Sudan is a federal nation where powers and functions of central and state governments are defined by the Interim Constitution of 2005. Schedule ‘A’ of the interim constitution enumerates the national powers vested with federal government to sign international treaties on behalf of the Republic of Sudan. But these treaties have to be ratified by the National Assembly “The Parliament”. According to article 91(3) of the Constitution, National Assembly is the competent body to ratify International Treaties, Conventions and Agreements. As Agriculture is listed as one of the subjects under the jurisdiction of state governments, foreign trade including agricultural trade falls under the jurisdiction of central government. While Sudan is taking the necessary arrangements to comply with rules and provisions of WTO Agreement on Agriculture there is no evidence that the stake-holders specially farmers, the states and most of agricultural policy makers are aware of the provisions, principles and rules of AoA and their implication on productivity, prices, agricultural development and agricultural support and incentives or properly consulted. Therefore, the potential conflicts are expected to rise between federal and state governments specially in case of multi-party political system/or weak structured federal system or for ideological reasons. To serve this purpose, a survey was conducted by administering scheduled questionnaire among different stakeholders on agriculture in Sudan and India with the objective of knowing the level of awareness on AoA of WTO and their views on its likely implications. In India nearly 49 per cent of the respondents are aware of the rules of AoA, 35 per cent partly aware and only 16 per cent are unaware. In Sudan case 47 per cent of the respondents are aware and 53 per cent are unaware. 50 per cent of the respondent from India and Sudan are of the opinion that AoA would have positive impact on access to external markets and new technology and also an impact on improved production. In contrast, the same percentage are of the opinion that AoA would adversely affect centre state relations, employment and livelihood of rural
people especially rural women. The majority of the respondents in Sudan and India are of the opinion that governments have so far not taken adequate steps to create awareness among the stake-holders specially farmers about the opportunity and challenges of WTO. Also the majority of the respondents hold strong view that India and Sudan farmers could not compete with imported agricultural commodities from developed countries while the levels of the domestic support to agriculture have been reduced.

Therefore, some discussion on the existing and potential sources of conflict could be useful here. The implication may vary widely from state to state and some states may be affected adversely due to the resource-base potential of the states and of their remoteness.

As stated above, Sudan is on its way to accede WTO and it has taken all the necessary arrangements and measures to comply with the provisions and principles of WTO/Agreement on Agriculture while trading bilaterally and regionally. From the experience gained from the arrangements and measures being taken and the views/opinions expressed in the questionnaire, the WTO Agreement on Agriculture will have its implication on Sudan agriculture sector. The implication on agriculture is most likely to vary widely from one sub-sector to another and from state to state.

The implication of WTO/Agreement on Agriculture can be divided into two main categories, namely, general and specific implications. The general and specific implications can be discussed as below:

6.1 The Existing and the Potential Sources of the General Implications
The existing and the potential sources of general implication are perceived to stem from: a) the progressive economic reforms, b) challenges facing agriculture, c) restructuring of agricultural sector, d) cropping pattern, e) fiscal policies.
Progressive Economic Reforms

The progressive economic and institutional reforms taken by Sudan government as a pre-condition for accessing WTO could be a general source of disputes and conflicts. This is mainly because, the reforms might result in substantial cuts in public expenditure in physical and social services such as education, health and infrastructure which are the most important interventions of social and economic development of the states. Because of the historic development disparities between the states since independence in 1956 in social, economic and infrastructure development, the pace, sequence and intensity of the economic and institutional reforms could be a source of conflicts between federal government and states. Most of the grievances of the states which are expressed recently in terms of marginalization and inequality led to the social unrest in Darfur states of Western Sudan and in the states of Eastern Sudan are partly due to the implemented economic and institutional reforms.

Challenges Facing Agriculture

The challenges facing agriculture in the triennium in Sudan are similar to those of most developing countries. Global atmosphere changes, land degradation, drought and desertification, decline in rainfall and the scarcity of water resources are factors prevalent in Sudan agricultural sector. Added to them, are the poor physical and institutional rural infrastructure associated with agricultural production and marketing. The forgoing challenging factors affect the optimization of sustainable agricultural production in Sudan, specially in states with poor resource base and in states of poor physical and institutional infrastructure. In order to offset or minimize the effect of these challenges, a lot needs to be made starting from the environmental end of the spectrum towards the more social end. In this respect, development strategies and interventions are needed to deal with the adaptation of agricultural sector to climatic and environmental changes. Similarly, development strategies and interventions are required to develop water resources and vegetation cover specially in desert, semi-desert and low rainfall Savana zones. Likewise development of transportation network, marketing infrastructure and rural electrification are essential for a country of size bigger than Western Europe and in which agriculture is still and will continue.
to be the main source of livelihood of around 70% of its population. Moreover, development of sustainable competitive agriculture sector in Sudan calls for investment in capacity building and empowerment of farm communities who are still traditional. This could make deep inroads into knowledge and technological-base agriculture through institutional transformation. In addition, the on-going learning and innovation among farmers and the encouragement of the young generation to take up farming as a profession will be the real stake of agricultural sector in Sudan. These development strategies and interventions could be a general source of conflict between the federal government and states because of the insufficient resources and the financial resources in particular in the short-term.

Adaptation and minimization of the effect to the challenges facing agricultural sector in Sudan through development programme would require substantial costs due to the vast area of the country and the irrational practices and policies of the past. There will be a high demand from the states particularly the resource poor states on national financial resources. Each states would like to develop its agriculture sector in order to achieve food security at least. Improvement of the degraded land, water harvesting, utilization of underground water, provision of credit, insurance and input subsidies as agricultural services are of priority to many states. Although most of these programmes can be considered permissible under Green Box and Blue Box of AoA the availability of financial resources for funding would be problematic and a general source of conflict between the centre and states.

Restructuring of Agriculture Sector
With the prevailing climatic changes, desertification, fluctuations of rainfall, pests and diseases and imperfect labour, credit and commodity markets and low level of technology, agriculture is of low productivity and less competitive. As a result, agriculture specially in rain-fed sub-sector is no longer an occupation that can encourage neither the present farmers to use the costly technologies in production and land improvement, nor the potential the young generation and new investors to take-up farming as a profession. Therefore, to achieve knowledge and technological-base agriculture and to encourage young generations to take up farming as a profession,
agricultural sector in Sudan must be able to provide sufficient economic rewards and financial incentives that make farming a rewarding and competitive business not less than industrial and service business. More significantly, new investors specially foreign investors could enter the agricultural sector boosting agricultural production and promoting agro-based industry. Consequently, the inflow of additional investment will promote and strengthen the regional economy of the states and will add to the national economy. In this context, a new agriculture policy is required because at present around 70 per cent of Sudan population are engaged in agriculture and the overwhelming majority of them are small farmers with holdings of 1 to 2 hectares who produce for the 30 per cent of the population. Therefore, it might be necessary to reverse the present trend in such a way that farm communities not to exceed 30-40 per cent of the population to produce for the 70-60 per cent of population and for exports and the rest of the rural population is to be absorbed in service and industrial sectors as well as in the public sector (Lewis 1956). By doing so, sufficient economic and financial incentives can be realized with proper labour, credit and commodity markets. As a result, sustainable, competitive and rewarding agriculture and better livelihood for rural people can be realized. Such new policy might be objected by many people and by some states because of the prevailing land tenure system which are mostly communal base with the lack of institutionalised land property rights. It could be of a great benefit to small and marginal farmers who could hardly survive under the present situation where their marginal productivity will be zero or less or to shift to other occupation. Such policy would be a source of conflict between the states and the federal government with regard to the rights of allocation and usage of land and to the prevailing land tenure systems. Land reforms and consolidation policies required by such policies could be looked at as a threat to the small and marginal farmers as well as to the community and tribal ownership of land and consequently to socio-political stability of the country and the state. This would be the main source of conflict in agriculture sector between federal government and states, though such policies needs to be considered seriously by the executive, legislative and judiciary institutions at both federal and state levels in order to gain significant outcome from agriculture.
Cropping Pattern

Trade liberalization tends to change the cropping pattern in favour of crops which have potentials for export. This may result in food insecurity in the country as a whole and in the less privileged states of poor resource base in particular. With the promotion of crops which have potential for export, there may be a loss of diversity and some states may suffer if the loss of diversity is associated with the subsequent loss of export competitiveness. Favouring crops of potential for export could be a potential source of conflict.

One of the important challenges that will face agricultural sector in Sudan is the consumers concern. Consumer at national and global levels are becoming more aware of good quality of life, health and environment. Thus agricultural sector must respond to the consumers concern. Intensive use of chemical, genetically modified food are to be avoided and the environment-friendly practices and hygienic matters are to be encouraged in order to satisfy the needs of the consumers.

Fiscal Policies

Fiscal policies can also be a source of general conflicts and disputes. One of the principal sources of conflict could be the wide variation between tax raising ability of different states due to different resource-base, potential and the economic activities in different states. States with irrigated agriculture and high rainfall in central Sudan (Gezira states, Sennar State, Blue Nile State, Gadarif State) have more comparative advantage in raising taxes from agriculture and allied activities. States in western and eastern Sudan which are within desert, semi-desert and low rainfall Savanna are less privileged because of the low rainfall and consequently low agricultural productivity. The States of Western Sudan are the main source of rain-fed agricultural exports namely; groundnuts, sesame, gum Arabic, and Carcade but because of low productivity and poor infrastructure production and marketing costs are relatively high which make them less competitive at global market. Because of these adverse factors the less privileged states could claim for both compensation and special treatment in the implementation of the Agreement on Agriculture.
6.2 The Existing and the Potential Sources of the Specific Implications

With regard to the specific implications of Agreement on Agriculture, Sudan applied for membership of WTO on 11th October 1994. There is on-going process of harmonizing trade policies in order to avoid any inconsistency between domestic laws and regulations and those of WTO before Sudan finally joins WTO as a full member. With regard to the commitment of Agreement on Agriculture in the areas of market access, domestic support, export subsidies and sanitary and phyto-sanitary, the offer of Sudan can be summarized in the following:

Market Access

In case of market access, non-tariff border measures are replaced by tariffs that provide significant levels of protection to the domestic producers. High tariff bindings are set for strategic food products for food security and livelihood consideration. The strategic products are sorghum, broad beans, millet, wheat flour and sugar over which domestic producers have the comparative advantages. The binding includes 740 tariff lines with nine tariff bands ranging 25 per cent to 300 per cent, where the current applied five tariff bands for agricultural products ranging from 0 percent to 45 percent. The simple average tariff in the offer is 53 per cent compared to 35 per cent of the applied rates. In addition the offer included the use of tariffs for most sensitive products and proposing to use Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ).

The wide variation between the set bindings and the applied rates for agriculture products could be considered as precaution measures to protect the domestic producers and to develop strong competitive agriculture sector. Here, the implication of AoA on federal state relations could be positive and within the permissible level of the Aggregate Measurement of Support (AMS).

Domestic Support

The trade distorting support under Amber Box is within the permitted level for both specific and non-specific product support. The AMS which is 10 per cent of the total value of agricultural production which complies with the level of domestic support allowed by the agreement to trade distorting subsidies under Amber Box. Trade
Support Measures of minimum impact on trade distortion under “Green and Blue Box” are excluded from reduction commitments. Direct payments to producers like decoupled income support, structural adjustment assistance and direct payment under environmental programme and rural or regional development programmes are allowed to be provided under domestic support commitment.

Export Subsidies
Under the provision of export subsidies, Sudan export subsidies are insignificant as they are in the form of reduced cost of marketing of live sheep and application of reduced fees and handling and up-grading.

Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary
With regard to sanitary and phytosanitary measures, Sudan has adopted technical regulation, standards and conformity assurance and assessment procedures. For food and food products, these are based in most cases on adopted CODEX Alimentarius standards. Moreover, most of agricultural commodities for export are produced in the rain-fed sub-sector “ground nuts, sesame, hibiscus, gum Arabic, sunflower” where the use of chemical is very limited. The limited use of chemicals and natural grazing is a great advantages for agriculture sector. Because of consumers concerns SPS could be a source of conflict between federal and states as federal and some states may reject products from other states alleging the non-compliance of those products with the scientific standards of quality and health. This could be a source of conflict between federal government and states and among states unless the effective concerned technical institutions, which are lacking in most states, are made available.

As a conclusion it can be argued that in the offer submitted by Federal Government of Sudan to WTO, the resource poor farmers as well as states are protected against the cheap subsidized imports and at the same time supported in case of adverse conditions. But, such measures might encourage farmers not to make efforts for increasing their production and productivity. Hence domestic consumers and exporters could be adversely affected, which might necessitate the manipulation of tariffs by the federal government to accommodate the interests of the stake-holders in both rural and
urban sectors. Moreover, the Agreement on Agriculture calls for further reduction of tariffs and opening up of markets in order to fully liberalized the international agricultural trade based on true competitiveness to reward the efficient producers around the world. In addition, it is argued that with the current level of agricultural production in most developing countries and in Sudan is still traditional and subsistence-based. Therefore, food security is threatened world-wide and the scope for rewarding prices and incentives for farmers is limited. This might result in an increased magnitude of rural-urban migration and retardation of growth of agriculture sector, the main economic sector in countries of predominantly agrarian economies. On the other hand, full liberalization of agricultural trade could mean dismantling of trade barriers and elimination of subsidies. Dismantling of barriers will open up the domestic market to the heavily subsidized agricultural imports which will destabilize domestic prices and farm incomes. Elimination of subsidies will hit hard the poor resource farmers and states and they are many. Dismantling of barriers and elimination of subsidies would effect adversely the development of strong competitive agriculture sector in Sudan. Domestic consumers can benefit in the short-run from the two measures but in the long-run the achievement of the food security, creation of rural employment, the increase of farm income and the growth of regional economy would hardly be secured, if not possible. This could be the main potential source of conflict between federal government states, specially if the former increases the pace of liberalization of agricultural trade favouring the industrial and service sectors against agriculture sector or depending greatly on oil production of the quick unsustainable returns.

6.3 Factors Affecting Relations Between Federal Government and States
The relations between the federal government and states in Sudan are most likely to be affected by three main factors namely: a) federal state-society relations, b) the working of the federal system, and c) the implications of the issues under consideration. The three factors will be discussed in briefly in the following:
Federal State-Society Relations

In addressing the state-society relations a theoretical and conceptual indepth will be given. According to many political scientist state-society relations has emerged as principal mode of organizing the social space unifactorially along language, ethnicity, religion and culture which are identified as the main objective makers of a nation or identity. According to Hayes (1993), it is nationality that constitutes nation, and it designates a group of people who speak either the same language or closely related dialects who cherish common historical tradition and who constitute or think they constitute a distinct cultural society. A group sharing distinct language, history, religion and cultural is crystallised into nationality by political act and nationality is not one stroke phenomenon but it is a dynamic phenomenon of construction and change.

It is also argued that identity or nationality resumes a set of identities within which may either be in conflict or harmony with each other. While harmony promotes group cohesion, conflict weakens it. Thus, the state-society relations becomes significant in examining federalism and federal nation-building. In the framework of federal nation-building Carl J. Fredric pointed out that federalism is primarily a process by which a number of political communities enter into arrangement for working out solutions, adopting joint policies and making joint conversely, differentiated into a federally organized whole. Thus, federalism has united together the discrete groups and diversities into a federal polity which retains, protects and articulates the federal qualities of the society through structuring of the state-society relationship. The structuring is perceived to be in such a manner as each of them legitimizes the other and at the same time retains their respective identity, autonomy and integrities within a generalised pattern of governance based on consensus, co-operation and co-ordination of activities in the areas of commonality. Likewise, the constituting elements of the nation and state must be seen as symbiotic institutions that co-ordinate social and economic spheres in an integrated manner and not as political institutions that govern and control.
Based on the above cited theoretical and conceptual ind-depth, the history and the Interim Constitution of Sudan of 2005 affirm that Sudan is multicultural, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-religion where such diversities co-exist and form sources of strength, harmony and inspiration. Historically, the formation of Sudanese identity or nationality and the nation-building process have been the concern of the constituting elements of the Sudan society and the concerned authorities and institutions since the Turkish Regime 1821. The common history of the struggle against invaders and colonialism had been one of the powerful makers of Sudanese nationality. Despite, the many dialects and the different beliefs, Arabic language and Islamic Religion have been common for not less than 80 per cent of Sudanese population. The history Arabic language, Islamic religion have succeeded in the formation of identical Sudanese culture without denying or rejecting other social qualities. Instead they have been accommodated in the nation-building process as source of strength, integration and harmony. Apart from Southern Sudan, national building has been fairly waxed or comments despite some grievances associated with marginalization and inequality in resource and power sharing. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement between Southern Sudan and Central Government is most likely to lead, in the end, to unity and consequently to stronger nation-building. Federal-national building could further be strengthened because the multi-diversities affirm their presence across the country and across the state and not confirmed to a particular state and no homogeneity can be claimed in any state. Therefore, the multi-diversities are expected to be source of strength harmony and inspiration. Accordingly, the central-state conflicts and disputes which are inevitable in real life can be compromised because of the coherent federal nation-building.

The Working of the Federal System

The federal system in Sudan has four ties: National, Southern – State, States and Local Governments. The federal structure comprises 25 states and more than 200 local governments. The states have their own governments and assemblies. Likewise, local government have their own executive and legislative bodies. The powers of the federating units are well defined. The decentralised structure of the federal system has
been constituted taking into consideration the many diversities which have been implicitly reflected in the creation of the states and local governments and in the appointment to the Constitutional positions. The aim of this action is to retain the identities, autonomy and integrities of social groups “on tribal or ethnic basis” with a generalised pattern of governance based on consensus co-operation and co-ordination. It worth mentioning that the Interim Constitution provides Safe Guard Measures which could help in avoiding the potential conflicts, disputes between federal government and states. Examples are the demarcated lists on which the federating bodies can enact laws on matters like land, national resources, water and raising revenue. The Constitution also provides provisions with regard to the sharing of financial, fiscal, agricultural and other resources of national nature. In addition to the provisions the Constitution also allows for establishment of commissions such as Land Commission, Fiscal and Financial Allocation and Monitoring Commission, Petroleum Commission etc to ensure the allocation of resources and the nationally collected funds in a transparent and fairness among different tiers of government. Finally, to deal with the disputes and conflicts arising in the federal set-up there is a Constitution Court whose only job is to interpret the laws and provisions and give the final verdict. Therefore, it can be said with confidence that the working of the federal system is fairly conducive for fruitful co-ordination and co-operation to reach in the end, compromises or consensus on the disputing issues.

Issues Under Consideration
The Agreement on Agriculture is an international agreement; the federal government has no hand in its making and establishment. Moreover, it applies to all countries and Sudan is not an exception. The rejection of the agreement implies the isolation of Sudan from the International Economic System which would have a devasting effect on the overall economic and social development and would lead to economic recession. Therefore, the implication of AoA for federal and state relation will not result from the agreement itself but from some provisions, rules and commitments embodied in the agreement. The disagreed provision, rules and commitments can be addressed through negotiations. This calls for increasing the awareness of the stake-
holders about WTO and Agreement on Agriculture and also by proper consultation with the states, farmers communities and the public. It also calls for establishment of proper information systems and capacity building programmes. Such measures can empower the discussants and negotiators at state or local levels to reach fair and agreeable agreement that takes into consideration the interest of the concerned individuals and institutions as well as the national interest.