



Darfur Digest October 2008

I. Executive Summary and Policy Recommendations

The Special Election Edition of the Darfur Digest

Welcome to the Darfur Digest's Special Election Edition. In light of the upcoming election, we've decided to shift gears a little bit this month and focus on providing our readers with a detailed analysis of the parties' positions on Darfur, so that you all can make the most informed decision possible. It's important to note, however, that Stand is a non-partisan organization. We are advocates for Darfur, not for any individual political party.

In this issue, we provide coverage of the Conservatives, which naturally focuses on the policies which they have enacted, as well as the positions taken by the Liberals, the New Democratic Party, the Bloc Quebecois, and the Green Party. As usual, we also provide our most up to date policy recommendations for responding to the crisis.

Policy Recommendations

1. Build on Canada's recent commitments to Darfur by appointing a Special Envoy to the region. A Special Envoy could strengthen Canadian policymaking on Darfur in three key ways: 1) providing the world with a public face for Canada's efforts on Darfur, 2) providing a presence on the ground in Sudan, and 3) coordinating an integrated "all of Sudan" approach to Canadian peacebuilding. Specifically, a Special Envoy could play a key role in assisting efforts of the Darfuri rebel groups to form a unified and coherent bargaining position, a critical success factor for renewed negotiations.
2. The Canadian government should pursue targeted divestment from Sudan conditioned on the Sudanese government's cessation of atrocities in Darfur and active engagement in the peace process.



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3. Canada's mission to the UN should engage on more actively in multilateral diplomacy at the UN to bring renewed prominence to the Darfur issue internationally and rally greater international support for conflict resolution efforts.

II. The Conservative Party

The Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) has not publicized an official stance on Sudan. However, the CPC's Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs outlined a three-pronged approach to the situation. The three prongs of the approach are: diplomacy, humanitarian reconstruction and peaceful assistance and support for international peacekeeping efforts.¹

Canada has donated over \$441 million to Darfur, including support to the former African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), through offering the provision of helicopters and various reconstruction efforts.² In mid-2008, the Conservative government committed to contributing \$275 million to various efforts in Sudan, including assessed contributions to the UN African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).³ The Conservative government has not sent troops to Sudan or appointed a Special Envoy to assist in overseeing peace mediation and the delivery of aid.

Under the Conservative government, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has spent \$133.8 million in Sudan. CIDA's presence has significantly increased since January 2006. Canadian involvement has focused on the provision of early recovery, such as vaccinations, peace efforts, and humanitarian assistance,

¹ Parliament of Canada, Edited Hansard, February 28, 2008, <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/House/Publications/Publication.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=39&Ses=2&DocId=3312029>.

² "Canada welcomes establishment of hybrid AU-UN peacekeeping mission in Darfur and contributes additional \$48 million," *Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada News Release*, August 2, 2007, http://w01.international.gc.ca/minpub/Publication.aspx?isRedirect=True&publication_id=385345&Language=E&docnumber=105.

³ "New report calls on states to provide helicopters to Darfur peacekeepers," *Save Darfur Canada*, July 31, 2008, http://www.sdcanada.org/en/unamid_helicopters.html.

including the provision of food aid and water.⁴

The previous Foreign Minister Maxime Bernier visited Sudan, in March of 2008. During the visit Bernier reiterated Canada's support for the peace treaty between the north and south of the country.⁵ Bernier also stated that the Conservative government might consider supporting the Liberal Party's motion on divestment from Sudan if the situation in Sudan did not change.⁶ However, the Conservative party has not commented on Bill C-536, the Sudan Accountability Act, which passed through its First Reading in the House of Commons, and Darfur was not mentioned in the 2007 throne speech.

III. The Liberal Party

The Liberal Party's stance on the crisis in Darfur was mentioned only briefly in their 2008 election platform. Recognizing the importance of UNAMID, the Liberals committed to ensuring that Canada does its part to ensure the mission succeeds. In order to do this, a Liberal government would contribute resources to the mission so it can contract the tactical and heavy lift helicopters it needs.⁷

The Liberal Party's position on Darfur was more substantively elucidated earlier in the party's Statement on the Crisis in Sudan and Darfur. This statement was released in December 2007 after the Lester B. Pearson Peacekeeping Conference, where the Liberals realigned their foreign policy goals to mesh with those of former Prime Minister Pearson.⁸

⁴ Sudan – Canada's commitment, Canadian International Development Agency, August 1, 2008, <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/sudan>.

⁵ "Darfur peace key to improving relations: Bernier," *Embassy*, April 2, 2008, http://www.embassymag.ca/html/index.php?display=story&full_path=/2008/april/2/darfur/.

⁶ "Canada reiterates support to Darfur peace process," *Sudan Tribune*, March 27, 2008, http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article26518&var_recherche=canada.

⁷ Liberal Party of Canada, "An action plan for the 21st century," http://www.liberal.ca/pdf/platform/2008lp_action_plan_e.pdf.

⁸ Liberal Party of Canada, "Statement by the Liberal caucus on the crisis in Sudan and Darfur," Dec 11,



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Aside from calling for an increase to both bilateral and multilateral aid to Africa, the Liberals believe that a high level coordinator/envoy should be appointed to work with both donors and UNAMID in Darfur. The Liberals envision this individual taking a leading role in directing and improving the coordination of UNAMID actions in the region. The Liberals also want to lobby UNAMID to expand the peacekeepers mandate in order to halt the illegal trafficking of arms in the region.

Diplomacy is also a central pillar of this policy, and the Liberals believe that a conference should be convened in order to bring all parties back to the negotiating table to craft a peace settlement and rescue the North-South Peace Process in Sudan. Furthermore, the Liberals seek to revive the US-Norway-Canada-UN Contact Group while simultaneously engaging China to help stop the conflict. With respect to non-state actors, the Liberals also emphasize the importance of working with the myriad of rebel groups in order to prevent the infighting that has caused other peace talks to break down. The last aspect of this pillar is to aid the International Criminal Court in bringing war criminals to justice that have been active within the Darfur conflict.

Liberal MPs have demonstrated their concern for the crisis in Darfur in the House of Commons. Liberal MP Glen Pearson has been a particularly outspoken advocate on behalf of Darfur. Liberal MPs Ken Dryden and Irwin Cotler have advocated for Canada's divestment from Sudan with broad support from the Liberal Party. Ken Dryden introduced Motion 410, calling on the Government of Canada to divest from the governments of Sudan and Iran.⁹ Irwin Cotler proposed bill C-536, the "Sudan Accountability Act," aimed at increasing accountability by Canada and the international community with respect to investment in Sudan.¹⁰ This act is still in the process of being examined by the House of Commons.

2007, http://www.questionwire.com/qw/page.php?rc=afni&lc=ni_p&ni_no=5005676.

⁹ "39th Parliament, 2nd Session, Number 044," February 5, 2008, <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=39&Ses=2&DocId=3249159#Int-2301541>.

¹⁰ "39th Parliament, 2nd Session, Number 044," April 11, 2008, <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=39&Ses=2&DocId=3414511&File=0>.



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IV. The New Democratic Party

While certain NDP MPs including Alexa McDonough, Paul Dewar, Tony Martin and Bill Siksay, have consistently spoken out about the need for the Canadian government to do much more for the people of Darfur, the party itself provides relatively little information on their stance regarding the conflict.¹¹ Statements on the NDP website regarding Darfur are dated and no category exists for foreign policy under the NDP plan. However, a search of the debates in the House of Commons and articles linked to from the NDP website reveals the NDP's three pronged approach to the crisis in Darfur.

The first prong of the NDP stance on Darfur is to support United Nations Resolution 1769 by committing more troops and resources. Evoking the Chapter VII mandate to protect civilians, and the consent of the Government of Sudan, the NDP thinks Canada should further support UN Resolution 1769 by committing personnel and resources to the mission, including offering Canadian troops to complement the advance party requested by the UN.¹² Although the NDP does not believe in military intervention, they do advocate pulling troops out of Afghanistan and deploying them as peacekeepers in Darfur.¹³

The second prong is to invest in developing civil society and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).¹⁴ The NDP approach believes that peace cannot be achieved without the development of a vibrant civil society and its meaningful engagement in the comprehensive peace process. Only once civil society is functional will the CPA be successfully implemented. However, specifics for strengthening this sector are not

¹¹ Email from NDP, received August 18, 2008.

¹² "Inaction on Darfur Shameful," December 17, 2007, www.pauldewar.ca/en/node/127; Email from NDP, received August 18, 2008.

¹³ *39th Parliament, 2nd Session, Number 061*, March 6, 2008, <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=39&Ses=2&DocId=3335079&File=0>

¹⁴ "Inaction on Darfur Shameful," December 17, 2007, www.pauldewar.ca/en/node/127



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outlined by the Party.

The final prong in the NDP approach is national divestment from Sudan. Their dedication to this pillar is highlighted by a 2007 NDP motion to undertake a study of Canadian funds invested in Sudan and explore legislative initiatives to regulate such investments. Despite opposition from Conservatives, the Foreign Affairs committee, led by NDP MP Paul Dewar, adopted this motion last year. The NDP also supported Liberal Motion 410, which calls on the Government of Canada to divest from the governments of Sudan and Iran.

V. The Bloc Quebecois

The Bloc Quebecois have said relatively little publicly about Darfur. This is unsurprising, considering that the Bloc Quebecois is a party focused on promoting and gaining sovereignty for Quebec. What we can glean from the information available is that the BQ party supports the UN mission in Darfur. In 2006, the CBC reported that Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe – along with a Liberal MP – criticized Harper for failing to focus attention on Africa's problems, naming one of these as Darfur.¹⁵

In a House of Commons debate in 2007 during World Peace Week, Bloc Quebecois MP Vivian Barbot brought up Darfur and briefly described the worsening situation. To restore peace in Darfur, the MP urged the federal government to engage in diplomatic efforts, increase humanitarian aid, support the International Criminal Court and give greater financial and logistical assistance to the African Union and UN mission. Barbot also acknowledged the importance of long term commitments to Darfur saying, "Peace is not just the absence of war. It is also the creation of an environment conducive to the well-being and development of all human beings."¹⁶

¹⁵ "In depth: Sudan, the crisis in Darfur, a timeline," *CBC News*, September 21, 2006,

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/sudan/darfur.html>.

¹⁶ "39th Parliament, 2nd Session, Edited Hansard, Number 22," *House of Commons Debates*, November 22, 2007,



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But when it came time for the House of Commons to debate Motion 410 – a motion calling for the Government of Canada to divest from the governments of Sudan and Iran - Bloc Quebecois MP Meili Faille raised their party's concerns. The BQ felt that divestment might disrupt the peace process because it would exert pressure on the government - at the same time that divestment would have little effect on Sudan. The party believed that Sudan and Iran should not be treated with one single initiative, but instead dealt with separately. The MP also said that the BQ opposed any unilateral action, and suggested that the Government just allow the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade to “do its work.”¹⁷

In addition to this speech on Motion 410, Faille commented that Canada should focus more on internal policies relating to immigration and refugee policies concerning claimants from Sudan. The BQ party have also failed to comment on the Sudan Accountability Act.

Beyond these three instances, the Bloc Quebecois have not made available a party platform on Darfur. The Bloc Quebecois won 51 seats in the last election and it remains to be seen how much power they will receive after this next federal election.¹⁸ But it is clear that the Bloc Quebecois could be a great ally for Darfur, if they choose to use their voting power.

VI. The Green Party

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=39&Ses=2&DocId=3132077&File=0>.

¹⁷ “39th Parliament, 2nd Session, Edited Hansard, Number 061,” *House of Commons Debates*, March 6, 2008, <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=39&Ses=2&DocId=3335079&File=0>.

¹⁸ Jay Makarenko, “Recent federal election history in Canada,” *Mapleleafweb*, September 8, 2008, <http://www.mapleleafweb.com/features/recent-federal-electoral-history-canada>.



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Although the Green Party is traditionally known for its policy positions on the environment it has a rather extensive policy on Darfur. The position was outlined in the party's official policy document (*Vision Green*) and then later reiterated in a statement on Darfur released in April 2008.¹⁹ Both documents outline the increased role the party believes Canada should take with respect to peacekeeping, diplomacy, and humanitarian aid throughout the region.

Vision Green, references Darfur on a number of occasions. Broadly speaking, it reaffirms the need for Canada to become a leader in peacemaking and poverty alleviation globally. In the section entitled *Stopping the genocide in Darfur* it outlines the party's particular policies with respect to Darfur. It calls on the government to provide increased support (financial, political, and logistical) to the UN-AU peacekeeping mission (UNAMID), provide diplomatic assistance to the AU to support the peace process, and mobilize humanitarian aid for the region. Furthermore, the policy looks to the future and emphasizes the need to establish a UN Rapid Response Force that could quickly be deployed to address crisis situations around the world.

In line with the Green Party's holistic approach they emphasize addressing the crisis within its regional context. This is important considering the large number of Darfuri people who have sought refuge in surrounding countries and the destabilizing effect that the conflict is having on the region. As such the party believes aid should be provided to Chad and Sudan. Furthermore, the Party also proposes that UNAMID and the EU Mission in Chad work to create "safe corridors" between refugee camps to facilitate safe travel and the delivery of aid. In order to alleviate external pressures on Sudan the party also supports the idea of creating comprehensive peace agreements in both Chad and the Central African Republic. Within Sudan the Green Party supports the continuation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, but only with the consent of the

¹⁹ Green Party of Canada, "Vision Green," August 11, 2008, http://www.greenparty.ca/en/policy/visiongreen/partfive#_Toc180047654;
Green Party of Canada, "Green party statement on Darfur," April 14, 2008, <http://www.greenparty.ca/en/releases/14.04.2008b>.



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AU in order to ensure that a “solution [is] created by Africans for Africans.”

The Green Party also endorses the use of the International Criminal Court in resolving the conflict and demands that Sudan turn over Ahmad Harun to face charges of war crimes. Although it is not entirely clear how they would get Sudan to comply with these demands, they do note the importance of engaging both China and the United Arab Emirates and working with these countries to pressure the Sudanese Government to acquiesce to international demands.

The major missing factor in the party’s position on Darfur occurs on the issue of divestment. Despite the fact that the party condemns oil companies that are currently active in the region because of the role that they play in violence, their position on targeted divestment in Sudan is unclear. They have not released any statements on divestment with respect to Darfur and have not commented on legislation that has been proposed on this issue.

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Stand is a national Darfur advocacy group that originated as a student-based organization but has broadened to include all interested citizens. Working both independently and in concert with our NGO partners, we've briefed officials at Foreign Affairs, liaised with MPs and members of the Government, and most recently, helped organize a non-partisan coalition of MPs committed to stronger Canadian action on Darfur. In concert with advocacy organizations in the United States and Europe, Stand brings concerned citizens together to influence governments around the world to act to end the crisis in Darfur.

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