

Sudan: Chaos Unleashed. Color Revolution

By [Andrew Korybko](#)

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The ongoing events in Sudan are a perfect example of the uncontrollable chaos that can be unleashed in society following a Color Revolution, with it now becoming almost impossible to predict how the latest crisis will be resolved, if ever.

Disturbing Developments

“Revolutions devour their own children”, as the saying goes, and nowhere is that more evident than in contemporary Sudan in the two months following the [military coup](#) against former President Bashir.

The armed forces overthrew the long-serving leader after he reportedly intended to use violence against the protesters that were participating in an ever-intensifying [Color Revolution](#), yet now those very same forces did what they supposedly prevented Bashir from doing and killed dozens of people camped out in the capital.

This led to the country’s [suspension from the African Union](#) and an urgent diplomatic intervention by [Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy](#) to mediate the crisis, yet the authorities [soon thereafter arrested](#) one of the protest organizers and also the head of the “Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North” armed opposition group that met with him and therefore destroyed domestic and international trust in the Transitional Military Council (TMC). At this point, the entire situation is unpredictable as a result of the uncontrollably chaotic processes unleashed in society following the onset of the country’s Color Revolution earlier this year, and it’s anyone’s guess what happens next.

International Interests

Sudan’s stability is integral to the interests of several countries, some of which are interestingly rivals with one another. The GCC and its Egyptian ally are competing with Turkey for influence in the country, which is essentially an extension of the ongoing “[GCC Cold War](#)” between Qatar and the rest of its notional partners in the bloc over Doha’s patronage of the Ankara-allied Muslim Brotherhood that the remaining members of the organization and Cairo regard as terrorists. Bashir had previously allowed Turkey to rebuild the historic port of Suakin, which Egypt and the GCC consider to be part of a secret plot to set up a Turkish naval base in the Red Sea and has fueled speculation that they might have backed the early stages of the Color Revolution as part of a campaign of pressure to get him to reconsider this deal. Russia and China are also Sudan’s close partners, too, with the former seeing it as its [point of entry](#) into the rest of the continent and one of the three states pivotally comprising its “[African Trilateral](#)” while the latter needs the country for its envisaged bi-coastal “[Sahelian-Saharan Silk Road](#)”.

American Aims



The US is actually the only country that could theoretically gain from Sudan's ongoing instability, which Bashir predicted a year and a half ago during his visit to Russia when he [warned](#) that America wants to divide his state into five parts. Just as the US sought to revise the Sykes-Picot status quo in the Mideast through its geopolitical re-engineering schemes brought about by the outcome of the theater-wide Color Revolutions popularly known as the "Arab Spring", so too might it be seeking to do the same in Africa through its [Syrian-like weaponization of chaos theory](#) after this latest stage of what the author previously described as the "[African Spring](#)". To put it simply, American strategists might have keenly predicted the broad course of events that would follow the onset of the Color Revolution in Sudan, with their country only having to indirectly and minimally intervene as needed in order to guide them in the direction of its grand strategic interests, which in this case might be the "Balkanization" of Sudan into five separate states, an outcome that goes against the interests of each of the aforementioned countries except the US.

A Return To Militancy?

The TMC seems aware of this plot and that might be why it arrested the SPLM-N's leader, but the way in which it did so right after he met with PM Abiy makes it seem like he was set up and could possibly provoke the organization into resuming its militancy against the state before or after the [unilateral three-month ceasefire](#) that it declared expires in mid-July. That group and other armed ones probably saw an opportunity in Bashir's overthrow to decentralize Sudan along the lines of a Bosnian-like "[Identity Federation](#)", which is just a step away from the outright separatism that the US is speculatively supporting. With international pressure building and a return to militancy possibly being imminent, the TMC might have its hands full with a plethora of problems on top of the most pressing one of the ongoing Color Revolution that never went away after the coup. About that, the challenge with Color Revolutions is that they open up a Pandora's Box of problems that are intended to be almost impossible for the state to properly deal with, thus leading to its systemic weakening and the creation of a self-sustaining cycle of unrest.

Color Revolution Pawns

The protesters are so concerned with ensuring an irreversible transition from military to civilian rule that they seem oblivious to the fact that their actions are putting the country's existence in jeopardy, therefore making them function as indirect (if mostly unwitting) pawns of American foreign policy. That's not to take away from their legitimate grievances, but just to point out how Color Revolutions masterfully exploit chaotic processes in pursuit of a third party's grand strategic ends, even if the actual participants are largely unaware of it. Therein lays another problem because the government's response to the worsening Color Revolution crisis will always be imperfect, with passivity being interpreted as weakness and

thus inspiring more anti-state activity while too heavy-handed of an approach risks provoking armed militancy. The ideal solution would be to preempt the Color Revolution in the first place through a combination of proactive socio-economic development projects and solid intelligence efforts, though that ship has already proverbially sailed in Sudan's case and there's no going back to the pre-crisis status quo.

Concluding Thoughts

Sudan is in an ever-worsening state of crisis after the recent developments of the past week when the armed forces killed dozens of Color Revolutionaries, got the country suspended from the African Union in response, and arrested two key opposition figures shortly after PM Abiy's mediation meeting with them. The scenario of state fragmentation is worryingly being furthered after these latest events, yet all the participants — the state, the anti-state forces (both peaceful and otherwise), and Sudan's international partners — seem powerless to avert it given the uncontrollably chaotic processes that have already been unleashed in the country since the onset of the Color Revolution, which it should be acknowledged was made possible in the first place by the preexisting systemic shortcomings that were simply exacerbated by the US' sanctions regime. There's no telling what comes next, but the prognosis is far from positive and it seems likely that the worst-case scenario might become more probable than ever before, though there's still a chance — however unlikely — that it can still be averted if free and fair elections are held as soon as possible but even that might not stop what could be an irreversible process by this point.

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Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

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About the author:

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Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

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