacked by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) led by the late John Garang, who used Eritrean troops and weapons to respond to Sudanese accusations that amounted to a war declaration.

The attack was launched by forces of the National Democratic Assembly (NDA), the largest faction of which was led by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), in order to correct some of Mona Abdel Fattah's statements in her article, and the significance of this correction will be reported later. Asmara was hosting the Sudanese political and armed opposition, and it is worth noting that the

Sudanese opposition includes regional and ethnic organisations as well as a specific interest in Asmara's rule, which will have a long-term impact on the public landscape.

Ethiopia's western border, from Hamra in the extreme northwest to the Blue Nile, was opened to Sudan's armed opposition. Sudanese coalition forces deployed along the border to the north of the Blue Nile, while Sudan People's Liberation Army units stayed in southern Blue Nile-controlled areas within Sudanese territory.

The Khartoum dictatorship, commanded by the Islamic Movement, conducted fights with neighbouring states to the east and west using a variety of weapons and techniques, the most dangerous of which was the tribal and regional weapon. As he began to develop his own internal strategy by stimulating the tribal and regional spirit throughout Sudan, encapsulating his policy with what he termed the "shortening of the administrative shadow," bringing the concept of federalism out of its content, he also embraced tribal and regional support for movements opposing new regimes of governance in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

According to Dr. Lam Akkul's book "A Former Source," the Khartoum system trained the Aromo, Gambella, and Beni Shakul groups prior to the fall of the Mengistu administration in 1991, and the same policy of targeting those tribes continues. It also mobilised parts of Ethiopia's Oromo nationalism, often known as the Muslim majority in Ethiopia, under religious cover, similar to the tactic it intended to apply to Eritrea. Because of the nature of the national structure that characterised Eritrean revolutionary systems in their struggle against the coloniser, despite their different intellectual premises, it was difficult for the Khartoum regime to use the same tribal tactic, adopting and supporting Islamic jihadist groups that could destabilise the fledgling State while also playing on the contradictions that Eritrean revolutionary systems in their various stages.

It is hardly surprise that the Islamic Movement leadership in Khartoum has adopted this policy towards its neighbours, as part of its expansionist goals, after gaining control of governance. It is the same tactic that began to be used internally following the imposition of security control and attempts to revitalise the people and urge them to participate in the southern battle, which transformed their faith into a jihadist conflict.

The second phase, which used the tribal weapon to weaken the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and encircle it within its regional framework, began to embrace and support tribal groups from southern Sudan, whether they were part of or opposed to the movement, taking advantage of the SPLM and People's Army's tribal composition. That strategy is clearer in its subsequent engagement with armed formations in Darfur, where it pursues a policy of targeting tribes based on ethnic and racial criteria.

The Khartoum dictatorship has been active utilising military force in internal conflicts. Instead of fighting military wars with no certainty of success, it has established its own and official security agencies to fight its other battles as part of its expansionist goals outside boundaries. These organs have begun to pursue a policy of regional, tribal, and religious polarisation, whichever works, as a tool for destabilising regimes in such areas and gaining control of decision-making centres if their schemes succeed in overthrowing or extorting and weakening such administrations.

### **Ethiopia's Eritrean War and Triangle Papers Mixing**

The Eritrean-Ethiopian war began in May 1998, following a series of tensions for a variety of causes, including the decline and deterioration of relations between yesterday's comrades who fought from

a single trench under the "gendarmierie" system. Eritrea's claim to demarcate its southern border with Ethiopia would not have resulted in war between the two countries if there had not been accumulated historical differences between the Tigrayan nationality of Ethiopia's northern territory and the Tigrinya that it neighbours in the southern Eritrean region, which extend not only geographically but also ethnically. This is in addition to the varying relationships between the TPLF and the Eritrean Liberation Front during their war against the regime in Addis Abeba.

The position between the two states may have exacerbated the TPLF's grip over Ethiopian governance, as well as control over the ruling coalition and the implementation of its ethnic federalism agenda, which Asmara opposed. Would the two states' relationship have been different if this factor had not existed? Eritrea's aspirations for border demarcation with Ethiopia actually refer to the demarcation of its border with Tigray. The two conflict points "Badme and Zlambsa" are located on the territory's border with Eritrea. If the power in Addis Abeba was not the Tigray Front, the claim could have taken other forms than war.

With the start of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War, the "Humra Hamdayit Umm Hajr" triangle is rearranging its features once more. Eritrea began to execute the same plan as Khartoum, housing and training Amhara and Afar nationals on its territory.

The battle honed the Khartoum regime's triangle strategy, and its impact along the front line between them and the armed resistance on the three-state border was clear. That policy began to bear fruit, particularly after the conflict ended and the government of Khartoum and the Sudanese opposition were interested in engaging in peace talks. The Khartoum government successfully brought the regional landscape into its square, successfully breaking peace talks with the Sudanese opposition into isolated islands.

It succeeded in isolating the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in its home territory, deviating from the Machakos negotiation formula that granted the people of the South the right to a referendum on self-determination, and isolating the remaining SPLM-controlled areas in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile from the fate of the South.

With the Cairo Agreement, it was able to isolate political opposition from its influence on parties while also trapping its presence within the Centre in the Central Parliament.

It was successful in isolating violent regional movements in the east, leaving Eritrea with a role in Sudan limited to eastern Sudan and centred on regional and tribal strategies. The parties to the Asmara Agreement for Eastern Sudan, also known as the "Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement," include the Beja and Free Lions Congress "Rashayda Tribe" and the Eastern Sudan Party, which emerged with the signing of the Agreement and is made up of two tribal-based organisations.

It succeeded in isolating Darfur's armed movements and establishing a movable platform between Chad's capital, N'Djamena, and Qatar's capital, Doha. They are more regional than national movements.

This political strategy has exacerbated disparities among Sudanese voters and returned them to their regional bases. In each region, they have fostered disparities between their ethnic and tribal components in tandem with their objective of decreasing the administrative shadow in order to strengthen their political and security hold. Its impact on the Sudanese environment persisted after the Islamic Movement administration fell in April 2019, overshadowing the Juba Peace Agreement reached by the Transitional Authority and the Revolutionary Front. Instead of signing a unified and difficult-to-overturn agreement, the Revolutionary Front, which includes armed struggle movements,

has chosen to fall into the trap of a regime's strategy of struggling and sacrificing blood in order to drop it by signing it fragmented into what it has called "paths," putting itself in the trap of applying it or procrastinating its application without regard for the nature and complexity of the transition. Darfur's trajectory, which included the Nuba Mountains, the Blue Nile, the Centre Track, the North Track, and the East Track, all sowed seeds of strife.

### **Ethiopia's War**

According to Abdelwahab bin Aleppo's study, "Social and Cultural Construction in Africa: The Attractions of the Tribe and the State," published in the Algerian Journal of Public Policy, No. 3 in February 2014, the Horn of Africa's ethnic diversity is often cited as a contributing factor to conflict and war. Race and ethnicity are defined in a variety of ways. An ethnic group can be defined as a human group with natural features such as language, religion, race, nationalism, tribe, and other human groups within the same state.

Ethiopia's war was preceded by several significant events influenced by the triangle, most notably the ratification of the Algiers Peace Agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia, which silenced the plateau's defenders until recently. There was no significant development in relations between the two states until the signing of the historic Peace Agreement "Second Important Event," six years after the departure of the Tigray Front's leader and Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who signed the Algiers Agreement. Isaias Afwerki and Abiy Ahmed's objectives collided to undermine Ethiopia's ethnic federalism, which served as a pillar of authority.

The regime's premises and motives in Eritrea, which has established its grip on the State under the one-party system and the one-President, are based on fear of the effects of the Ethiopian regime based on pluralistic democracy, particularly multi-ethnic pluralism, as well as the elimination of the main rivals, the TPLF.

One of Asmara's ruling regime's strategies is to control and prevent the growth of domestic national tendencies that undermine the regime's police grip. It represented a repetition of criteria that remained to characterise the ties of the triangle States amongst each other, constantly supporting regional and ethnic movements against the dominant regimes in the triangle's ribs while fearing growing nationalism within his country because he understood that it would ravage the pillars of his regime.

That war was preceded by the victory of the Sudanese people's will in the fall of the ruling regime in Khartoum in 2019, as well as the repercussions of the counter-revolution, which used all available weapons, including sedition and tribal wars, to thwart civilian forces' efforts to establish democratic civilian rule in Sudan.

Ethiopia's 2020 war in Khartoum, followed by the signing of the Pretoria Agreement, exposed the quagmire in which the Triangle countries became involved. The so-called President of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed, enraged his partners in power, which were established following the victory of the revolution on the basis of ethnic federalism. Perhaps the manner he conducted his war with yesterday's friends was Chi's climb to dictatorship after building his new party "Prosperity" on the wreckage of the alliance that led to the triumph of the Ethiopian revolution in overthrowing the Marxist totalitarian state. He has already begun to cut the fingernails of yesterday's allies and remove them from decision-making positions, depending on successes that he believes are sufficient to achieve the mass required to override ethnic federalism.

While pursuing the "future" strategy, Abiy Ahmed returned to the same ground in his military conflict with the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which resorted to its territory, as did the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) to the south, when it was narrowed by the means of coexistence in the new developments required. In the face of Tigray's military power, Abiy Ahmed sought refuge in other nationalities, particularly Amhara and Arumu, exploiting the conflicts between the nationalities, which are similar to Sudan's policy. He also sought safety with a close friend, Isaias Afwerki, who had used his privileged position to exterminate the Tigrayan front and people. He entered the conflict alongside his ally and invaded northern Tigray region as well as the northwestern areas of Ethiopia controlled by the Tigray Front following the fall of the Mengestto Hila Meriam government.

Following the signing of the Pretoria Convention in 2022, the arrow of nations and ethnicities quickly returned to Abiy Ahmed, as those nationalities sensed that their requests were being ignored and that the Convention's stipulations were not being included. The Ethiopian scene returned to its original biography. After marching alongside the Federal Army in its war against Tigray, the Amharic Fano militias were now lifting their gun nozzles in front of the Federal Army, allowing them to emphasise their capabilities and extend their control over much of the Territory, as well as approach the capital Addis Abeba. This is not fidgety in the Arumia region to the south and Afar to the east.

"After four years of war in Oromia, Beni Shangul, and Tigray, it became evident that Abiy's attempts to destroy Ethiopian nationality had failed, bringing the Ethiopian economy and security system to an end. As a leader, Abiy Ahmed faced a difficult choice: find a way to work with ethnic nationalist movements or watch Ethiopia disintegrate. He chose to give up his ideological ambitions in order to stay in politics. First, he reached a tactical agreement with the Oromo's key opposition groups, releasing leaders such Jawar Mohammed and Bekele Gerba in January 2022. Later that year, Abiy signed a peace accord with the Tigray People's Liberation Front.

Tigray only found Sudan to support them. Relations between Sudanese military intelligence and TPLM fighters have existed since the organization's founding. In the war between the Sudanese military authority and the Ethiopian government, it was natural for Sudan to support Tigray.

Regional junctions have also played a significant role, as they always have, although they will not be addressed here. The Ethiopian-Ethiopian battle has intersected an Ethiopian identity with the Egyptian state, which aims to solidify the continental landscape and is only squeezed by Ethiopia, and the water struggle has had an impact on the landscape since the Renaissance. Egypt, which has long supported Eritrea, stands in opposition to it in this conflict. What is important to her here is the expansion of Ethiopia's military and political power, therefore her backing for the Tigray Front was significant.

### **Sudan War.. Triangle Head**

The Sudan War, which broke out on April 15, 2023, required no reason to pique people's interest. What three decades of the Islamic Movement's rule, which tamped down the preparation of macro-national tendencies and returned the country's factory to tribal and regional covenants, have done the best to consolidate the cornerstones of its rule and its continuity, is what has produced today's reality in all of its forms.

On June 30, 1989, the Islamic Movement staged a coup using its military wing within the armed services. The military, like the rest of the State's institutions, was employed to carry out its strategy and programmes, allowing its unilateral enterprise to gain complete control of those institutions. It



has been able to implement the so-called "policy of empowerment" in three decades, transforming all institutions of their nationality into servants of the ruling party, primarily the Sudanese Armed Forces.

To carry out its aim of consolidating the area, tribalism, and ethnicity, the Islamic Movement has attacked both the military and other institutions. However, the military establishment has had a stronger role and impact, weakening it, undermining its nationalism, and distorting its traditions and values so that it does not interfere with its political activity. It has begun to build rival military units to fight the war against its people.

It began with the development of the "People's Defence" force as a parallel force to the army and armed tribes after fighting some, as a result of which the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) established the greatest armed tribal force to oppose armed movements in Darfur, and then played roles that escalated to becoming the strike infantry force while attention declined for years to the qualification of the armed forces as one of the nation-State institutions.

All of this load was inherited by the Transitional Authority, which was established by the December Revolution after effectively overthrowing the Islamic Movement regime in April 2019. The transitional phase faced two major challenges. The first was the military junta, which represented the deposed regime's security council and later emerged as backing and standing behind the counter-revolution aiming to turn back the clock. The second is the civilian Government's weakness, its lack of visibility, and the absence of an agreed-upon political and economic agenda, which stems from the nature of the political forces that established the Government, as well as its composition and contradictions.

This has weakened the executive branch's ability to carry out its tasks as outlined in the constitutional document governing the transition period. The counter-revolution allowed the continuation of its programmes through its agents in various state organs, especially the military system, which, with its numerous ribs, struck all mass movements pressing for the completion of the revolution's duties. It adopted a policy of employing tribal conflicts, sedition, and wars east and west, and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) were active during this phase in order to put an end to the revolution. The formation and doctrine of rapid support have been designed to play this role since 2013, defending the ruling regime and continuing in the same role during the transition period, and played an important role in the implementation and support of the Army Chief and President of the Sovereign Council's coup against the Transitional Government in October 2021.

The Sudan war began almost immediately after the coup d'état failed to achieve its objectives due to a strong popular resistance. Yesterday's fellow Islamists, military, and rapid support forces began rough joint operations that resulted in bloodshed among themselves, killing innocent people, displacing, starving, and using millions of Sudanese as human shields in a war in which tribalism and regions played a key operational role.

This war has ramifications for the rest of the triangle, as well as for other adjacent countries, determining the character of each state's anticipated reaction. Perhaps the most serious reply comes from Syed Abu Amna, the political secretary of the Beja High Council, who told Sudan Tribune that "there are four armed groups in Eritrea, linked to leaders of the former National Congress Party, working to inflame tensions in eastern Sudan." These factions include the Eastern League forces commanded by Amin Daoud, the Eastern Sudan Liberation Movement led by Ibrahim Dunya, the National Movement for Justice and Development led by Mohamed Tahir Suleiman Bitai, and the Beja Conference led by Musa Mohamed Ahmed.

## **Angles of Peace.**

The triangles of Eastern Sudan, involving Sudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, are emblematic of the intricate and multifaceted relationships in the region. These triangles are shaped by historical ties, geopolitical interests, and strategic alliances, leading to a complex web of interactions that influence the stability and security of the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region.

Understanding the dynamics of these triangles requires a comprehensive analysis of the historical context, the motivations of the involved parties, and the impact of external influences. Only through such an analysis can effective strategies be developed to promote peace, stability, and cooperation in the region.

To promote peace, stability, and cooperation in the region, it is necessary to consider several key areas:

### **1. Strengthening Regional Cooperation:**

Enhancing collaboration between Sudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea through regional organizations such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU) is crucial. These organizations can mediate conflicts, foster dialogue, and implement development projects that benefit all parties involved. Strengthening regional cooperation can help address common challenges such as border disputes, resource management, and economic development.

### **2. Encouraging Economic Integration:**

Economic interdependence can serve as a powerful tool for peace. Initiatives aimed at boosting trade, infrastructure development, and investment among Sudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea can create mutual benefits that discourage conflict. Projects like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) can provide a framework for deeper economic integration, reducing poverty and creating job opportunities that stabilize the region.

### **3. Addressing Root Causes of Conflict:**

Many conflicts in the region are rooted in ethnic tensions, political exclusion, and economic disparities. Addressing these issues requires inclusive governance, respect for human rights, and equitable resource distribution. Initiatives that promote social cohesion, such as community dialogues and conflict resolution workshops, can help build trust and reduce tensions.

### **4. Leveraging International Support:**

International actors, including the United Nations, the European Union, and individual countries, can play a supportive role in fostering peace and development in the region. Providing financial aid, technical assistance, and diplomatic support can help build the capacities of local institutions to manage conflicts and implement development projects.

### **5. Promoting Good Governance and Democracy:**

Good governance and democratic institutions are essential for long-term stability. Encouraging transparent and accountable governance, fair elections, and the rule of law can help prevent the emergence of autocratic regimes and reduce the likelihood of conflicts. Supporting civil society organizations and independent media can also enhance public participation and oversight.

### **6. Fostering People-to-People Connections:**

Building strong cultural and social ties between the peoples of Sudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea can promote mutual understanding and reduce prejudice. Exchange programs, joint cultural festivals, and educational partnerships can help bridge divides and create a sense of shared identity and purpose.

#### 7. Enhancing Security Cooperation:

Collaborative security efforts are vital to combat cross-border threats such as terrorism, human trafficking, and smuggling. Establishing joint security mechanisms and sharing intelligence can improve the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies and enhance regional stability.

### **Conclusion**

The triangles of Eastern Sudan represent a microcosm of the broader challenges and opportunities in the Horn of Africa. By focusing on regional cooperation, economic integration, addressing root causes of conflict, leveraging international support, promoting good governance, fostering people-to-people connections, and enhancing security cooperation, the countries in the region can work together to build a more peaceful, stable, and prosperous future.

Such efforts require sustained commitment and collaboration from all stakeholders, including governments, regional organizations, civil society, and international partners. Only through collective action and a shared vision can the region overcome its challenges and harness its potential for the benefit of all its people.

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