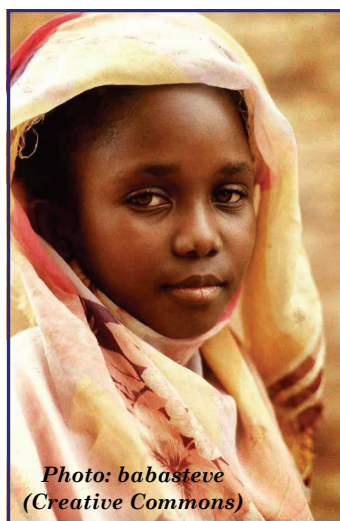


## ***After Oslo: Involving all Sudanese in Sudan's Reconstruction***

**St Ethelburga's, London, UK, 28 April 2005**



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Concordis International facilitated a one-day consultation on 28 April 2005 to develop consensus on the contribution of the Sudanese diaspora to the reconstruction process of Sudan post the CPA. This consultation built on the previous work of Concordis on the Sudanese conflict since 1999, facilitating low-profile, inclusive research-based dialogue in support of the formal peace process. Participants were primarily UK-based Sudanese. They attended in their personal capacities and came from diverse backgrounds, representing a comprehensive range of key Sudanese civil society groups and the private sector.

The participants discussed the major international donors' conference in Oslo, which was attended by representatives of more than 60 countries and international organizations on 11-12 April 2005. The Oslo conference was generally seen to have been fruitful, resulting in a set of recommendations by working groups and commissions that were presented to the main

conference. Financial pledges made at the conference totalled US\$ 4.5 billion for the period 2005-2007. However, the weaknesses of the Oslo conference were also discussed, such as the conditionality of many of the financial pledges and the lack of broad representation in the various commissions.

The participants considered the regional disparities affecting Sudan's reconstruction. It was noted that, although the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) addressed unequal distribution of power and wealth in the north and south of Sudan, other areas, such as the east, were not adequately addressed. However, it was noted that the CPA could provide guidelines for addressing problems in other areas. Participants agreed that the underdeveloped South needed massive investment combined with appropriate governance from an inclusive and participatory interim government. The abundance of resources in Sudan was recognised, including land, sunlight, groundwater, Nile water, oil and gold reserves, but participants felt that aggressive privatisation in Sudan in the past had merely served to highlight some of the country's disparities. It was noted that without integrated and sustainable development, Sudan would find it difficult to progress economically. Investment needs to be encouraged and infrastructure needs to be developed, especially relating to health and transport. Participants argued that there was now a necessity to create conditions in which the public sector would thrive and the diaspora would have incentives to invest.

The participants agreed that one of the most effective methods of achieving long-lasting change is the development of grassroots and civil society organisations. They highlighted the need to build up support from the grassroots level and remove restrictive rules, especially concerning political rights. They also identified a need to challenge the ideologies of racism and gender inequality, and felt that an independent media provided an important tool for challenging these ideologies in Sudan.

The participants felt that the short consultation had been productive, particularly in highlighting the ways in which the diaspora could become more actively and effectively involved in the reconstruction of Sudan.