



**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CANADIAN LEADERSHIP REQUIRED TO SAVE SUDAN'S BEST CHANCE  
FOR TRUE PEACE**

**OTTAWA, ON**– The following international experts on the current crisis in Sudan will be in Canada from April 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> and available to speak as a panel to media – just two weeks after Minister Bernier's visit to Sudan and four days before the upcoming census leading to elections in Sudan.

- Peter Schumann, Former Regional Representative for Southern Sudan, UN Peacekeeping Mission in Sudan
- David Mozersky, Horn of Africa Project Director, International Crisis Group
- Dr. Sara Pantuliano, Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute

While the conflict in Darfur rages on and the crisis there deepens, the only current hope for peace and good governance in the country is slipping quietly away. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed in 2005 to end decades of civil war between North and South Sudan, provides keys to changing systems of governance and economic marginalization that feed so much of the conflict in this war-shattered country. While the international community has been wringing its hands in the face of Darfur's devastation, the implementation of the CPA has lagged behind and missed key benchmarks. Frustrations over these delays and renegeing led Southern representatives in the Sudanese government to walk out and nearly cause its collapse. Today, North and South are cooperating again, but the underlying causes of the crisis have not been resolved. Unless the international community presses for greater adherence to the agreement, all indications point towards its imminent disintegration, plunging the country into a wider civil war than ever before.

One of the most contentious events for Sudan this year is the upcoming census that is scheduled for April 15, 2008. This will be a monumental process, given that it needs to take place in every corner of this very underdeveloped country, including Darfur. It is a crucial event, however, as it will lay the foundations for general elections in 2009 and a referendum on a possible secession of the South in 2011. The country's Northern elite fears losing its political power and access to southern oil deposits. Meanwhile, the prospect of a census, general elections



and a referendum is the only incentive keeping Southerners from taking up arms again and launching another civil war.

Coordinated action and pressure within the international community is desperately needed to prevent renewed violence between North and South Sudan. Canada played a key role in facilitating the signing of the CPA, and Sudan is the third biggest priority for Canadian foreign aid. However, Sudan has slipped off of the current Canadian government's foreign policy agenda; our aid must be complemented with high-level political leadership.

Peacebuild therefore calls on the Government of Canada to put Sudan back on this country's foreign policy agenda. We can and should work with our international partners to ensure the census is conducted successfully and that the elections do take place next year in a free and fair manner.

Minister Bernier's visit to Sudan on March 25-28 is a welcome step, but more tangible assistance from the Canadian government will be required to ensure the best chance for positive change in Sudan is not lost.

For additional details, please visit Peacebuild at [www.peacebuild.ca](http://www.peacebuild.ca) and contact Kelli Fraser or Stefan Lehmeier (see details below).

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## **About Peacebuild**

*Founded in 1994, Peacebuild (formerly known as CPCC) is a network of Canadian non-governmental organizations and individual engaged in a wide range of activities related to addressing the cause and consequences of violent conflict. The Peacebuild network is made up of approximately 61 organizational members and 19 individual members from a variety of sectors. Peacebuild working groups have been established on the following themes: Gender and Peacebuilding, Small Arms, Children and Armed Conflict, Conflict Prevention and Peace Operations.*

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