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Traditional Judiya Leaders in Sudan as Actors of Humanitarian Diplomacy: Are They Eligible to Fulfill These Roles in the Darfur Humanitarian Crisis?

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Abstract

This study explored Judiya which is the main mechanism for traditional mediation, reconciliation and justice in Darfur in Sudan, in relation to humanitarian diplomacy. Ajaweed (respected elders and traditional leaders) play a central role as the mediators in Judiya. The purpose of the study was to elicit the possibilities of utilizing Judiya as a potential resource that may have more promising benefits in humanitarian diplomacy than in political rounds in the context of the Darfur crisis. The study followed a descriptive methodology based on a review of data collected mainly from research articles and documents published in the web (online). The results revealed that Judiya operates in line with humanitarian diplomacy. It embraces the fundamental humanitarian principles: *Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality* and *Independence*. Furthermore the study observed that many tools in the practice of Judiya and Ajaweed are shared with those utilized in humanitarian diplomacy including skills, ownership, the win-win attitude in solutions, and the presence of a protocol that respects the local culture. The study indicated that Judiya leaders as individuals are fit to assume the roles of humanitarian diplomacy actors. Many obstacles and difficulties facing organizations providing humanitarian and relief services in Darfur will probably be tackled by approaching Ajaweed appropriately.

Keywords: Humanitarian diplomacy, Darfur, Judiya, conflict resolution, traditional justice.

INTRODUCTION

The Humanitarian crises and disasters are getting more frequent and more complex, especially the armed conflicts. The humanitarian situation of vulnerable people worsens progressively with the escalation of violence. The deterioration further occurs when a conflict continues for a longer period of time or gets complicated. Many humanitarian aid organizations face difficulty in accessing conflict areas where vulnerable populations need their services. Reasons relate to security concerns and often political issues (Yagub 2014). Humanitarian diplomacy must be put into action to overcome these difficulties.

The armed conflict that sparked since 2003 in Darfur in western Sudan rendered the humanitarian situation there one of the world's worst, "with so many people in the most belligerent ways being chased from their homes. Everything has been taken away from these people" (UN 2004). Hundreds of thousands of civilians have been killed. Larger numbers have been displaced, and exposed to diseases and malnutrition. Human rights violations occurred, including rape and other forms of sexual violence (Patrick 2005).

This paper critically examined how the traditional tribal reconciliation mechanism in Darfur (Judiya)¹ could be helpful to humanitarian diplomacy. It was particularly interested in showing the potential humanitarian diplomacy roles that could be played by the Judiya leaders² (Ajaweed)³ in the context of the humanitarian crisis in Darfur.

The study is divided into six sections. In this section (section one) brief introductions to the three main interacting elements of this study are presented, namely humanitarian diplomacy, Darfur humanitarian crisis, and Judiya conflict- resolution system in Sudan including Judiya leaders (Ajaweed). In section two, the research hypothesis and questions are stated. Section three explains the methodology and design of the study. In section four, characteristics of Judiya system and criteria of Judiya leaders (Ajaweed) in relation to humanitarian diplomacy and to mediation are examined. It includes a comparison between professional modern conflict mediators and Ajaweed. Section five presents the discussion and shows the answers to the research questions. Conclusion and recommendations are posted in section six.

HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY

Humanitarian diplomacy is an emerging term that has started to be fashionable in the humanitarian action domain since the beginning of the 21st century (Régnier

2011). Several definitions exist for the meaning of humanitarian diplomacy and there is no consensus on a standard universal definition. The definition developed by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) describes humanitarian diplomacy as "persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people, and with full respect for fundamental humanitarian principles" (IFRC 2009). Veuthey (2012) defined humanitarian diplomacy as a "dialogue (private or public) between the governments and (or) humanitarian organizations, inter-governmental organizations (IOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or other Non-State Actors (NSAs)". A Turkish statesman considers humanitarian diplomacy as the balanced combination of power and compassion (Davutoğlu 2011). Yet the aims of humanitarian diplomacy meet more agreement than the definition. The main objectives being the persuasion for protection and access to the vulnerable people or victims of a humanitarian situation, establishing projects for aid delivery, and protecting the humanitarian space (Veuthey 2012; Martínez 2013). In practice humanitarian diplomacy involves performing a multitude of different activities including private and public advocacy, negotiating access to civilian populations in need of assistance and protection, monitoring assistance programs, mediation, communication, formal agreements, and creation of partnerships (Harroff-Tavel 2006; Smith & Minear 2007; IFRC 2009).

Although humanitarian diplomacy shares some common grounds with conventional diplomacy, yet Régnier (2011) mentioned big differences between them. Examples of such differences, included that humanitarian organizations lack a specialized body of 'humanitarian diplomats' at their disposal so humanitarian diplomacy is conducted by staff of humanitarian organizations who are not trained in diplomatic negotiations. The immunity of humanitarian diplomats is not sacrosanct (with few exceptions) unlike that of conventional diplomats. Humanitarian diplomacy just seeks humanitarian dialogue between the protagonists in a conflict or disaster without political pretensions; and frequently takes risks, acknowledges errors made and can choose to make use of the media. He further stated that "Although diplomats and humanitarian aid workers can complement each other in times of crisis, the former can also block the latter if reasons of state prevail". Smith & Minear (2007) argued that whereas the portfolio of diplomats is eminently political, humanitarian agencies seek to establish and maintain their non-political bona fides. In the opinion of Mutambo (2014), humanitarian diplomacy



Figure 1. Map of Darfur region in Republic of Sudan

Source: This work is a derivative of "Sudan Darfur states" by Дмитрий-5-Аверин, used under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported

differs from conventional diplomacy of states because emergency aid agencies do not confront the government in discussions, rather, they use other parties as they focus on their core business of delivering relief.

Beside the framework of humanitarian diplomacy composed of the fundamental humanitarian principles (humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence) and the international humanitarian law, humanitarian diplomacy activities are supported by a helping toolkit. The toolkit involves persuasion techniques and practical

skills including advocacy, negotiation, peace-loving, patience, wisdom, knowledge of local culture and negotiation skills. Other tools are creating ownership for all the parties of a conflict, the win-win attitude in solutions, and the presence of a protocol that respects the local culture (Diplofoundation (2015)). Many of these principles and tools are shared with those in the practice of Judiya and Ajaweed as will be detailed in the course of this study.

DARFUR CONFLICT AND THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Darfur is the western region of Sudan that covers an area of approximately 440,000 square kilometers (Figure 1) and used to be inhabited by about six million persons. The conflict that started in 2003 is a complex one and is being waged on many fronts by different actors. It involves rebel groups fighting the government, in addition to inter-tribal violence (IRIN 2013). The humanitarian situation deteriorated with escalation of the trend of killing of civilians, destruction of villages and rape crimes. The United Nations (UN) estimated that about 200,000 people died and nearly two million were displaced in the period between 2003 and 2007 (UN 2007). Oxfam (2013) reported destruction of about 3000 village between 2003 and 2009. Until 2013, about 200,000 sought refuge in Chad and 1.4 million became internally displaced. These numbers kept increasing as the crisis saw little hopes in political solutions of reconciliations, peace processes, agreements and regional and international peace-keeping interventions.

Some political factors played a role in worsening the humanitarian situation: in March 2009 the government ordered expulsion of 13 important INGOs working in Sudan and serving Darfur soon after an arrest warrant was issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against the president of Sudan, Omer Hassan El-Bashir on charges of war crimes. The Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS), with the assistance of the IFRC and some national agencies, had to try filling the gap of humanitarian aid after expulsion of the mentioned organizations. Another confounding factor is the increase in targeting humanitarian aid agencies with attacks of violence. Now, in 2015, it is estimated by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) that about “4.4 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in Darfur. Over 2.55 million people remain displaced by insecurity and violence, with only 5,540 aid workers in international organizations are working in Darfur” (OCHA, 2015).

THE JUDIYA SYSTEM IN SUDAN

Judiya

Traditional reconciliation mechanisms are known in several traditional societies in Africa e.g., in Burundi, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and Sudan (Mohamed 2002; Huyse & Salter 2008; Litanga 2012). In Sudan the practice is called “Judiya”. It is present in several parts of Sudan but mainly prevalent in Darfur in western Sudan

where it is the main mechanism for traditional mediation, reconciliation and justice. It has been used as an important conflict resolution practice that settled disputes between individuals, including spouses, or between clans, ethnic or tribal groups (RFK 2011; Bronkhorst 2012; UNEP 2014). The Judiya system is considered one of the most successful traditional institutions for administering justice (RFK 2011).

Ajaweed (Judiya leaders)

Judiya is based on third-party mediation, with the mediators known as Ajaweed (singular “Ajwad” or “Ajwadi”). They are selected from respected members of the community and traditional leaders, usually elders known for their knowledge of communal and customary law and for their understanding of the environment and history of tribal areas (Bradbury et.al 2006; Bronkhorst 2012; UNEP 2014). The disputants may object to the participation of a particular “Ajwad” but that should take place only before the commencement of the Judiya (El-Tom 2012).

General characteristics of Judiya

In contrast to government and native administration courts, the Judiya is distinguished by the impermanence of its membership, with no formal paperwork or official records. A Judiya session is relatively easy to set up: as it can take place anywhere (no specially- installed premises), and it is open for attendance by anyone. The Ajaweed are freely available, and approachable by communities almost without any formality (El-Tom 2012; Bronkhorst 2012; UNEP 2014).

Common principles of the Judiya

Gado (2014) extracted a list of the common principles of the Judiya from interviews he made with 26 key informants in Darfur in 2010. They are quoted below:

1. Mediators are volunteers.
2. Mediators must be voluntarily accepted by all parties to the conflict before their involvement in the arbitration process.
3. Parties to the conflict must voluntarily accept to participate in the Judiya.
4. Customary law constituted the reference for adjudication.
5. The parties to the conflict participate voluntarily in the Judiya, but this also implies an obligation to accept its outcome.
6. The implementation of the agreement reached in the

Judiya is a shared responsibility of the parties to the conflict and the mediators.

7. Higher level tribal leaders serve as guarantors for the implementation of the agreement in good faith with the mediators serve as witnesses in case of dispute over interpretation of the outcome.

8. A mediator is expected to be a knowledgeable person with regard to the customary law and issues of dispute.

9. The parties to the conflict decide on the agenda to be discussed without intervention from any other party.

General description of Judiya proceedings

“The Judiya meeting begins with a prayer, following which each party to the dispute presents its complaints and demands, The Ajaweed meet in private to reach their decision, returning to convince the parties to agree to their solution” (RFK 2011). The decisions made by Judiya, once made, were respected by all .Failure to do so results in communal disapproval and labeling as a “deviant” (RFK 2011; Birech 2009) and putting the disobeying party in “a position of confrontation with their own community and other communities” (Gado 2014).

HYPOTHESIS AND QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

The hypothesis of this research assumes that the traditional tribal conflict resolution mechanism (Judiya) in Darfur is in line with the core principles of humanitarian diplomacy and thus can play –through its leaders (Ajaweed) as humanitarian mediators – a positive role in the humanitarian crisis in Darfur (access, negotiating passage, and protection). As such the questions to be answered by the study are:

1. Can the Judiya system in Sudan fulfill the characteristics of humanitarian diplomacy?
2. What possible roles that Judiya leaders (Ajaweed) can play in humanitarian diplomacy in Darfur?

METHODS

The study is descriptive and is based on a desktop review of data mainly from information and documents present on the internet (online). Online research articles, books, reports and websites about traditional reconciliation especially about the Judiya system of Sudan were critically examined to extract the characteristics of the Judiya in line with humanitarian diplomacy principles. At the same time the review has been done to identify criteria of selection of Judiya

leaders/conductors (Ajaweed) and verify whether they fulfill the characteristics required for playing certain roles in humanitarian diplomacy, particularly in the Darfur humanitarian crisis. Online resources were also consulted in the field of humanitarian diplomacy, the Darfur crisis, traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms, and mediation.

POTENTIAL ROLES OF JUDIYA AND JUDIYA LEADERS IN HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY

Judiya and Humanitarian Diplomacy

The study revealed that components and tools of humanitarian diplomacy are utilized in the practice of Judiya. In this section an analysis is presented to show how Judiya embraces these components and tools.

a). Humanity

Coupland (2001) presented two “Oxford dictionary” definitions of the word “humanity”. The first definition is: “the human race; mankind; human beings collectively”. The second is “the character or quality of being humane; behavior or disposition towards others such as befits a human being.” Interestingly he referred to the humanity in the first definition as -“humanity-humankind” and to the notion of humanity in the second as “humanity-sentiment.” He argued that a link exists between the two definitions.

Humanity mentioned in the 20th International Conference of the Red Cross -Vienna 1965- as the first principle among seven fundamental principles of the Red Cross calls for “mutual understanding, friendship, co-operation and lasting peace amongst all peoples” (IFRC 1979). This concept is present in the descriptions of the work of Judiya and its Ajaweed. The study has extracted the evidence to these observations from resources reviewed in this research. Mohamed (2002) described the Judiya- style of dispute resolution, with decisions accepted by both parties of the conflict, as “contributing to a culture of tolerance and forgiveness among and within communities”. During a Judiya session the Ajaweed remind the disputants of past relations, and call them to focus on the benefits of future cooperation (Tubiana et al. 2012). Judiya is said to provide for reconciliation and forgiveness rather than being based on the notion of punishment (UNEP 2014; Birech 2009).

Religious components of “humanity” such as compassion, mercy, forgiveness, good brotherhood and neighborliness, cooperation, resource-sharing and others are almost always mentioned during Judiya persuasion

sessions. In fact the relevant verses of the Quran (Muslims' holy book) are the opening words of a proceeding of *Judiya*, as described by Mohamed (2002): "a moderator will ask one of the saints [Quran reciters] to recite verses from the Quran and the Hadeeth [sayings of Prophet of Islam, Mohamed "PBUH"]. Citations will normally concentrate on verses and Hadeeth that commend living in peace for individuals and communities" and emphasizing "the need for coexistence, tolerance and harmony" (Wilson 2014). Mohamed (2002) describes a sentimental humanitarian scene that concludes a *Judiya* case: "reconciliation would not be regarded as complete without the two parties bursting into tears and hands shaking, signaling that the enmity between them is over".

b). Impartiality and neutrality

There is no consensus on the definition of impartiality and neutrality. The fact is that although "impartiality" and "neutrality" are [often] used interchangeably, they have different meanings (Shimokaji, no date). However, in the fundamental humanitarian principles, impartiality is explained mainly by "not discriminating on racial, religious, political or other basis; and neutrality by "not taking sides" (IFRC 1979). These meanings were observed in the studied data for this research. Most of the authors of the references that described the *Judiya* system have not defined impartiality" and "neutrality" distinctly, and probably used them interchangeably. However the essence of both terms is fulfilled in *Judiya* practice and the characteristics of its conductors (*Ajaweed*). Hung (2002) stated: "More important than what the words signify is the parties' feeling that the mediator is acting with 'neutrality and impartiality'".

In a context of a *Judiya* issue, the concepts of impartiality and neutrality describe the qualities expected in an *Ajwad*. "The *Ajaweed* may be drawn from a third tribe (or several other tribes)... that acts as an informed but impartial facilitator" (UNEP 2014). Mohamed (2002) stated that *Ajaweed*, who are tribal elders are "versed in customs and traditions and are reputed for their impartiality and peace-loving". Tubiana *et al.*, (2012) remarked "The *Ajaweed* are elders or notables from a family, clan, or tribe not involved in the dispute. Government officials and judicial officers can serve. Neutrality is [the] key" and parties have the right to reject an *Ajwad* they suspect of not being neutral. Yet an *Ajwad* claimed that neutrality" is not necessarily about your tribe, it is about your character" (Tubiana *et al.*, 2012). Neutrality is also mentioned by Ibrahim (2013), who stated that *Judiya* members have to be approved by both parties of the conflict for their neutrality and credibility.

While Tubiana *et al.*, (2012) claimed "neutrality is one of the key qualities of an *Ajwad*", Bradbury *et al.*, (2006), and RFK (2011) argued that *Ajaweed* are not neutral in the western sense of the term. Their practice is to exert pressure on the party resisting a settlement until they accept the recommendations. But Astor (2007) explained that - in mediation - two meanings for neutrality exist. One is that the mediator does not influence the content or the outcome of the mediation. The mediator's task is to control the process of the mediation, providing a procedural framework within which the parties can decide what their dispute is about and how they wish to resolve it". The second meaning is that the mediator is not partisan and that she or he will treat the parties equally, not favoring one over the other. Probably this second meaning is the nearest to *Judiya* practice as it is a comprehensive system that includes mediation, adjudication and implementation.

c). Independence

Independence of *Judiya* system has been noted by some authors. Tubiana *et al.*, (2012) stated that "Darfurians favor *Judiya* over the courts in part because it is faster and in part because it is freer of governmental interference". Gado (2014) reported: "Parties to the conflict are the only ones to decide on the agenda of the *Judiya*; they preserve the full right to raise any issue that they consider as something of concern to them".

d). Win-win solution

Judiya system is based on providing for reconciliation and forgiveness in contrast to courts which are based on punitive judgments (Mohamed 2002). The *Judiya* does not make decisions that result in a winner-loser situation, but "allows all to save face" (Tubiana *et al.*, 2012). The win-win outcome of *Judiya* solutions has been observed by several researchers. Interestingly some of them compared the situation in *Judiya* with that in a formal court. Mohamed (2002) stated that "The court will declare one of the disputants victorious; the other will feel being the loser and will never forgive the victor. The [*Judiya*] on the other hand, makes both disputants satisfied with the decision, thus pre-empting future tense relations". Bronkhorst (2011) revealed the presence of a belief that by using courts one party always loses, while *Judiya* seeks win-win solutions.

e) Sense of ownership

The sense of ownership which is practiced by humanitarian diplomacy, is what makes a dialogue "not

felt as imposed from above or outside...[parties] feel more responsible for the outcomes reached" (UNDP 2009). The sense of ownership will lead to high rates of compliance" (Young, no date); and increases the chances of success (Peck & Wertheim 2014). This attitude and its application in Judiya are perfectly confirmed in a description of the steps of a Judiya session by Bronkhorst (2012) stating that although Ajaweed may have formed their solution, the conflict parties are given the chance to state their case. This makes both parties feel the decision has come from them. Birech (2009) included the local ownership ensured by Judiya in her description of the advantages of Judiya as a customary mediation system. This local ownership would be absent if an otherwise external justice and reconciliation method was involved. Gado (2014) confirmed the sharing of ownership of the agreement and its implementation by the conflict parties in Judiya system. He included that in the list which he compiled for the principles of Judiya (mentioned above) as principle 6.

f) Protocol

Although Judiya doesn't follow a written protocol, yet it does not lack a customary one. It has its own inherent spontaneous protocol deeply rooted in the local tradition and custom. For generations Judiya has been respected and observed by all in its society. Examples of what resembles a protocol have been described by several authors. According to Mohamed (2002); Sansculotte-Greenidge (2009); Tubiana et al. (2012); El-Tom (2012); Gado (2014) the following protocol points occur:

- i). Judiya is not held unless both parties of the conflict express their acceptance of Judiya.
- ii). Ajaweed must be accepted by all conflict parties before a Judiya council is formed.
- iii). Either party has the right to dismiss an Ajwad for suspicion of non-neutrality or any other reason, but only prior to commencement of the Judiya.
- iv). Judiya meetings can take place in any suitable place. Meetings may convene at an Ajwad's house or even in the shade of a tree.
- v). Presentation of the case one party before a Judiya, is made mostly verbally and in the presence of the other party.
- vi). Rulings made by Judiya are binding to all parties once a Judiya offer has been accepted.

Gado (2014) described a situation in case the conflict is over land. The two parties usually deny access to the disputed land until a Judiya settles the issue. The guarantee is added by taking an oath on the Quran

(called Halifa or Qasam). A good example of Judiya protocol is illustrated by Tubiana et al (2012) in a description of Judiya session proceedings. The following points could be listed from the description: a) The Ajaweed normally question the aggrieved party first, then the accused. b) Each side appoints a spokesman. Only that spokesman can speak for his side. c) The spokesman can neither point with his hand nor provoke the other side in any way.

g) Skills

There are many skills that Judiya has in common with humanitarian diplomacy. Skills such as experience, wisdom, knowledge of history, knowledge of local tradition, in addition to rhetorical skills are important criteria that make a person acceptable/ accepted as Ajwad (Sansculotte-Greenidge, 2009). Ibrahim (2013) added patience, generosity, good negotiation abilities and democracy as specific skills and criteria of an Ajwad. Egeimi *et al.*, highlight the importance of the Ajaweed's knowledge of the ecology of an area and the history of similar conflicts or even the history of that particular conflict. These are essential to provide the context of preparations for the Judiya meeting itself and to be able to show examples of how a conflict can be resolved (Cited in El-Tom 2012).

But some authors observed that in Judiya it is mostly the respected elderly who fulfill these skills and be accepted as Judiya members. A statement by Ajayi & Buhari (2014) justifies this: "Elders are respected as trustworthy mediators all over Africa, because of their accumulated experiences and wisdom". Mohamed (2012) also observed the elders in rural Sudan are respected for their wisdom and "their words are rarely disputed". Gado (2014) remarked "elders are believed to be more knowledgeable in customary law".

The Judiya leaders (Ajaweed) and mediation

A mediator's primary role is to act as a neutral third party who facilitates discussions between the parties and the mediator should demonstrate how to communicate through employing good speaking and listening skills, and paying attention to non-verbal messages and other signals emanating from the context of the mediation and possibly contributing expertise and experience. The mediator should direct the parties to focus on issues and stay away from personal attack (Indartono 2013). The Ajaweed typically practice the above description. In the mediation of today's world, a professional mediator should fulfill certain criteria to be "licensed" to practice mediation. Comparison of modern (western) professional

Table 1. Comparison of modern (western) professional mediator and a Judiya mediator

Criterion	Modern mediator	Judiya mediator
Age: (young/old)	Any	Mostly old
Personal attributes: Patience, wisdom, rhetoric, negotiation skills, leadership.	Yes	Yes
Knowledge: of local context, conflict history and ethical considerations	Yes	Yes
Experience	Yes	Yes
Training	Yes (Formal)	Yes (non-formal)
Qualifications (Certificate)	Yes	No
From within community	Not necessarily	Yes
Job	Permanent	Temporary
Cost	Paid	Free (Voluntary)

mediator and a Judiya mediator (Ajwad) is compiled by the author from Augsburg (1992); Nebraska Office of Dispute Resolution (2011); and Ibrahim (2013). They are presented above in Table 1.

Another type of mediation, which is not that of Judiya, is the insider-partial mediation described as:

"Mediation done by a person who is already involved in the conflict (i.e. someone who is an 'insider'), and, at least to some extent, is aligned with one side or the other (hence, someone who is 'partial')... In most cases, insider-partial mediators are people of such high stature that they have credibility with people on all sides of the conflict. This person must be someone who is known and respected by all parties to the conflict and trusted to be fair, even though he or she is associated with one side or another" (Maiese 2005).

These characteristics apply closely to Ajaweed as individuals. It is assumed that Ajaweed individual mediators can potentially be fit for a role in this insider-partial mediation especially in the humanitarian action context.

Other roles: Judiya in the refugee camps

Sansculotte-Greenidge (2009) and Tubiana et al (2012) reported Judiya being practiced in refugee camps in Chad, where Ajaweed played roles much similar to the Judiya they used to practice in their homelands to resolve conflicts that erupt between Darfuri refugees in these camps or between refugees and local residents. They reported less success rates in solving cases than when practicing Judiya in Darfur. The attributed causes were that "many of the camps are multi-tribal, and the *blokkat*

(camp blocks) were settled on a first-come, first-serve basis, ensuring that the blocs are indeed very mixed" (Tubiana et al 2012) and that "In a situation that has come to characterize NGO and UNHCR interaction with the refugees the traditional roles and responsibilities of the various refugee stakeholders were ignored" (Sansculotte-Greenidge 2009).

DISCUSSION

Resources studied in this research evidently reveal that Judiya in Darfur is a system that embraces the fundamentals of humanitarian principles and includes in its practice many tools commonly utilized by humanitarian diplomacy. In one way or another, one could say that Judiya actually practices humanitarian diplomacy in a natural way. Judiya therefore fulfills properly to be considered for roles in humanitarian diplomacy. Ajaweed as leaders of Judiya are the main pillars of the Judiya system. They are the ones who lend the Judiya its reputation and effectiveness through history. This has come by virtue of their personal attributes of leadership, wisdom, respectfulness, peace-loving and other characteristics. Judiya endowed Ajaweed with the credibility and trust and empowered them with experience and insight. So Ajaweed as individuals are qualified to play several roles as humanitarian actors.

In researching the topic of this study, a scarcity of web references dated before the onset of armed conflict in Darfur has been observed. Most of the consulted references available on the internet that discussed aspects of Judiya were relatively recent (dated in the early 2000's and after). The majority of the references approached the Judiya issue within topics dealing with the Darfur crisis and exploring the possibility of positioning Judiya towards large political agendas of

settling the armed conflict and restoring peace there. Some authors suggested Judiya to take the form of an open conflict resolution conference or a peace conference (Birech 2009; Bronkhorst 2012). This study argues that approaching Judiya to help with humanitarian diplomacy issues is far more achievable and feasible. Humanitarian action may potentially benefit from Ajaweed and Judiya in the following ways:

- a). Conflict resolution in the local community by Judiya.
- b). Negotiation intermediation: can be performed by Ajaweed as trusted respected individuals, including the inside-partial mediation role.
- c). Ajaweed can play an important role in dispute resolution inside settlements for internally displaced people and in refugee camps.
- d). In advocacy plans: involving the vulnerable population can be achieved through partnership with Ajaweed.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Judiya as a traditional system of mediation and reconciliation, and Ajaweed who are the leaders of Judiya can be potential actors in humanitarian diplomacy. Their roles range from assisting with conflict resolution in their community and in the refugee camps and displacement settlements to mediating in negotiations to partnership in advocacy. The study proposes the following recommendations to humanitarian actors:

- 1). Approaching the local community to identify Judiya leaders (Ajaweed) who may become potential intermediaries and mediators in humanitarian negotiation and persuasion.
- 2). Seeking partnership with Ajaweed, as allies in humanitarian action in Darfur.
- 3). Recognizing and empowering Judiya system in refugee camps and settlements of internally displaced people of Darfur.

Further research is recommended to explore more roles for Judiya and Ajaweed in humanitarian diplomacy (e.g. in protection as guarantors of agreements). Further studies are also needed to discover suitable methods for approaching, communicating, and allying with Judiya and Ajaweed.

ENDNOTES

- 1). The English spelling may vary: Judiya, Judiyya, or Judia.

2). "Judiya leaders" in this study also means members or conductors of a Judiya, i.e. the "Ajaweed".

3). The English spelling may vary: Ajaweed, Ajawid, or Agaweed.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author states no conflict of interest.

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