

# In Need of Review: SPLA Transformation in 2006–10 and Beyond

*By Richard Rands*



Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken



HM Government



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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# List of abbreviations

<b>C-in-C</b>	Commander-in-chief
<b>CPA</b>	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
<b>COGS</b>	Chief of general staff
<b>DCOGS</b>	Deputy chief of general staff
<b>DDR</b>	Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development (UK)
<b>EDF</b>	Equatorial Defence Forces
<b>GHQ</b>	General Headquarters
<b>GoSS</b>	Government of Southern Sudan
<b>JIU</b>	Joint Integrated Unit
<b>LRA</b>	Lord's Resistance Army
<b>NCO</b>	Non-commissioned officer
<b>OAG</b>	Other Armed Group
<b>SAF</b>	Sudan Armed Forces
<b>SDG</b>	Sudanese pound
<b>SPLA</b>	Sudan People's Liberation Army
<b>SPLM</b>	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
<b>SSDDT</b>	Security Sector Development and Defence Transformation (UK project)
<b>SSDF</b>	South Sudan Defence Forces
<b>VSS</b>	Veterans Security Services

# I. Introduction and key findings

The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) is engaged in a process of transformation: it is undergoing a conversion from a guerrilla force into an affordable, professional, and disciplined regular force designed to operate under democratic civil control of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) or, at an appropriate future date, as part of a national army under a government of national unity or its unified successor.<sup>1</sup> The milestones for this process are outlined in the SPLA White Paper on Defence, which the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly endorsed in June 2008 (GoSS, 2008).

This *Working Paper* reviews the successes and shortcomings of the SPLA's defence transformation process to date, measured against the White Paper milestones. It takes into account decisions, events, processes, programmes, and doctrine relating to SPLA transformation and development from 2006 onward. In so doing, it identifies a transformation gap that has become evident between SPLA requirements and defence reform initiatives.

It would be impossible to evaluate the SPLA's transformation process without a clear understanding of how the force's structure, composition, and capabilities have evolved over time in the absence of a formal, written strategy and detailed implementation plans. A strong grasp is also needed of the current burdens placed on the army by the integration of the so-called Other Armed Groups (OAGs) into the SPLA, and the intricate power-broking and daily balancing of command and influence required to maintain stability. These contextual issues are considered in Part II of the paper, along with a review of the post-referendum future of the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs).

Part III dissects transformation efforts in detail and focuses on the positive as well as the negative effects of international assistance programmes. It also analyses the SPLA's self-conceived and self-funded transformation and development efforts, relating transformation initiatives to strategic parameters and objectives documented in SPLA publications and doctrine since 2006. This section reviews the role of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration



(DDR) programmes in SPLA defence transformation, as well as the prospects for ‘right-sizing’<sup>2</sup> the force.

Among the key findings are the following:

- The lack of a coherent SPLA defence strategy is frustrating high-level support for transformation. Despite some successes with the development and implementation of procedural doctrine, the absence of a comprehensive strategic defence review and approved defence strategy means that the transfor-

mation process is rooted within a force structure that was designed out of necessity and without the benefit of detailed analysis. A comprehensive analysis of SPLA capabilities is required, not only as part of an overarching defence review, but also to guide future transformation.

- The SPLA leadership's preoccupation with the possibility of renewed North–South conflict is its primary motivation for strengthening the armed forces at all costs. This war mentality is unlikely to change until the referendum on self-determination is successfully navigated; it suggests that the SPLA will fully cooperate with formal defence review processes only after the referendum and once international defence cooperation treaties or memorandums have been signed.
- The challenges posed by the integration of the OAGs present the largest threat to the cohesion and effectiveness of the SPLA. Future transformation parameters must be informed by a thorough understanding of OAG integration issues.
- The SPLA faces multiple short-term challenges, including problems regarding accountability, logistics, and sustainment; a lack of mobility; poor tactical communications; urgent training and new equipment needs; and insufficient funds to support development.
- Until the Ministry of SPLA Affairs actively supports defence management—rather than serving solely as an 'accountability' mechanism—its rivalry and conflict with the SPLA will continue. The current antagonistic relationship has hindered the development of effective democratic civil governance and oversight procedures that should underpin overall operational effectiveness.
- DDR has not had any effect on defence transformation. There is a need for a radical rethink if right-sizing, requiring demobilization, is to be attractive and viable. Incentives to leave the SPLA in the form of traditional DDR support, severance, and the promises of a pension need to be realistic and relative to existing pay and conditions.
- The development of an SPLA reserve force—clearly stated in the Defence White Paper—should be explored in detail as part of a comprehensive defence review. The process should be tied to regular army demobilization incentives.

This paper takes as its starting point the assumption that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2005<sup>3</sup> was the result of a negotiated peace—rather than an absolute victory after which a clear winner was able to impose conditions. Many Southerners, and particularly SPLA officers, see the CPA as nothing more than a ceasefire; for them, a final victory and the beginning of peace will only come with secession from the North.<sup>4</sup> This belief plays a major role in the design and implementation of defence transformation and security sector reform as a whole.

Transformation is an ongoing process. This paper reviews SPLA transformation activities and decision-making up to 1 October 2010 and does not take into account SPLA postings and appointments as agreed by the SPLA commander-in-chief (C-in-C) on 28 October 2010. Nor does this paper attempt to presume the result of the referendum in 2011; however, it does assume that the SPLA will continue with transformation and development in future years. ▣



## II. SPLA organization, composition, and capabilities

### Structure

Prior to the death in 2005 of Dr. John Garang, GoSS president and SPLA C-in-C, the SPLA had begun to adopt a recognizable, conventional army structure, based on divisions, brigades, and battalions. One of Garang's final decisions as C-in-C was to appoint four deputy chiefs of general staff (DCOGS) to support his chief of general staff (COGS), Lt. Gen. Oyay Deng Ajak.<sup>5</sup> In order of descending seniority these DCOGS were:

- Maj. Gen. Salva Mathok Gengdit (DCOGS Administration);
- Maj. Gen. Bior Ajang Aswad (DCOGS Operations);
- Maj. Gen. James Hoth Mai (DCOGS Logistics); and
- Maj. Gen. Obuto Mamur Mete (DCOGS Political and Moral Orientation).<sup>6</sup>

These appointments were based on length of service, an extremely significant factor in transformation decision-making. Garang also created active and reserve officer lists, as well as retiring a number of officers. One of the officers on the retired list was Gen. Salva Kiir Mayardit, who, as Garang's successor, became SPLA C-in-C and GoSS president in 2005.

The initial organization of the SPLA, based on divisions, was designed in mid-2005 but not implemented at ground level until early 2006. It was based on six divisions and four independent brigades:<sup>7</sup>

- 1st Division: Upper Nile State;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Division: Equatorias;
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Division: Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap states;
- 4<sup>th</sup> Division: Unity State;
- 5<sup>th</sup> Division: Lakes State (aimed at providing direct support to the headquarters of the SPLA in the proposed capital at the time, Rumbek);
- 6<sup>th</sup> Division: SPLA elements of the JIUs; and

- Four independent brigades in: Southern Blue Nile, Bor (Jonglei), the Nuba Mountains (South Kordofan) and Raja (Western Bahr el Ghazal).

In 2007–08 the independent brigades in Blue Nile, Bor, and the Nuba Mountains became the 10<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> divisions, respectively. However, it is still not clear whether the 9<sup>th</sup> Division, around Lake Jau, is structured into smaller unit formations.<sup>8</sup> The independent brigade in Raja was integrated into a newly formed 5<sup>th</sup> Division (whose boundaries were changed following the decision to move the capital from Rumbek to Juba). An additional division—the 7<sup>th</sup>—was established in Upper Nile State; while it is referred to as a mobile division, there is little evidence that it has structured brigades or significant mobility.<sup>9</sup> In addition, the SPLA formed a Special Force (or ‘Commando’) brigade of 4 battalions—approximately 3,500 men who graduated from training in New Cush, Eastern Equatoria—in mid-2007; the force was deployed as independent units, on specialist tasks, by the end of the same year.

Although the main phase of restructuring occurred in late 2007, one of the key catalysts for this expansion was the requirement to absorb up to 50,000 additional men following the Juba Declaration in 2006.<sup>10</sup> The Declaration called for complete and unconditional unity between the SPLA and the South Sudan Defence Forces (SSDF),<sup>11</sup> as well as an agreement to immediately integrate the two forces to form one unified, non-partisan army under the name of SPLA (as stipulated in the CPA). In effect, therefore, the SPLA absorbed many of its former enemies and rivals in order to create greater stability in the South.

Although the intention in 2005–06 was to have one division per state, operational requirements, based on perceived threats, led to the structure in place today.<sup>12</sup> State boundaries do not limit SPLA formations and—although divisional and brigade commanders currently cooperate within State Security Committees and some battalion commanders do so within County Security Committees—the SPLA is very much centrally controlled from its headquarters in Bilpam, just outside Juba town. All decisions regarding the structure and detailed operational roles of the SPLA have been made in the absence of any formal strategic defence review and subsequent defence strategy. The Defence White Paper of 2008 identifies broad SPLA roles and functions—while simultaneously specifying a ‘right-sizing’ policy ‘based on [SPLA] mission and budgetary lines’ (GoSS, 2008, sec. 7.7)—and the divisions, brigades, and battalions

have been spread throughout Southern Sudan, creating extended communications and logistical challenges. As internal threats have evolved, forces have been moved in response to specific pressures and internal conflicts.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, most of the responses have been slow and reactive because the original location of units was not based on a detailed analysis of threat and mission requirements. For example, a brigade size force of approximately 2,500 men operating against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) was deployed across an area of more than 400 km in December 2008, in units as small as 30–50 men, without communications and with only one working vehicle in the whole formation (Burton Rands Associates, 2009).

To coincide with the implementation of the ten-division structure in 2008, the SPLA increased the size of its headquarters staff. This expansion coincided with the completion of the General Headquarters (GHQ) facility at Bilpam, built by DynCorp with funds from the US State Department's Africa Peacekeeping Program, AFRICAP.<sup>14</sup> An additional DCOGS appointment was created to oversee training and research (which had previously been the responsibility of DCOGS Operations), along with several new directorates and commanders of supporting arms such as artillery, air defence, armour, and engineers. Subsequently, in June–July 2009, the DCOGS were promoted to the rank of lieutenant general. A number of concurrent changes—including the lateral movement of a number of key officers to posts both inside and outside the army—left the newly promoted Lt. Gen. James Hoth Mai as COGS.<sup>15</sup> One of the main drivers behind the promotion of the most senior officers to lieutenant general during this period was the integration of 17 major generals from OAGs in line with the Juba Declaration.<sup>16</sup> The senior core of SPLA officers strongly felt the need to separate themselves by rank and authority from the former OAG officers in order to command the force effectively. The integration of so many senior officers posed significant problems in the field; in some divisions, commanders, deputy commanders, and chiefs of staff were all at the two-star level.<sup>17</sup>

Although it could be argued that the increased capacity at headquarters had a positive impact on transformation efforts, the reporting chain to the outlying divisions has not kept pace; divisional commanders still report directly to the COGS through DCOGS Operations. However, in May–June 2010 three senior

DCOGS were allocated geographical sectors to oversee in response to a number of internal security crises, particularly following national elections in April 2010 and the subsequent insurrection mounted by the former DCOGS Political and Moral Orientation, Lt. Gen. George Athor. The creation of sector 'oversight' by certain DCOGS did not add another layer to the chain of command; rather, it gave the COGS the capability to consult experts with a specific focus on the status, cohesion, and support requirements of the divisions in their sector during times of increased tension or threat.<sup>18</sup> The sectors were divided as follows: 1<sup>st</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> divisions; 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> divisions; and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> divisions.

Throughout the ongoing evolution of the SPLA's organization of its field units and headquarters, a core group of officers has been at the heart of transformation. This group was initially led by Lt. Gen. Oyay Deng Ajak (who still has significant influence as a former minister of regional cooperation and, at this writing, as minister of investment) and subsequently by James Hoth Mai (now a four-star general and COGS); it has been supported by Pieng Deng (DCOGS Administration), Ayuen Alier Jongroor (DCOGS Training and Research), and influential directors such as Maj. Gen. Malual Ayom Dor (formerly director of training, director of colleges, and—at this writing—director of production), Maj. Gen. Malek Ruben (director of finance), Maj. Gen. Kiir Garang (former director of general training, now the engineering force commander), and a growing number of highly motivated brigadiers and colonels who have graduated from regional command and staff colleges as well as international military schools and colleges.<sup>19</sup>

The SPLA's Transformation and Research Directorate, established in early 2010 with a mandate to oversee SPLA transformation activities, has not yet demonstrated the capacity, influence, or credibility to propose, drive, or even monitor change. This directorate was established under pressure from advisers from the UK government-sponsored Security Sector Development and Defence Transformation (SSDDT) project and, arguably, did not take into account the SPLA's leadership dynamics and ownership of transformation.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, many senior officers in the SPLA believe the responsibility for transformation coordination should have been given to the Directorate of Organization, which took on the responsibility of defence reform immediately after the signing of the CPA.<sup>21</sup>



The author with SPLA non-commissioned officers during a course at Mapel Training Centre, 2009. © Richard Rands

Although defence transformation is acknowledged as a ‘long process and not an event’,<sup>22</sup> the SPLA adopted conventional military formations on a large scale and over a short period of time. On paper, therefore, the army transformed from a guerrilla force to a conventional army in a matter of months. Yet with insufficient resources, underdeveloped administrative processes, a lack of understanding of conventional military theories among the majority of officers, and limited training and discipline in parts of the army, it has faced significant transformation challenges ever since.

## Integration issues

The cohesion and subsequent effectiveness of the SPLA’s nine divisions (not including the 6<sup>th</sup> Division, which accounts for the SPLA’s contribution to the JIUs) largely depends on three factors: (1) the influence of senior commanders at GHQ; (2) the capability of commanders at division, brigade, and battalion

levels; and (3) the composition of formations and units following the integration of armed groups and militias. The first factor is straightforward; whenever significant challenges or problems face the deployed divisions, senior officers deploy from GHQ to take personal control of the situation. Their influence, usually based on tribal ties, historical military commands, and genuine competence, usually provides clarity and resolution. The second factor is mostly left to chance and depends almost entirely on the leadership, professional competence, and motivation of the officers in charge at various levels. The final factor is often decisive and intrinsically linked to the first two. In a number of units, effectiveness, discipline, and cohesion are directly related to composition, particularly the integration of militias since the signing of the Juba Declaration in 2006.

This section aims to identify areas of cohesion and vulnerability based on the composition of units and integration of militias. As a starting point, the following list identifies the general locations of the commanders of former militias and, where possible, the current locations of their former forces.<sup>23</sup> These former militia commanders either play key roles within the SPLA or represent a potential destabilizing influence in the event of renewed conflict. Integration officially ended in March 2009,<sup>24</sup> yet although many militia officers were split and spread throughout different divisions, attempts to split the other ranks were mostly futile. Some groups refused to move and were integrated into the closest formation and, in some cases, soldiers who were moved soon went absent and were neither integrated nor demobilized.<sup>25</sup>

**Gordon Kong.** The men at the Ketbek Garrison of Maj. Gen. Gordon Kong of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) largely became SPLA with the Juba Declaration. They took with them most of the equipment held by the SSDF in the area, which had been supplied to them by SAF Military Intelligence. They are now integrated into elements of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division, under the command of Col. Simon Yap. The SPLA also brought in forces from other areas, particularly Bul Nuer from Unity State, to balance out the Jikany Nuer majority, which was the primary group in Kong's SSDF troops. While the battalion also integrated soldiers and officers who hailed from other areas, such as the Equatorias, the majority were formerly loyal to Kong.

Kong, who was in Khartoum at the time of the Juba Declaration, had initially indicated that he would be willing to integrate into the SPLA. Yet he

decided not to participate after most of his junior officers and men had integrated. Those who did not want to integrate into the SPLA either demobilized and became civilians in the area or were moved to Malakal, where they joined the SAF component of the JIUs. Some were deployed with the SAF in Kosti. Kong has maintained a connection with his men in the JIUs, and it remains unclear what loyalty he could leverage over those who were integrated into the SPLA.

**Peter Gadet.** Much of the SPLA's 7<sup>th</sup> Division operating west of the Nile in the Shilluk areas of Upper Nile State is composed of former forces of the SSDF commander Peter Gadet, now a major general in the SPLA. Although Gadet served as Paulino Matiep's main deputy, the two men had a violent falling out before the Juba Declaration. Gadet stayed with SAF Military Intelligence during the Juba Declaration process and many were suspicious of his allegiances. He eventually came over to the SPLA and was deployed as the commander of air defence, based at GHQ in Juba. His continued authority over his former men now in the 7<sup>th</sup> Division is unclear; it is known that he occasionally visits the division. His men are known for being more unruly and ill-disciplined than the average SPLA soldiers. As a former proxy force opposing the SPLA in Unity State and the oilfield areas, Gadet and his men were known for their ruthlessness.

**Paulino Matiep's forces under the command of Tahib Gatluak.** Upon integrating into the SPLA, the core forces of Paulino Matiep, under the command of Tahib Gatluak, continued to be based in Mayom County in Unity State. Some were then redeployed to Juba to join Matiep's bodyguard. The remaining men were deployed as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Division in Duar, Unity State. These forces are probably the most integrated and do not tend to exhibit the kind of restive nature associated with the former forces of Peter Gadet. That said, they remain loyal to Paulino Matiep and, considering their probable key role in defending the border area between Northern and Southern Sudan, their loyalty is a concern and they are thus a group to monitor for potential issues. Tahib Gatluak, a major general in the SPLA, is posted as deputy commander to the 1<sup>st</sup> Division in Renk, Upper Nile. He seems to be among the former SSDF officers who integrated more comfortably into the SPLA.

**Yohannes Yual (Yoal).** Yual was a key Lou Nuer leader in the SSDF and his mobile forces were very effective at causing problems for the SPLA during the war. At the Juba Declaration he agreed to join those who integrated under Paulino Matiep. His men, primarily Lou Nuer, are now included in the 8<sup>th</sup> Division's command (Jonglei). He has been deployed as deputy commander in the 4<sup>th</sup> Division in Duar, Upper Nile State, and now serves as a major general in the SPLA.

**Samuel Both.** Both, a major general, led a small 'mobile force' of SSDF based in the Doleib Hill area of Upper Nile. Both has been deployed as a brigade commander in the 5<sup>th</sup> Division; his forces were sent to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> divisions.

**Yohannes Koang Rek.** A former SSDF commander under Matiep, Koang Rek has been deployed as a brigade commander at Doleib Hill/Canal in the 1<sup>st</sup> Division. He is a brigadier in the SPLA.

**Chol Lueth (Nyman).** Lueth was a key SSDF commander who did not have major forces himself. After integrating into the SPLA, he was deployed as a brigadier; he commands a brigade at Jel Hac/Paloich, near the oilfields in the area of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division.

**Thon Mum (also known as 'Yusif').** Mum was integrated with Matiep's SSDF as a brigadier. He later left the army to become a member of parliament in the state assembly in Malakal, Upper Nile State, and was made minister of information in the state government. At this writing, he was an adviser to the governor. His former forces were dispersed widely throughout the divisions, reportedly more than any other groups that were integrated.

**Saddam Shayot Manyang.** Shayot gained the nickname Saddam for his ruthlessness, in reference to Saddam Hussein. He was integrated with Matiep as a major general. His loyal men were redeployed to various areas: some in the 7<sup>th</sup> Division and some to Western Bahr el Ghazal (Raja area), where Shayot was initially deployed once integrated into the SPLA. He has since been redeployed to the 7<sup>th</sup> Division as a brigade commander in Kaldok, Tonga County. He is renowned for nearly capturing or killing Riek Machar when Machar defected to return to the SPLA. Shayot's forces were the primary group attacking those protecting Machar and captured or killed many of his supporters.



Some of his forces are deployed to the 4<sup>th</sup> Division in Unity State and have been involved in fighting Misseriya forces. Shayot was a key figure in the SSDF and should be considered loyal to the old command structure.

**Timothy Taban Juuc.** Before he integrated into the SPLA with Matiep's forces as major general, Taban was in control of all SSDF forces in Akobo, Jonglei State. Those forces are reportedly still loyal to him and he has made efforts to maintain a connection with them, both those who remained in Akobo without integrating into the SPLA and those who were scattered within the army. In the April 2010 election, Taban ran as an independent in Akobo County and defeated the prominent Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) leader John Luk Jok, the incumbent and sitting minister of energy and mining. This victory is an indicator of Taban's popularity and authority among the Nuer community in Akobo and his strong connection with his former forces. This high degree of distribution was probably linked to recognition of Taban's popularity among his men and the desire to dilute his potential to influence them. Furthermore, there are strong indications that Taban does not think of himself as having left the army to run for political office (he is now GoSS minister of information and communication). In this regard he continues to use his military rank and is seen by many in the Akobo area, particularly youths, as a military leader. He also reportedly maintains strong connections with the remnant 'white army'<sup>26</sup> and those who purportedly disarmed.

**Al Fursan Forces of Al-Haj Basheer Mawein.** The Al Fursan Forces were originally based in Raja County. Basheer Mawein came over to the SPLA with Peter Gadet and a group of SSDF fighters that agreed to join with the SPLA after the Juba Declaration. Basheer Mawein has since been integrated into the SPLA; information as to his current rank and location is not available. The majority of these forces are now included within the 5<sup>th</sup> Division in Western Bahr el Ghazal.

**Hassan Hamid Saleh.** When Brig. Hamid Saleh initially approached the SPLM/A, the predominantly 'northern' character of his forces led some to fear that they were trying to join the SPLA to infiltrate the command structure on behalf of SAF Military Intelligence. After being turned away, Saleh went to the SSDF to persuade them to include the Debab Forces as part of the SSDF

so that they could be integrated into the SPLA. Officers of the Debab Forces were eventually integrated but, by September 2010, none of them had been deployed. The rank and file was verified by the UN Mission in Sudan in 2007 as moving to the border; since the officers' integration, however, many have dispersed and simply returned to their home areas or settled in border regions.

**Bari Equatorian Defence Forces (EDF) of Mohammed el Haj.** Mohammed el Haj was in command of the vast majority of the Bari EDF. As the only armed forces of the Bari community within the EDF, el Haj and his men had to join the SSDF to be able to become part of the SPLA. They initially tried to join the SPLA before the Juba Declaration but were not recognized as a sufficiently significant force to be considered. In the end, the decision to integrate them was largely based on a desire to have Bari officers in the SPLA to show ethnic balance. The result is that a few of Mohammed's officers were integrated at GHQ or deployed into various divisional posts. Mohammed was a member of parliament for the National Congress Party in Juba but resigned to join the SPLM before the April 2010 elections.

The majority of his claimed EDF forces dispersed into the community. As such, there were no major concentrations of Bari EDF in the SPLA. Paulino Tombe, the other commander of the Bari EDF, was also integrated into the SPLA. His brother continues to serve as a SAF colonel and is reportedly attached to the JIU in Juba.

**Madang Forces of Chuol Gaga.** One of the more senior commanders of the SSDF, Chuol Gaga was previously a SAF officer. He joined the SPLA at the Juba Declaration. He was integrated as a brigadier and is the deputy director of military organization at GHQ in Juba. His forces have been dispersed widely throughout the divisions; however, a small concentration remains at the Ketbek Garrison and in the brigades along the Sobat River and in Doleib Hill, Upper Nile State.

**Forces of Simon Gatweach (Gatwich).** Gatweach was integrated into the SPLA as a major general and is posted as the deputy director of military production at GHQ in Juba. His forces have largely remained under the 1<sup>st</sup> Division command; many are deployed in the Melut area of Upper Nile, along the river and controlling the area adjacent to the Adar oilfields.

**Sultan Abdel Bagi.** Abdel Bagi's forces were largely integrated into the SPLA at the time of the Juba Declaration; they are included in the 5<sup>th</sup> Division. A significant number decided to continue their alliance with the SAF, however. This group is under the command of two of Bagi's sons who decided not to integrate into the SPLA.

**Abdel Aki Akol.** Akol was integrated into the SPLA as a major general and is deployed in the 5<sup>th</sup> Division; his forces were integrated near Aweil and are included in the same division. Once integrated, Akol's forces and those of Abdel Bagi had a violent confrontation. As a result, they were separated and dispersed, though significant concentrations of both forces remain in their original areas of operation.

Despite the relatively successful integration of the militias, former senior commanders in Khartoum believe that neither their loyalties nor their identities as militias have in fact changed.<sup>27</sup> Former leaders of the SSDF, the largest grouping, claim they are still a coherent force. Despite the rhetoric, however, declarations such as the following are questionable:

*We are ready to re-mobilize the demobilized SSDF due to the current situation in Southern Sudan. There will be war at the horizon. The South will disintegrate and it will take a century or so to reunite or will disappear forever. SSDF is always SSDF no matter where it is—SPLA or no SPLA—it's always a patriotic and capable SSDF. We shall prevail in Southern Sudan. We know of big foreign interest in Southern Sudan but it will not succeed. It would only create more political and military turmoil in the region.*<sup>28</sup>

Security incidents in Upper Nile State have also demonstrated that former commanders in Khartoum have little influence over the more youthful leaders in the field. For example, local militia commanders allegedly directed attacks on World Food Programme barges on the Sobat River in June 2009 without approval or orders from Khartoum.<sup>29</sup> Yet the subsequent negotiation and resolution was left to the former commanders in Khartoum, who typically were included only after events. Although key leaders such as Gordon Kong, Gabriel Tang, and David Chand are clearly still in contact with Gen. Paulino Matiep, they are not currently seen as major threats to the cohesion of the SPLA.<sup>30</sup>

The area of greatest risk remains within the SPLA's divisions, particularly those that received significant numbers of OAG forces after the Juba Declaration, such as the 1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> divisions. In addition, the SPLA's 4<sup>th</sup> Division includes many former SSDF officers and soldiers. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> divisions occupy critical areas to the west of the Nile, along the line of the 1956 border,<sup>31</sup> stretching into the oilfield zone. These divisions form part of the SPLA's front-line forces and any future fragmentation would have serious consequences in the event of renewed conflict. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> divisions are less vulnerable as they are effectively commanded and present an appearance of order and cohesion. Nevertheless, much depends on the way these formations are led and managed in the future.

Closely tied to integration are seniority and promotion issues, which are potential sources of disgruntlement among officers. The SPLA attempts to adhere strictly to seniority and has established a baseline for officers, which is dependent on when they were commissioned or when they attended the 'Shield' officer training courses in Ethiopia.<sup>32</sup> For example, attendees of the first officer training course in 1984, Shield 1, include the current COGS, DCOGS Administration, DCOGS Logistics, and DCOGS Training and Research. In addition, the integration of former Anyanya II leaders<sup>33</sup> also had to be taken into account, as did officers who defected from the SAF and those who joined from armed groups. Seniority is further complicated by officers who defected from the SPLA in 1991 and 1992 and subsequently rejoined (though it is widely understood that their seniority dates back to when they rejoined the movement, not when they were originally commissioned). In addition, it is claimed that many officers who joined the SPLA after the signing of the Juba Declaration had their ranks inflated prior to integration.<sup>34</sup>

More recently, in August and September 2010, 20 brigadiers were promoted to major general and 145 colonels were promoted to brigadier. The majority of those promoted came from the first and second groups of SPLA trained in Ethiopia ('Shields 1 and 2'). The promotions to major general are likely to irritate a number of other officers who perceive themselves as senior to those who were elevated. Particularly frustrated will be the officers who integrated into the SPLA with the Juba Declaration, as well as those who defected from the SPLA only to return during the early and mid-1990s.<sup>35</sup> Undoubtedly, the moti-

vation to promote a large number of colonels to brigadier rank was to prevent discontent, but the impact on the SPLA's budget will also be significant. The costs of increased salaries and allowances were not accounted for in the budget and it is not clear how these unanticipated expenses will be met.<sup>36</sup>

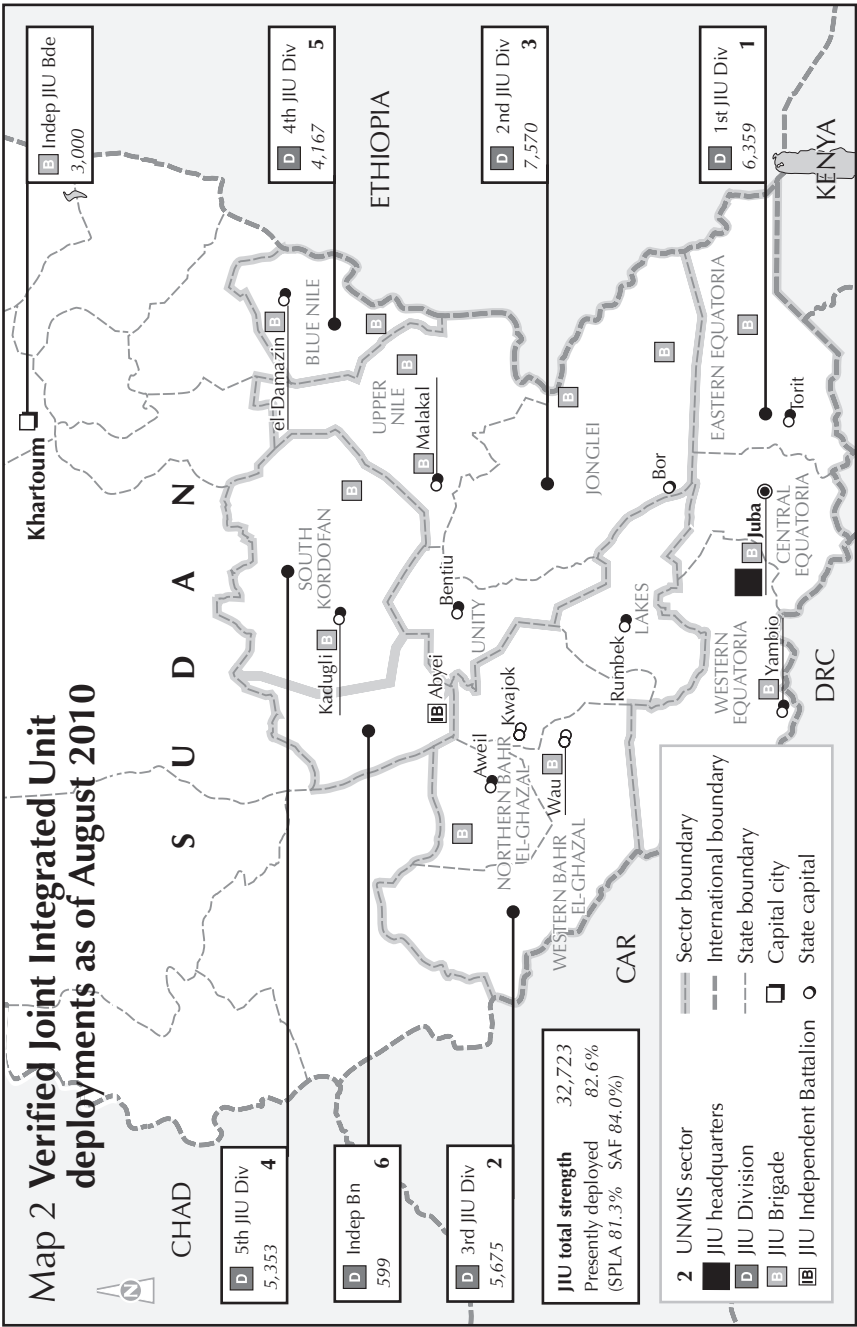
One of the motivations for the promotion of the COGS to four-star generals in August 2010 may also have been related to integration. With the president and C-in-C forced to give up his rank prior to running for election in April 2010, the most senior officer in the SPLA was deputy C-in-C, Gen. Paulino Matiep (the former commander of the SSDF). James Hoth Mai's promotion was aimed at putting a 'core' SPLA officer in the same rank as the head of the largest integrated group.<sup>37</sup>

## Joint Integrated Units

The CPA calls for the formation of JIUs consisting of equal numbers from the SAF and the SPLA as a symbol of national unity and sovereignty; it further calls on the JIUs to participate in the defence of the country, together with the SAF and SPLA, during the six-year interim period. The planned size of the JIUs was 39,000 men, to be deployed mostly in the South (24,000), but with additional units in Khartoum, the Nuba Mountains, and Southern Blue Nile. As of October 2010, JIU deployment stood at 82.6 per cent of its mandated strength (see Map 2).

The role of the JIUs after the referendum poses a challenging question for the SPLA. It is natural to assume that SPLA elements of the JIUs will be integrated into the existing force structure, probably in the areas where they are now deployed. This would increase the size of all divisions and put additional pressure on the leadership, as well as create further sustainment challenges. Given that the JIUs have benefited from regular pay and better provisioning than many of their counterparts in the SPLA divisions, instances of dissent are possible if and when they are integrated back into the core SPLA (Small Arms Survey, 2008a). Any attempts to demobilize them are likely to be met by stiff resistance unless sustainable pension or severance schemes can be offered. The current DDR package is viewed as wholly insufficient to lure large numbers of soldiers who have received regular salaries and adequate food supplies since 2005.<sup>38</sup>

# Map 2 Verified Joint Integrated Unit deployments as of August 2010



Source: UNMIS, 2010

However, the integration of SPLA JIUs back into the SPLA is less of a concern than the likely requirement that the SPLA absorb many SAF elements. Many of the SAF JIUs are former OAGs; they are effectively ‘aligned’ with—rather than fully ‘incorporated’ into—the northern army. Many are fearful of being moved to Northern Sudan since they see themselves as Southerners and typically have their families in the areas where they are based. Aside from regular SAF units in locations such as Malakal and Bor, many of the SAF elements of the JIUs hail from the areas where they are serving and have strong family ties in these locations. For example, 90 per cent of the SAF JIU element in Nasir are from the town or surrounding area and have no intention of leaving.<sup>39</sup> The same is true for the SAF component in Kapoeta; these men are mostly Toposa from Eastern Equatoria (Small Arms Survey, 2008a). As with the SPLA components, integration into the SPLA or increased incentives to demobilize are the only options the SAF components are likely to consider—movement north being out of the question.<sup>40</sup>

The impact of integration of the JIUs will be significant; if there were a requirement to integrate 15,000 of the estimated 24,000 JIU personnel in the South, it could cost the SPLA more than SDG 200 million (USD 83 million) annually in salaries and sustainment costs.<sup>41</sup> This sum exceeds the annual capital project allocation for the next 12 months (until October 2011) and would effectively absorb all the money the SPLA has budgeted for transformation and development.<sup>42</sup>

In its current form, the alternative option—DDR—offers very little incentive to demobilize. The SPLA would need to consider providing greater financial incentives, in the form of pensions or severance payments, to prevent serious dissent if they attempted to conduct widespread demobilization programmes. On top of this, the cost of the SPLA already constitutes the bulk of the GoSS budget and further increases would preclude the GoSS from providing essential services to the general population.

## SPLA capabilities

The SPLA comprises approximately 140,000 personnel, commanded from its headquarters in Juba and divided into divisions of approximately 10,000–14,000, which are made up of brigades and battalions of 3,000–4,000 and 400–700 men,

respectively. It comprises mostly light infantry forces armed with multiple versions of the AK-47, RPK and PKM machine guns, and RPG-7 anti-tank weapons, as well as 60 mm mortars used in a light support role. Although the army possesses 80 mm, 81 mm, and 120 mm mortars and towed artillery guns, it struggles to use them effectively in the conventional, indirect-fire role. Furthermore, because it has limited numbers of operational artillery pieces and ammunition, most personnel assigned to the artillery are effectively infantry soldiers. This is also true for the air defence forces that are equipped with versions of the 23 mm anti-aircraft gun and a limited number of anti-aircraft missiles.<sup>43</sup> The SPLA has acknowledged air defence as a key area of vulnerability, with C-in-C Salva Kiir stating that the development of air defence was the highest priority within the transformation process.<sup>44</sup>

Although the SPLA received additional tanks in 2007–08 (T-72 main battle tanks) as part of a procurement programme from Ukraine (Lewis, 2009, pp. 39–44), its armoured forces are fragmented, with tanks mostly deployed to forward areas in groups of usually fewer than eight. It procured a number of civilian engineering vehicles (rollers, graders, and trucks) in 2008 to assist with mobility and the maintenance of roads and bridges;<sup>45</sup> as of October 2010, it was awaiting delivery of up to ten Mi-17 transport helicopters.<sup>46</sup>

The SPLA's GHQ is able to communicate with the divisional-level headquarters through voice and data via secure high-frequency radio (provided by the US government in 2009–10). It also maintains a Codan high-frequency voice-only system to communicate with the divisions, which was used during the latter years of the war. Communications from divisions to brigades are transmitted via satellite phone if commercial mobile phone systems are not available. The same applies to communications from brigades to battalions, often with only one satellite phone being provided per battalion. At the tactical level, there is little (if any) communication with companies and platoons.<sup>47</sup>

Tactical and strategic mobility are also major challenges for the SPLA. The former is urgently required so that forces can respond in a timely manner to threats or, better still, so that they can actively deter violence in their areas of responsibility. The latter is required to facilitate the deployment and redeployment of large groups of forces and their supplies in order to sustain conventional operations. In most parts of the South, SPLA sub-units are spread thinly



across large areas in order to attempt to address the issue of poor mobility. This adds additional communications and management challenges, leaving small groups of forces to look after themselves in isolated areas without adequate support. In these situations the forces often prey on the communities they are sent to support. Even maintaining the existing fleet of vehicles is a constant challenge to the SPLA because of a lack of trained mechanics, workshops, and spares. The mobility of the force is also compromised, with an estimated 40 per cent of the SPLA's fleet of Toyota Land Cruisers and Ural trucks requiring urgent maintenance at this writing.<sup>48</sup>

Most SPLA soldiers are poorly equipped, some without serviceable or spare uniforms or boots, and without common load-carrying equipment. Up to 90 per cent of the ranks are illiterate, as are at least 70 per cent of the officers;<sup>49</sup> in addition, most units lack effective daily routines. Accountability of manpower is generally poor, though it has improved dramatically since the introduction in 2009 of an identity card linked to a pay system. While only approximately 50,000 soldiers have received identity cards to date,<sup>50</sup> the current cash-based pay system to the divisional units has at least encouraged greater personnel accountability. The receipt of salaries has also become more regular since 2009; it is now less common to find soldiers who have not been paid for three to four months. To maintain order and discipline, it is vital that SPLA members receive pay on time; the current precarious system of delivering cash to multiple locations throughout the South, from Juba, is therefore slowly being replaced by the use of banking facilities (where they are available).

Along with the provision of timely pay, the nourishment of the force is paramount. At this writing, the SPLA was outsourcing to contractors the delivery of food to the divisions. This approach seems to work as long as sufficient stockpiles are accumulated prior to the rainy season. Whenever units have failed to receive food (or pay), there has been serious rebellion. Elements of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> divisions in Lakes and Western Bahr el Ghazal rebelled in March 2010, complaining about a lack of food and pay and prompting the COGS to secure approval for emergency funding directly from the president. The issue was resolved before the rebelling forces entered the town of Wau, which could have been catastrophic.<sup>51</sup> More positively, approximately 40 per cent of the SPLA budget for 2011 (about SDG 900 million, or USD 375 million) is likely to be

allocated to running costs, which reflects a more realistic estimate than in previous years. This is a positive sign that the SPLA is beginning to understand the budgeting process and benefiting from the use of historical data during planning. Yet with salary costs of about SDG 900 million (USD 375 million)—not including allowances that could account for another SDG 600 million (USD 250 million)—only about SDG 200 million (USD 83 million) is allocated to capital projects, which include everything from training to construction and equipment procurement.<sup>52</sup> This budget is clearly insufficient for a force requiring significant reform and development.

The COGS recently complained that most of the SPLA had lost the ‘bush skills’ they had developed during the war and were reluctant to march anywhere.<sup>53</sup> This was also evident during the conduct of recent training courses sponsored by the US government.<sup>54</sup> The SPLA’s appetite for training is extremely strong, however; indeed, their response to hard training and effective leadership is remarkable given that few have ever received formal training (in first-world army terms). Indeed, leadership and instructor training remains the highest priority for the SPLA, with a requirement to train officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) of all ranks in rudimentary skills, drills, and processes. The development of colleges and academies for leadership training has increased consistently during the CPA’s interim period, with a group of the most capable officers assigned to support the process.<sup>55</sup> But without additional capital funds or international support, the army’s training aspirations will not be realized in the short term.

The SPLA has limited senior command capacity. As previously outlined, three lieutenant generals currently oversee nine divisions in three sectors. When serious threats to security arise, these three officers—or a handful of very competent senior officers from the operations, training, intelligence, logistics, and moral orientation branches—deploy to the field to report on the ground truth and, often, to take command. This approach tends to be successful but dilutes the capacity of the GHQ and is not sustainable in the long term. Therefore, the SPLA is increasingly vulnerable when faced with multiple threats and challenges throughout the South. Recently, it has been threatened by militia leaders such as George Athor, David Yauyau, and Gatluak Gai;<sup>56</sup> concurrently, the force is dealing with LRA threats in Western Equatoria and Western Bahr

el Ghazal.<sup>57</sup> If there were to be a threat of proxy forces along the border areas and major issues with white army militias,<sup>58</sup> or if there were dissent in any of the units, its capacity to manage the army effectively could easily be compromised.

Despite significant process improvements at GHQ, little policy implementation is taking place outside of Juba. In fact, the GHQ in Juba is completely non-representational of the challenges facing the divisional units. Problems include: accountability challenges, logistics, and sustainment; a lack of mobility (and hence a justification to retain a large, dispersed force); poor tactical communications; a need for urgent training and new equipment; and insufficient funds to support development. Combined, these leave the SPLA with multiple challenges to address in the short term. An army transforming from a guerilla force to a professional conventional army is always likely to hit a trough, at which point it is less effective than it was during the period of conflict. It is arguable that the SPLA passed this trough in 2006–07<sup>59</sup> but has gradually improved operational effectiveness since then. However, if the army is to develop significant, affordable capability that is relevant to the threats it faces, then transformation efforts need to be based on fundamental strategic direction and more radical reform, underpinned by detailed plans for implementation and an adequate budget. 📄

### III. SPLA transformation

#### Transformation doctrine and publications

The British Army defines military doctrine as:

*a formal expression of military knowledge and thought, that the Army accepts as being relevant at a given time, which covers the nature of current and future conflicts, the preparation of the Army for such conflicts and the methods of engaging in them to achieve success (British Army, 1996, p. 1).*

This section reviews the evolution of SPLA transformation doctrine and publications in relation to command, organization, management, and training. It aims to identify the strategic and policy-level foundations that have been laid in order to guide future transformation, in line with the milestones of the Defence White Paper 2008.

The White Paper is viewed by the international community as the first in a series of documents aimed at guiding the transformation and development of the SPLA, simply because its production was sponsored and driven by international support, mostly by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), with some US support. However, numerous earlier publications informed initial transformation decision-making. One example is an SPLA jobs description handbook produced from a 'Mobile Headquarters' in Yei in 1997. Envisioning a conventional military structure, it is an extremely advanced publication, detailing the roles and responsibilities of senior officers from the C-in-C through to the brigade and battalion commanders and staff. Furthermore, it provides organizational charts for divisions, brigades, and battalions along with the types and numbers of weapon systems. It was signed by John Garang and is clearly a key reference document that guided the restructuring of the SPLA in 2005–06, before post-CPA engagement by the international community.

Another key set of documents that guided SPLA restructuring and organization was published in August 2006. It further defines the organizational structures of the SPLA GHQ and the divisions. Developed entirely by the SPLA under the guidance of the director for organization at the time (now the DCOGS Training and Research, Ayuen Alier Jongroor), it is a detailed series of publications that acknowledges post-CPA transformation decision-making in 2005.<sup>60</sup>

Yet these early publications were written in the absence of any formal strategic defence review<sup>61</sup> and focused only on *what* the SPLA was to do in terms of reorganization, rather than *why* it should do so in terms of roles, missions, and tasks, or *how* in terms of military doctrine. In effect, these materials instituted an urgent reorganization during a 'lull in the conflict'<sup>62</sup> without considering the need for fundamental reform other than the need to integrate militias. It is likely that a number of fundamentals were agreed but never written in a formal expression of strategy or doctrine (as is often the case with the SPLA leadership). Nevertheless, given the SPLA's general lack of exposure to modern military strategy and operational doctrine, most decision-making was focused at the tactical level (the level that most SPLA officers are comfortable with) and implementation.

Not until the release of the SPLA White Paper on Defence in 2008 and the subsequent passing of the SPLA Act 2009 were mission, roles, functions, and a basic structure (ground, air, riverine, and reserve forces) clearly stated (although the Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan makes the first reference to the mission of the SPLA<sup>63</sup>). Both of these publications were produced with international assistance, sponsored by DFID, and guided by the DFID peace and security adviser and a team from the Ethiopian think-tank Centre for Policy Research and Dialogue.

The SPLA's initial response to the White Paper and SPLA Act was very positive. Indeed, the force publicly reaffirmed its support for the transformation process in a two-day workshop on transformation in March 2009, but since then there has been limited follow-up. As Maj. Gen. Obuto Mamur Mete said at the time:

*The SPLA is now required to develop an overall feasible and affordable operational plan that illustrates clear activities, timeframes for executing these activities,*

*allocation of primary and secondary tasks and objectively verifiable indicators that can be used to measure successes and failings during implementation [of transformation]* (Mamur Mete, 2009).

Since the White Paper and SPLA Act numerous SPLA publications have been developed and published. These include the SPLA Rules and Regulations (GoSS, 2009b), which expands on powers, functions, and duties of officers and the military law elements of the SPLA Act. In addition, the Rules and Regulations details the period of service for officers and soldiers, including a number of exceptions to the rules. However, there is no evidence to suggest that any comprehensive review process led to the decision on enlistment age range, service limits, or retirement age, let alone considerations of pensions, severance, or an ongoing DDR process.

Whether these documents were timely or premature has been a matter of some debate within the SPLA. A March 2009 issue of the SPLA's own *Liberator* magazine reports that the SPLA Act:

*seems to have not put into consideration the fact that we are still at the revolutionary stage. All Southern Sudanese and the marginalised people know that it is not yet uhuru (freedom). The war has not been won* (*Liberator*, 2009).

Two further administrative publications were released in May 2009: the *Manpower Database and Reporting Manual* and the *Functions, Duties, and Responsibilities of Administrative Staff Personnel in Division, Brigade and Battalion Headquarters* (SPLA, 2009a; 2009b). Although there is evidence to suggest that unit reporting has become more accurate and timely in recent months, full implementation of these processes is not yet complete.

The UK government has sponsored workshops down to the divisional level relating to all the administrative publications, but only some of the detail has been implemented. Furthermore, copies of these publications are rarely available below brigade headquarters level, which in many cases is not surprising, given the lack of literacy within the SPLA and a lack of headquarters facilities.<sup>64</sup>

In addition, large quantities of operations and training manuals have been developed and published in recent years. These include: the 2007 SPLA *Training*

*Aide Memoire* (SPLA-sponsored), the *Command Operations Centre Standard Operating Procedures* of November 2009 (US-sponsored), the *Training Strategy* of November 2009 (UK-sponsored),<sup>65</sup> and many syllabi, curricula, and lesson plans for basic training, officer, and NCO training to be included in these policies and doctrines. Although implementation of policies and procedures has, once again, been limited, there has been notable progress and improvement in the SPLA's Command Operations Centre and in basic NCO and officer training, especially with international support. Additional publications to shape intelligence, logistics, and communications processes are also being developed with adviser guidance.<sup>66</sup>

Despite some successes with the development and implementation of procedural doctrine, the absence of a comprehensive strategic defence review and the approval of a subsequent defence strategy leaves the transformation process rooted within a force structure that was designed out of necessity, and without the benefit of detailed analysis. While advisers have attempted to guide the SPLA through the development of a defence strategy (or a military strategy, as they have termed it), nothing coherent has been distributed to date. If a coherent defence strategy, based on current threats and the environment, and in consideration of budget limitations, is ever produced without international assistance, it is unlikely that the details will become publicly available.

This lack of transparency will continue to hamper the transformation process. An example of this type of frustration occurred during the development of the SPLA training strategy. The SPLA team assigned to develop the strategy had to make bold assumptions as to the priorities for military capability development, which required significant reverse engineering without the benefit of a clearly stated defence strategy.<sup>67</sup>

Finally, the absence of a comprehensive strategic defence review makes it almost impossible to establish a framework of understanding for the SPLA's approach to mission effectiveness or, in other words, a military doctrine. Military doctrine, aligned with a coherent defence strategy, would provide the foundation for the practical application of SPLA roles and functions and the implementation of transformation. Without it, practical transformation initiatives lack coherence and have little long-term impact.

## US support

The US government policy statement on Southern Sudan refers to the '[i]mplementation of the CPA that results in a peaceful post-2011 Sudan, or an orderly transition to two separate and viable states at peace with each other' and 'support [to] international efforts to professionalize and equip the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) responsible for providing security in key areas' (USDOS, 2009). There is no specific reference to the SPLA, yet US engagement in defence transformation since 2006 has been significant. Estimates of the cost of US-sponsored transformation initiatives to date range from USD 150 million to USD 300 million, with promises of more to follow.<sup>68</sup> Table 1 outlines the key initiatives from 2006 to October 2010.

All US-sponsored transformation projects were generated from the Bureau of African Affairs in the US Department of State; the majority were conceptualized by the Bureau's Regional Security Affairs, with the support of the Sudan Programs Group (2006–08) and, as of mid-2009, the Office of the US Special Envoy to Sudan. The significant increase in the number of projects in 2009 was probably related to the delay in completion of earlier construction programmes (collectively costing more than USD 100 million)<sup>69</sup> and the arrival of uniformed military advisers under the US Africa Command, with a remit to design and conceptualize transformation projects in concert with the SPLA and advisers from the Training Advisory Team.

Support levels will probably rise significantly after the referendum.<sup>70</sup> Officials from the Office of the Secretary of Defense have conducted surveys of potential airfield sites;<sup>71</sup> there is also discussion regarding the possible construction of a US military logistics base to support transformation initiatives in the divisions.<sup>72</sup> Such a base would give the United States overwhelming military influence in Southern Sudan.

US engagements have been focused at the operational and tactical levels and some projects have not been linked to SPLA transformation priorities. For example, the training and development of a riverine force and the military police were tertiary priorities in the SPLA Training Strategy 2009, with the highest priority being the training of infantry instructors (to increase capacity and promote self-reliance). The United States is likely to continue to fund transformation projects at the tactical and operational levels. Yet, once again, in the



Table 1 US support for SPLA transformation, 2006–10<sup>73</sup>

Project	Description	Year(s)	Remarks
SPLA Interim General Headquarters	Construction of a new SPLA headquarters at Bilpam, Juba, including an operations and maintenance package.	2006–08	The SPLA had outgrown its GHQ in the centre of Juba town by 2007.
Malou Training Centre	Renovation of the Malou Training Centre (the location of the SPLA Command and Staff College), including an operations and maintenance package.	2006–08	The training centre is used extensively for basic command and staff training.
Division Headquarters at Mapel and Duar	Construction of new divisional headquarters at Mapel (5 <sup>th</sup> Division) and Duar (4 <sup>th</sup> Division), including an operations and maintenance package.	2007–09	The division headquarters at Mapel is mostly used for US-sponsored training activities, although some buildings have been occupied by divisional personnel. Duar remains mostly empty as the operation of the barracks and headquarters is too costly.
Driver and Mechanic Training and Equipment Provision	Provision of limited training for drivers and mechanics based in Juba and the supply of DAF trucks and Toyota Land Cruisers.	2007	A limited train-the-trainer package for drivers and mechanics and the supply of DAF trucks and Toyota Land Cruisers. The former has complicated SPLA maintenance and logistics processes since the SPLA is mostly equipped with Ural trucks.
Basic Staff Skills Training	Basic staff skills courses for all general officers and selected senior officer instructors.	2007–08	The training helped to develop command and staff skills and increased cohesion within the headquarters.
Training Advisory Team	A team of advisers focused on providing transformation assistance in the functions of administration, intelligence, operations, training, logistics, engineering, medicine, communications, and civil–military operations.	2008 to date	The most prominent of the US programmes. The team has made significant headway in the development of a number of military processes.

Project	Description	Year(s)	Remarks
Comprehensive Training Initiative 1	A team of Kenyan instructors conducted basic military skills training in Mapel for up to 400 SPLA trainees.	2009	Most of the training was classroom-based and, on occasion, the SPLA had to demonstrate how to use former Soviet-bloc weapons with which the Kenyans were unfamiliar. The United States has decided to use Ethiopian military personnel for subsequent training under this programme.
Provision of language laboratories and associated IT equipment	Language laboratories were built at GHQ and at the Malou Training Centre.	2009	The language laboratory at GHQ is used on a limited basis. However, the laboratory in Malou is not in use. One instructor in Malou commented: 'We have all the equipment but we do not know how to use it, nor do we have a curriculum.' <sup>74</sup>
Presidential Guard Training and Equipment	Training of the Presidential Guard.	2009	Included an equipment procurement programme.
NCO Academy Training and Mentoring	Establishing the SPLA's NCO Academy in Mapel, training and mentoring instructors (up to 40 SPLA instructors and subsequently up to 4,000 NCOs).	2009–10	This project used experienced, contractor-provided training and mentoring staff. However, the transition from contractor to US National Guard Department of Defense personnel was not successful in the eyes of the SPLA as the Defense personnel lacked experience with African armies.
Provision of Harris Communications Equipment	Provision of secure voice and data communications to GHQ and divisions, with some mobile stations.	2009–10	The project included operator and installation training.
Riverine Force Development	Provision of 'Boston Whaler' boats (up to 16) and a boat handler, maintenance, safety, and collective training packages.	2009–10	Provided the SPLA with an intercept capability and increased tactical mobility.

Project	Description	Year(s)	Remarks
Military Police Training	Provision of training staff at Mapel to train the SPLA's military police (approximately 400).	2010	Increasing the capacity of Military Police in preparation for elections and referendum security.
Comprehensive Training Initiative 2	Provision of Ethiopian training staff (as many as 70) to train officers, commando forces, artillery, air defence, armour, medical, and engineer personnel.	2010	Training of officers and commando forces began in early 2009, with the remainder beginning in September 2010.
International Military Education and Training	Provision of education and training courses in the United States.	2009 to date	This programme allows SPLA officers and soldiers access to some of the best US military training and education courses. However, it has been criticized by some in the SPLA for taking away many of the brightest officers during a time when they are needed most.
Enhancing Command, Control, Communications, and Information Systems	Additional Harris communications equipment, command and staff training, intelligence process development, divisional Command Operations Centre development and equipment, English-language training.	2010	Work on this initiative began in October 2010 and will not be complete for at least 12 months.
Enhancing SPLA Logistics Capabilities	Maintenance training and establishment of Lainya Logistics Base.	2010	Work on this project began in October 2010 and will not be complete for at least 6 months.
Support to the Ministry of SPLA Affairs	Provision of up to four advisers to the Ministry of SPLA Affairs.	2010	Work on this project began in October 2010.
Light Engineer Battalion Training	Provision of training to an SPLA engineering battalion.	2010	Work on this project was scheduled to begin in October/November 2010.
Support to SPLA Medical Services	Provision of training to the SPLA medical directorate and refurbishment of SPLA medical facilities.	2010	Work on this project was scheduled to begin in October/November 2010.

absence of a coherent defence strategy and clear transformation parameters, it is questionable whether future projects will have a long-term impact.

## UK support

In comparison to the United States, the UK has fewer resources and funds available for defence transformation support. Its financial commitment is unlikely to exceed USD 10 million up to the end of 2012.<sup>75</sup> The UK chooses to limit involvement to development of human capital at the policy-making level and is not involved with implementation at the operational and tactical levels. The UK takes a balanced approach to defence engagement in Sudan, developing accountability in both the SAF and the SPLA and supporting the JIUs in accordance with the CPA.<sup>76</sup> DFID's sole defence transformation-related programme, the SSDDT project, focuses on more strategic issues in five workstreams that cover broader security sector reform issues:

- strengthening GoSS security decision-making architecture;
- SPLA transformation;
- transformation of the Ministry of SPLA Affairs;
- strengthening legislative assembly oversight of the defence and security sectors; and
- strengthening civil society capacity to contribute to security sector governance.

The SPLA transformation workstream employs nine advisers working on the following: strategic development and transformation; administration and personnel; logistics; training; strategic communications; finance (the latter is effectively shared between the SPLA and Ministry of SPLA Affairs); and transformation within the ministry. Members of the SPLA transformation workstream guided the development of the White Paper on Defence and the SPLA Act. They have also been instrumental in attempting to guide the development of a military strategy through a detailed analytical process, and the establishment of a transformation secretariat (or at least a credible focal point for the development of coherent transformation plans).<sup>77</sup> Neither of these milestones has been fully achieved to date, and there are strong indicators that the SPLA has no wish to change the structure of the force in the near future, being inter-

ested only in creating military effectiveness through training and additional equipment.<sup>78</sup> The SPLA is keen to focus on becoming more professional and operationally effective but seems much less concerned about affordability. Specifically, influential politicians are confident that additional funds will be available for defence reform after the referendum.<sup>79</sup>

One area of focus outlined in the terms of reference for the SSDDT project was the need for international cooperation on SPLA transformation issues. DFID proposed to facilitate international donor coordination meetings, led by the SPLA, to avoid overlap and coordinate offers of international support. To date, coordination meetings, as described in the terms of reference, have not taken place. There is, undoubtedly, an urgent need to coordinate US, UK, and other potential transformation support, and to ensure a coherent approach in the absence of an overarching strategy. At times, US- and UK-sponsored projects have put conflicting demands on the SPLA, which often has more urgent operational issues to manage. This was certainly the case during early preparations for the referendum, when key SPLA personnel were distracted by repeated requirements to provide personnel and logistical support for transformation activities.

Moreover, there is a requirement to define common processes and terminology to avoid conflict and confusion. During initial transformation projects the United States rigidly applied US military doctrinal concepts, processes, and terminology. More recently, however, US-sponsored advisers have supported the SPLA's preference, which is based on regional influences (mostly UK doctrine) with the use of some US doctrinal concepts. A number of mid-ranking and senior SPLA officers have been schooled in regional command and staff colleges in Kenya and Uganda, which are based on UK military institutions. Yet as an increasing number of officers and soldiers are schooled in the United States, preference for the US approach may grow.<sup>80</sup> The absence of military terminology and common approaches to doctrine suggests that the best solution for the future is a hybrid of the US and UK systems (which are not dissimilar anyway), with specific SPLA nuances, allowing the army to focus on interoperability with regional allies, as well as with the United States and the UK.

Since issues of cooperation extend beyond process and terminology, overlap and even conflict are inevitable in the absence of any guiding strategy or formal government-level coordination. The contractors providing the US Training Advisory Team and UK's SSDDT project have been directed to coordinate but,

despite best efforts, there is obvious competition, suspicion, and distrust as both parties are protective of their projects and commercial entities. In-country government representatives discuss issues of cooperation and occasionally make headway, but often in the absence of the SPLA. Both parties report to masters in the UK and the United States (sometimes via embassies in Khartoum), where there does not seem to be any formal coordination mechanism or dialogue on defence transformation issues. The two countries' special envoys have been suggested as ideal conduits for cooperation and dialogue on these issues.<sup>81</sup> They would certainly be able to overcome the current challenges posed

### **Box 1 SPLA-funded initiatives using international support<sup>82</sup>**

SPLA-sponsored defence transformation and development initiatives that employ international contractors fall into three main categories: training, equipment, and facilities development.

Since 2006 senior SPLA officers have indicated their transformation priorities using these categories. Any available funds, either from official budgets or from hidden funds, have been directed towards supporting these priorities.

Training initiatives using international training teams and consultants have included the training of 100 instructors and a special force of 3,500 in 2006–07 in New Site and New Cush; training of the president's and vice president's guard in 2007 at New Cush; basic command and staff skills training for colonels; and the establishment of the command and staff college in Malou in 2007–08. These training initiatives met urgent requirements at the time: the SPLA needed reliable commando and special forces to deal with internal security threats; the president and vice president had guards and close protection teams who lacked formal training; there was an urgent need to grade 1,000 colonels in terms of capability in order to appoint them to command and staff positions; and the best officers needed to be sent to regional command and staff colleges.

Since the 2007–08 training in Malou, the budget for SPLA-sponsored training initiatives has been restricted. The integration of OAGs following the Juba Declaration significantly increased pay and operating costs, leaving little, if any, funds available for the engagement of international training teams.

Over the same period, the SPLA spent a significant amount of money on equipment, including T-72 main battle tanks, 125 mm ammunition, 23 mm anti-aircraft guns, rocket-propelled grenades, and assault rifles (Lewis, 2009, pp. 39–44). This was part of an urgent 'wish list' to shore up the SPLA's conventional capabilities and, in part, to induce greater public confidence in the SPLA's ability to protect the South from northern aggression.<sup>83</sup>

More recently, the SPLA has focused on the development of facilities such as the building of the Doctor Garang Memorial Military Academy, the construction of the Officer Cadet Training College in Owinykibul, and the development of a logistics base in Lainya. In addition, there are strong indicators that the SPLA is about to receive a number of transport helicopters to support rapid mobility,<sup>84</sup> suggesting that off-budget funds are available for urgent transformation and development requirements.

by inter-agency relations between the US Departments of State and Defense and the UK's DFID (whose broad objectives are more similar to those of the US Agency for International Development).

## Ministry of SPLA Affairs development

It is important to review the development of the Ministry of SPLA Affairs in line with the principle of democratic civil control and accountability of the military. The first minister, the late Lt. Gen. Dominic Dim Deng, had been appointed in late 2007. His first key decision was to attempt to reorganize the SPLA officer manning plot, putting allies in key roles. This immediately put him in conflict with the COGS (Oyay Deng Ajak), who was aggrieved by this interference. It is not usually the role of defence ministers to post officers within armed forces. Salva Kiir had no option but to support the COGS and the posting plot was cancelled, the minister and his fledgling ministry soon becoming ineffective and lacking support.<sup>85</sup> Dominic Dim's death in an air crash in May 2008 left the ministerial position open for several months. During this period it was 'business as usual'<sup>86</sup> for the SPLA, with a clear reporting line direct to the president as C-in-C.

Pressure from the international community to adopt a more democratic civil approach to defence management led to the appointment of Nhial Deng Nhial in early 2009. His appointment was not without political ramifications, however. The governor of Jonglei, Kuol Manyang Juuk (the SPLA's first choice for minister), refused the position. Oyay Deng Ajak, the COGS at the time, was keen to take the position (or become minister of internal affairs) and was obviously disappointed with the subsequent appointment of Nhial Deng. Concurrently, Oyay Deng accepted the appointment of minister of regional cooperation despite his desire to remain in position as COGS until after the referendum in 2011. Yet he was reluctant to give way to the next most senior officer in the SPLA at the time, Salva Mathok Gengdiit (DCOGS Administration). The second most senior officer, Bior Ajang Aswad (DCOGS Logistics), a close ally of Oyay Deng, was also earmarked for a government position, creating a dilemma regarding who would be appointed COGS. In the end, with some engineering, Salva Mathok was given a presidential advisory post outside of the SPLA, Bior

Ajang was made under-secretary for the Ministry of SPLA Affairs, and James Hoth Mai (another close ally of Oyay Deng and third in the line of succession) was appointed COGS. This example clearly illustrates the role of seniority and allegiances in defence decision-making.

It was not long before there was conflict and disagreement between James Hoth and Nhial Deng. Sources claim that Nhial Deng was given guidance by Salva Kiir not to challenge the status quo and not to make key decisions without consulting James Hoth.<sup>87</sup> However, Hoth has complained that the minister is never available to make important decisions, particularly relating to the budget, which the ministry controls. Hoth reported that 'we [the SPLA] have to be clever with salaries in order to create surplus money to keep the SPLA functioning in the absence of the minister allowing us access to sufficient funds'.<sup>88</sup> Ultimately, it seems the relationship between James Hoth and Nhial Deng may not be conducive to effective civil management of defence issues. An example of the conflict between the two occurred prior to elections in March 2009, when elements of the SPLA's 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> divisions mutinied because of a lack of food and pay. In the absence of Nhial Deng, Hoth appealed directly to the minister of finance for emergency funding. The minister referred the request back to the Ministry of SPLA Affairs, which was unable to make a decision. Hoth therefore went straight to the president, who issued direction for the money to be released immediately in order to address the precarious security situation.<sup>89</sup> Because of incidents of this type the Ministry of SPLA Affairs is seen as an unnecessary link in the command chain rather than a contributor to efficient and effective defence management.

The Defence White Paper clearly states the responsibilities of both the minister and the COGS. And, along with the development of the ministry into a number of directorates with effective processes, achieving a clear delineation of responsibilities has been the aim of the UK advisers assigned there. The advisers have indeed achieved a great deal in the internal development of the ministry, working predominantly with the director of policy and plans, Maj. Gen. Simon Ananais Lako. The Ministry of SPLA Affairs is currently absorbing the Veterans Commission, which is likely to cause internal power struggles for key positions. In turn, the ministry will probably continue to face inward for some time.





SPLA officers during training at Malou Command and Staff College, 2008. © Richard Rands

It remains to be seen whether there is any true political will for the ministry to exist in accordance with the principle of democratic civil control. More recently, James Hoth's promotion to four-star general makes him senior to the minister in military terms. As already highlighted, seniority is a key factor in defence management and its significance is felt throughout the GoSS. This does not bode well for future democratic civil control of the army. Until the ministry is seen to function in support of defence management—rather than being a burden of 'accountability'—there will be rivalry and conflict, which the SPLA will always win.

## DDR and alternative options for right-sizing

The right-sizing policy in the Defence White Paper 2008 states that:

*the Southern Sudan Defence Council [more commonly known as the SPLA Command Council] in consultation with the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly will determine the size of the SPLA based on its mission and budgetary lines (GoSS, 2008, sec. 7.7).*

The next sub-section, under 'Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration', asserts that:

*the SPLA will bring forward plans through the DDR commission to demobilize all those who are underage, of retirement age, and those who are unfit or disabled. The right of the individual to voluntarily leave the SPLA will be recognised; however, the needs of GOSS and the SPLA come first (GoSS, 2008, sec. 7.8).*

Albeit limited, the document gives clear guidance. Yet right-sizing, down-sizing, and DDR have become almost synonymous within the SPLA. Worse still, DDR seems to have become a catch-all phrase for every form of demobilization. This section of the *Working Paper* aims to identify the confusion and ambiguities regarding DDR. It addresses the right-sizing challenges facing the SPLA, as well as alternative options.

Initially, the 'national [DDR] institutions, the UN, and the international community agreed to allow 182,900 candidates access to the DDR programme' (Small Arms Survey, 2009, p. 61). Up to 90,000 of the candidates were to come from the South. DDR authorities argued that it was unrealistic to expect to meet these targets before the referendum in 2011; the figures were subsequently reduced to a 'Phase 1' of 35,000 from 'special needs groups', with the Southern Sudan DDR Commission aiming to complete demobilization by June or July 2010. As of 1 October 2010, estimates indicated that fewer than 10,000 of the special needs personnel had been processed.<sup>90</sup> More significantly, a number of those taking part in the DDR process were not on the SPLA payroll when they began going through it.<sup>91</sup> To date, therefore, DDR has not played a notable role in either defence transformation or any military right-sizing exercise. Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest that any defence-related analysis had been carried out to arrive at the original figure of 90,000 potential DDR candidates. Given the absence of a strategic defence review, a subsequent strategy, and transformation plans, one senior SPLA officer described the figure as 'laughable'<sup>92</sup>—a view that is echoed by many of his colleagues.

The fact that neither the SPLA nor the GoSS regard the international focus on DDR as particularly viable only serves to reinforce, perpetuate, and compound these perceptions. This situation is the result of a lack of common understand-

ing and agreement between the SPLA and those involved in DDR efforts. Unless they can be seen as part of a process of defence transformation that benefits the SPLA's future effectiveness, DDR efforts do not stand a chance of being accepted and supported by the SPLA and GoSS in such a way as to promote effective implementation. This clash may be traced back to the post-CPA failure to frame DDR in terms that would have been practical for the SPLA transformation process and that would have recognized the strategic challenges facing the SPLA and the GoSS.

Confusion about DDR and its purpose starts at the very top. It affects those who design, fund, and implement the programme. Misunderstandings and ambiguities have permeated the SPLA; further, since most soldiers are receiving regular salaries, there is no incentive to participate in DDR. Promises of reintegration and the potential for future employment are not taken seriously, and the current financial incentives are insignificant. The SDG 860 (USD 360) DDR reinsertion grant is equivalent to less than three months' wages for a private soldier who has the chance of a pension in the future, or at least a regular wage.

Members of the SPLA's Wounded Heroes, a group of soldiers, some of whom volunteered and some of whom were nominated to demobilize, are mostly able-bodied and maintained on a specific GoSS payroll. They rebelled in Nimule and Yei in March 2009,<sup>93</sup> threatening armed attack, which was only quelled after presidential intervention. In the absence of proper controls, they also continue to extort money at illegal armed checkpoints on roads in Central Equatoria.<sup>94</sup> The GoSS continues to pay them, as they will not accept DDR and are waiting for more favourable conditions before disarming and demobilizing. This is a clear example of DDR failing to meet the requirements of the SPLA.

In recent meetings, the SPLA COGS stated that 'DDR is over', making plans for future phases doubtful. Although highly unlikely, it could be argued that the financial contributions of the international community and the GoSS would be better spent on establishing sustainable military pension schemes or redundancy packages. Support for draft legislation on the three following pension schemes is paramount:

- the SPLA Pensions Bill (a standard pension programme for all those meeting terms of service in line with the SPLA Act);
- the Martyrs' Families' Survivors Fund (for the widows and widowers and direct family members of combatants killed during the war); and
- the Wounded Heroes Bill.

The breadth of the above schemes means that a large number of candidates would be eligible, but there is a total lack of funding. As of September 2010, funds were to come from the government and overseas donations. If the army were to be required to downsize, however, even these pension schemes would not provide the short-term incentives needed for reductions.<sup>95</sup>

An alternative approach to right-sizing that is very much favoured by the SPLA is the reassignment of personnel to duties in the military production directorate<sup>96</sup> or—more radically—to security companies formed through public-private partnerships.<sup>97</sup> One area of focus is training and reassignment to employment in agriculture, for example, in support of producing food for the SPLA, and commercial sales. Extending this concept to other areas of employment, such as the manufacturing of uniforms and tents, could also spark the beginning of a basic defence industry, geared towards providing employment for surplus or retired SPLA personnel and money for pension funds.<sup>98</sup> Furthermore, personnel assigned to employment within a self-sustaining military production programme could form the backbone of SPLA reserve forces. Through this approach, the SPLA—the largest institution in Southern Sudan—could become a major agent for development rather than exclusively for providing defence and security. An injection of capital would be required to kick-start this type of initiative, however; but with detailed business planning, this kind of approach would be likely to interest private investment as well as international community support.

In summary, there is a need for a radical rethink if right-sizing—which requires demobilization—is to be attractive and viable. Incentives to leave the SPLA in the form of traditional DDR support, severance, or the promises of a pension need to be realistic and correspond to existing pay and conditions. The option of developing an SPLA reserve force (which is clearly stated in the Defence White Paper) must be explored in detail, as part of a comprehensive

defence review, and must be tied to regular army demobilization incentives. In addition, more effective and consistent sensitization of the SPLA regarding the available demobilization options needs to take place. Finally, the option of forced demobilization is not worth considering given the fractious nature of the SPLA. 🗑️

## IV. Conclusion

The SPLA ‘transformed’ into a conventional military structure in 2006. In-depth transformation is a much longer process, however, and requires a comprehensive, overarching strategy that has not yet emerged. The issues raised in this paper—including the challenges associated with OAG integration, the future status of the JIUs, the capacity limitations of the SPLA as a whole, and the continued war mentality within the army and its preoccupation with countering northern aggression—must all be taken into account in developing such a strategy.

The need for a thorough strategic defence review to inform planning cannot be overstated. Effective and non-competitive delivery of future bilateral assistance depends on it. Diplomatic pressure and international support and advice will be required to convince the SPLA to conduct such a review—and to use the findings to develop a coherent defence strategy that includes modelling of appropriate force structures against threats and financial constraints. Such a strategy should also include long-term plans for strategic and tactical mobility and the proper garrisoning of forces.

Should such a defence review call for the downsizing of the SPLA, demobilization—including DDR, severance, and pension policies—will need to be reviewed and modified to comply with the review findings. This work will undoubtedly require the development of detailed military production initiatives, the formation of reserve forces, and alternative approaches to employment and reintegration after demobilization.

Following the defence plan and the strategy, an SPLA transformation plan, ideally agreed by the GoSS, the SPLA, and international donors, should also be coordinated through a properly staffed and resourced transformation unit. With international support, the SPLA needs to develop a military doctrine to establish a framework approach to future operations. This must include an agreement on terminology and military planning processes to allow future interoperability with regional and international allies.

In the meantime, low-level transformation initiatives should continue to focus on some of the SPLA's own priorities. These include 'training the trainer' initiatives to increase SPLA instructors' skills; building leadership and command skills, particularly among junior and mid-ranking officers; logistics assistance, especially maintenance training and improving communications down to the company level; and administration improvements, focusing on the development of financial and personnel accountability systems. 📌

# Endnotes

- 1 This definition of SPLA transformation combines UK and US government definitions provided in various scopes of work for defence transformation projects in Southern Sudan.
- 2 This paper uses the term ‘right-sizing’ to refer to the process of finding a balance between military effectiveness and affordability in terms of force structure, composition, and size. Right-sizing need not always imply ‘down-sizing’ or reductions in troop numbers; depending on the nature of perceived threats, it could imply a need to increase the size of a military force.
- 3 See GoS and SPLM/A (2005).
- 4 Various informal author conversations and confidential interviews with SPLA personnel, 2006–10.
- 5 Author interview with Maj. Gen. Malual Ayom Dor, Juba, 2 August 2010.
- 6 Author interview with Maj. Gen. Malual Ayom Dor, Juba, 2 August 2010.
- 7 Various author interviews and discussions with SPLA officers, New Site and New Cush, August 2006–July 2007.
- 8 Author discussions with SPLA operations staff, 27 July 2010.
- 9 Author discussions with SPLA operations staff, 27 July 2010.
- 10 Lt. Gen. Oyay Deng Ajak, SPLA Transformation Workshop, Juba, 24–25 March 2009.
- 11 See SPLA and SSDF (2006) for the text of the Juba Declaration. The SSDF was composed of a number of independent militias, some of which had joined just prior to the Juba Declaration so that they would be integrated into the SPLA. For background on the history of the SSDF, see Young (2006).
- 12 Author interview with Maj. Gen. Malual Ayom Dor, Juba, 2 August 2010.
- 13 Author interview with Maj. Gen. Malual Ayom Dor, Juba, 2 August 2010.
- 14 Various author discussions with US government officials, September 2007.
- 15 For more details on the politics involved in these shifts, see ‘Ministry of SPLA Affairs development’ in Part III of this report.
- 16 Author interview with Maj. Gen. Malual Ayom Dor, Juba, 2 August 2010.
- 17 Various author discussions with SPLA command and staff college students, Malou, September–October 2007.
- 18 Author discussions with SPLA operations staff, 27 July 2010.
- 19 These officers were responsible for the development of the White Paper in 2008 and have been involved in post-CPA training and organizational development. A number of more junior officers were responsible for the development of the SPLA Training Strategy and other branch-related publications.
- 20 Based on the author’s own experience as an adviser to the SPLA.
- 21 Author interview with Maj. Gen. Malual Ayom Dor, Juba, 13 September 2010. See Part III of this paper for further details.
- 22 As stated by Lt. Gen. Oyay Deng Ajak, SPLA Transformation Workshop, Juba, 24–25 March 2009.



- 23 Based primarily on Small Arms Survey (2008b, table 1). The updated information was drawn from interviews by Matthew LeRiche and Richard Rands with confidential SPLA and former SSDF sources, Juba, Malakal, and Nasir, June–August 2010.
- 24 As stated by Lt. Gen. Oyay Deng Ajak, SPLA Transformation Workshop, Juba, 24–25 March 2009.
- 25 Author interview with Maj. Gen. Malual Ayom Dor, Juba, 2 August 2010.
- 26 The ‘white army’ is the name given to groups of armed civilians, mostly youths, who claimed to provide local protection to communities but, during the conflict, often fought against the SPLA. In 2006, the SPLA conducted a largely successful operation to disarm the white army.
- 27 Author interview with a confidential source (former SSDF), 28 July 2010.
- 28 Author telephone interview with confidential source, Khartoum, 29 July 2010.
- 29 During author interviews, Nasir residents implied that the former county commissioner’s militia was responsible for the attacks.
- 30 Author interview with a confidential source (former SSDF), 28 July 2010.
- 31 One provision of the CPA is the demarcation of the border between North and South based on a 1956 survey.
- 32 ‘Shield’ was the name assigned to the training courses that SPLA officers attended.
- 33 Anyanya II was the name given to the Ethiopia-based Southern movement that began hit-and-run attacks against Sudanese forces in the early 1980s.
- 34 Author interview with Maj. Gen. Malual Ayom Dor, Juba, 2 August 2010.
- 35 Author interview with a confidential SPLA source, Juba, 13 August 2010.
- 36 Author interview with SPLA transformation adviser, Juba, 15 September 2010.
- 37 Author interview with a confidential SPLA source, Juba, 13 August 2010.
- 38 Author discussions with SPLA JIU personnel, Nasir, 7 August 2010.
- 39 Author discussions with SPLA JIU personnel, Nasir, 7 August 2010.
- 40 Various author interviews with JIU commanders, August 2006–September 2010.
- 41 Estimates based on the author’s knowledge of SPLA salaries and operating costs.
- 42 The SPLA budget request for 2011 is approximately SDG 2.3 billion (USD 1 billion).
- 43 Based on the author’s experience from multiple visits to field units, 2006–10.
- 44 Statement made during the SPLA Transformation Workshop, Juba, 24–25 March 2009.
- 45 Author interview with Maj. Gen. Ruben Malek, Juba, 25 March 2009.
- 46 Author interview with confidential source, Juba, October 2010.
- 47 Based on the author’s experience from multiple visits to field units, 2006–10.
- 48 Author’s estimate based on reviewing reports received from SPLA units during 2010.
- 49 Data compiled by Burton Rands Associates through the assessment of more than 7,000 SPLA officers and soldiers of mixed rank over the period August 2006–September 2009.
- 50 Author interview with a military adviser, Juba, 22 August 2010.
- 51 SPLA briefings, Juba, 26 March 2010.
- 52 Author interview with military advisers, Juba, 18 August 2010.
- 53 Author interview with James Hoth Mai, Juba, January 2010.
- 54 Based on the author’s own experience of establishing the SPLA Non-commissioned Officer Academy in Mapel, September 2010.
- 55 From March to July 2010 a team of SPLA officers, with adviser guidance, developed syllabi for officer cadet courses as well as junior and senior command and staff courses.
- 56 For information on these Southern insurrections, see HSBA (n.d.a).

57 SPLA briefings, Juba, 13 August 2010. For more on recent LRA attacks, see HSBA (n.d.b).  
58 See Young (2007) and Arnold and Alden (2007).  
59 The cohesion of the SPLA was at risk immediately following the integration of OAGs after the  
signing of the Juba Declaration; hence, its effectiveness as a unified army has been doubtful.  
60 The opening statement of the August 2006 document on the organizational structure of the  
SPLA GHQ in Juba extends 'sincere thanks and appreciations' to 'the former SPLA Military  
Cluster Committee: especially Cdr. Oyay Deng Ajak and the rest of his Committee members  
for their valuable contributions in the first draft on Organizational Structure and establish-  
ment of SPLA in Rumbek (Southern Sudan) February 2005; this became the fundamental  
reference and guidance to the present Organizational Structure Committee.'

61 Multiple author interviews with senior SPLA officers, 2006–10.  
62 Confidential SPLA source, Juba, 3 April 2010.  
63 See GoSS (2005b, part 10, ch. II, art. 158(2); 2009a).  
64 Author interview with a military adviser, Juba, 13 August 2010.  
65 For more details, see SPLA (2009c; 2009d).  
66 Author interviews with military advisers, Juba, July–August 2010.  
67 The author advised the SPLA Training Strategy and Policy Development Team during the  
development of the SPLA training strategy over the period July–November 2009.  
68 Various author discussions with diplomatic sources, 2009–10.  
69 Author interviews with contractors, Juba, 2007.  
70 Based on author discussions with US military advisers, 2009–10.  
71 Author interview with personnel of the US Office of the Secretary of Defense, Juba, 2009–10.  
72 Author interview with a confidential source, Juba, 26 July 2010.  
73 Compiled based on multiple author interviews with military advisers, diplomatic staff, and  
SPLA officers, May 2006–August 2010.  
74 Author interview with SPLA officers, Malou, 17 July 2010.  
75 Funding for the SSDDT project is approximately USD 9.6 million.  
76 Interview with the British defence attaché, Juba, September 2010.  
77 Various author discussions with military advisers, February 2009–August 2010.  
78 Author interview with COGS outlining priorities such as training, equipment, and the con-  
struction of training facilities, Juba, 18 August 2010.  
79 Author interview with a confidential government source, Juba, 30 July 2010.  
80 US schooling is provided through the International Military Education and Training pro-  
gramme, which is funded by the US Department of State.  
81 Author discussions with diplomatic sources, Juba, July–August 2010.  
82 Author discussions with senior SPLA sources and the author's own experience, 2006–10.  
83 Author interview with a confidential source, Nairobi, July 2006.  
84 Author interview with a confidential source, Juba, July 2010.  
85 Prior to the endorsement of the Defence White Paper, diplomatic pressure was exerted on  
the president to appoint a minister for SPLA Affairs. Arguably, Dominic Dim Deng was not  
a popular choice from the outset; however, in terms of length of service, he was senior to  
Oyay Deng Ajak, the then COGS.  
86 Author interview with a confidential SPLA source, Juba, May 2008.  
87 Author interview with a confidential SPLA source, Juba, March 2010.

- 88 Author discussions with James Hoth Mai, Juba, November 2009.
- 89 Author interview with a confidential SPLA source, Juba, 26 March 2010.
- 90 Various author discussions with UN DDR personnel, Juba and Rumbek, July 2010.
- 91 Author discussions with DDR candidates, Juba and Rumbek, July 2010.
- 92 Author interview with confidential SPLA sources, Juba, July 2009.
- 93 SPLA reports, 25 March 2010.
- 94 The illegal checkpoint north of Nimule was removed by police and military forces on three occasions between March and August 2010.
- 95 Author interview with a military adviser, Juba, 18 August 2010.
- 96 Author interview with Maj. Gen. Malual Ayom Dor, Juba, 2 August 2010.
- 97 Veterans Security Services (VSS), established in 2008, is currently the only security company in Southern Sudan licensed to carry firearms. In return, VSS only recruits and trains demobilized personnel from the SPLA with the understanding that they will return to the SPLA in the event of further conflict. From author discussions with senior officers in the SPLA, it is clear they are keen to establish legislation to ensure that all security companies have to recruit demobilized military personnel. Alternatively, they are interested in licensing VSS as the only company in Southern Sudan able to provide private security services.
- 98 The Sultanate of Oman's security forces operate similar programmes, which contribute significant amounts of money to their pension schemes.

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