

opments were planned in 1991 for a faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Education, Engineering and Mining Economics, and Business Administration.

Darfur University, already planned under President Nimeiri, started with faculties of education, medicine and health sciences, agriculture, veterinary medicine, and social studies. This university admitted 200 students in 1991. In the eastern states, there is the Eastern University, which has faculties of medicine, education, natural resources, fishery and marine sciences, engineering and applied studies, economics, petroleum and mines, and the Islamic College. As the *Horn of Africa Bulletin* reported, in 1991, "The intake of the country's ten universities and polytechnics is being doubled again this year to 20,000 students. This was announced by the Higher Education Minister, Prof. Ibrahim Ahmad Omar."

In Kassala, the university started with medicine and education. In Port Sudan, the university features Fishery and Marine Sciences, the first of its kind. It had 200 students in 1991. Further universities were to be opened in Malakal (upper Nile), Wau (Bahr al Ghazal), Juba, Al-Imam Al-Mahdi, and Al-Azhari.

The University of Khartoum (which used to be called the Gordon Memorial College, established in 1902), was the first to allow women students, in 1945. The Khartoum branch of the Cairo University, founded in 1955, allowed co-educational instruction. In 1961 the Higher Teachers Training Institute was founded, and enrolled many women, as did the Shambat Agricultural Institute, established in 1954 and the Khartoum Polytechnic.

The Khartoum branch of Cairo University was under Egyptian control, and teaching for the 25,000 Sudanese students focused on an Egyptian curriculum, taught exclusively by Egyptian professors. Sudanese students received no training in matters suiting them for work in Sudan: The Sudanese economy, its legal system and history, were ignored. Sudanese students had to pay high tuition and book fees. In March 1993, the Sudanese government "Sudanized" the university and renamed it Al-Nilein University (the university of the two Niles), much to the disgruntlement of the Egyptians.

Important in the Sudanese educational reform process has been the introduction of Arabic as the language of instruction, as per a decree in 1991. Iraq made a precious contribution by providing Arabic language textbooks free of copyrights. English has been maintained as a foreign language, which students are encouraged to learn, but Arabic is the basic vehicle of instruction. Dr. Hassan al Turabi further notes that it would be very important for the Sudanese to finish efforts to publish complete dictionaries in various branches of knowledge establishing precise terminology in Arabic. Furthermore, he said he thought the fact that books would be available in Arabic would mean that knowledge would be available to all classes in society, not just the privileged.

Sudan's political system today

by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Since 1989, the Republic of Sudan has developed a federal system, led by the President. In upcoming elections slated for 1995, the President is to be elected directly by the electorate. The Constitution is in the process of being elaborated. Citizenship is available to all Sudanese, regardless of culture, belief, or ethnic origin.

The count is to be organized through congresses at various levels, which are to provide for participatory democracy. Thus, at the local level, citizens meet to elect a Popular Committee. Popular Committees in turn make up the Council Congresses, which make policy and elect an Administrative Council which is mandated to implement policy. From the local congresses and administrative councils are elected members of the Province Council. The Province Councils, in turn, elect members of the State Congress, who also come from four Sectorial Conferences (Economic, Social Cultural, Youth and Students, and Women). The State Congress elects a specified number of representatives to the State Legislative Assembly, whose members are also drawn by direct election according to geographical representation.

The National Congress consists of persons promoted from the State Congresses and Assemblies, and from National Sectorial Conferences, which are Economic, Social Cultural, Youth and Students, Women, Legal, Administrative, Diplomatic, Defense, and Security. This body elects a number of members to the National Legislative Assembly, which also includes members elected directly on geographical criteria.

The current Transitional National Assembly is composed of 250 members, nominated as representatives on geographical, professional, cultural, ethnic, and religious bases.

The federal government, made up of ministers nominated by the President and ratified by the Transitional National Assembly, constitutes the Executive branch, flanked by the legislative assembly and the federal judiciary. The federal government is responsible for federal legislation; armed forces and defense affairs; national security; federal judiciary, public prosecution, and advocacy; foreign affairs, international representation, and external information; borders; nationality, immigration, passports, and aliens' affairs; customs; taxation (other than state taxes); planning of national economy and foreign trade; national development; currency and coinage; federal transport; inter-state highways; telecommunications; planning for higher education; education,



Sudan's President Omar Hassan Ahmed al Bashir has created a more decentralized government, creating 26 federal states to replace the previous nine.

cultural, and information planning; specialized hospitals; epidemics and pest control; land, natural resources, and environmental protection policies; census; public audit; national institutions and national public corporations; the national electricity network; inter-state water supply; the national committee for elections; and any other matters regulated by federal legislation.

State jurisdiction

The state governments have the following jurisdictions and powers: state legislation; state security; state and local development in coordination with federal planning; state tax, provided that the state shall be entitled to a certain percentage of the taxes levied on federal projects and services functioning within the state and of income tax on federal personnel within the state; border trade within the provisions of the law, provided that customs thereon shall be paid to the state; agriculture and forestry, other than national farms; animal wealth; wildlife and tourism; development of water resources and pasture; health services and establishment of all types of centers for medical treatment and health care; education up to secondary school level, in coordination with federal planning; establishment of institutions of higher education, in accordance with federal plans; establishment of organs of local government and control of their functioning; roads and telecommunications within the state; recruitment of personnel other than rare technical and technological

expertise, the recruitment for which shall be organized at the federal level; newspapers and local broadcasting stations; development of local cultures; and protection of the environment within the framework of national planning and coordination.

Sudan's federal system came into being in 1991, when nine states were established, on the basis of previous regions. These states, and their capitals, were the following: Khartoum (Khartoum), Northern (Al-Damer), Eastern (Kassala), Central (Medani), Kordofan (El Obweid), Darfur (Al-Fasher), Upper Nile (Malakal), Bahr al-Ghazal (Wau), and Ekuatoria (Juba). This was done explicitly to meet the demands of the south, which had called for federalism, since 1947, when the north and south were unified. Given the British machinations during the colonial period to strictly divide north from south, and to inculcate anti-northern sentiments among the southern population, fears of northern domination prevailed in the south after unification.

Federal system adopted

In 1972, with the Addis Ababa agreement which ended the civil war, the south was granted autonomy. In 1980, northern Sudan was divided into six regions, and in 1983, the south was organized into three regions. It was these nine regions which then became the nine states in 1991. The current government is the first to have adopted the federal system.

In March 1994, President al Bashir announced a further decentralization of government, through the creation of 26 federal states to replace the previous nine. Among these states are Northern, Nile River, Gezira, Blue Nile, White Nile, Sennar, Western Kordofan, Northern Kordofan, Southern Kordofan, Western Darfur, Northern Darfur, Southern Darfur, Lakes, Western Bahr Al-Ghazal, Warab, Upper Nile, Jonglei, Unity, Western Ekuatoria, Eastern Ekuatoria, Bahr Al-Jebel, and Khartoum. The reasons for further decentralization included a desire on the part of the Khartoum government to enhance coordination of policy between the federal and state levels, facilitate governing, promote development, enhance security, and contribute to settling continuing ethnic conflicts.

Staffing the new state governments involved deployment of thousands of civil servants from the capital, and cost about 5 billion Sudanese pounds. One obvious aim of the decentralization is to establish government bodies in the southern states still devastated by war, capable of facilitating reconstruction. In this context, in addition to the five ministers each state will have (Agriculture and Animal Wealth, Finance and Economic Development, Education and Orientation, Engineering, Health and Social Affairs), the southern states will have a sixth, the Minister for Peace and Rehabilitation. Another important feature of the decentralization policy is its facilitating bringing new universities into these states.