

CONFLICT AND INSTABILITY IN THE DARFUR WESTERN REGION OF SUDAN

BY

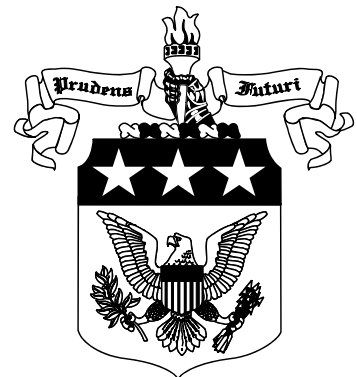
COLONEL ABAKAR MAHAMAT ABDALLAH
Chad Army Intelligence

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U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE 15 MAR 2008		2. REPORT TYPE Strategy Research Project		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2007 to 00-00-2008	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Conflict and Instability in the Darfur Western Region of Sudan				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Abakar Abdallah				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College ,122 Forbes Ave.,Carlisle,PA,17013-5220				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT See attached					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 30	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

CONFLICT AND INSTABILITY IN THE DARFUR WESTERN REGION OF SUDAN

by

Colonel Abakar Mahamat Abdallah
Chad Army Intelligence

Colonel John A. Terrell
Project Adviser

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U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Colonel Abakar Mahamat Abdallah
TITLE: Conflict and Instability in the Darfur Western Region of Sudan
FORMAT: Strategy Research Project
DATE: 20 March 2008 WORD COUNT: 6,260 PAGES: 30
KEY TERMS: Sudan, Fashir
CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

My intention of writing this paper is to address the root causes of the civil war that is going on in the Darfur region of Western Sudan and how is affecting Chad. In addition, I will explore the issues related to the genocide and crime against humanity that continuously committed by Sudanese Government Security Forces and its Arab Janjaweed Militias. Furthermore, I will tend to elaborate on the failures of African Union and the United Nation's peacekeeping Mission. I also discuss rebel groups experiencing leadership difficulty and splitting into more factions continually failed to face the government forces. Furthermore, elaborate on the destructions on the civilian population and refugees in Chad. Lastly, I explain how Sudan people in general, and Darfur in particular, suffer from Khartoum regime.

CONFLICT AND INSTABILITY IN THE DARFUR WESTERN REGION OF SUDAN

The memories of the genocide that occurred in Rwanda are still fresh while there is another genocide currently taking place in Darfur, but the world does little about it. The only difference between the two is those who committed genocide in Rwandan used machetes to execute their victims. But in Darfur, the Sudanese Government troops are using tanks, air planes and supported by Arab-Janjaweed Militias, riding camels and horses and killing their victims with fire arms. China and Russia, as permanent members of United Nations Security Council (UNSC), are aggressively pursuing their economic interests in Sudan, therefore, blocking any UN decisions to punish the government. They threatened to use their veto to block any UNSC resolutions intended to impose harsh economic sanctions on Sudan.¹ This paper explores the history of conflict in the Sudan, especially in the Darfur region. It postulates that the preponderance of power held by an Arab minority which discriminates against an indigenous black majority is the root cause of this conflict. The paper traces irrational United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU) peacekeeping efforts and offers proposals for future actions.

This is the reason why Sudan refuses to listen to the international community and is committing more atrocities in Darfur. It is important to note that the genocide policies of cruel regimes that purposely aim at massacring innocent people can be equally as deadly as the use of weapons of mass destruction. On the other hand, the UNSC is also reluctant to enforce its resolutions against the Sudanese government. Despite the fact that the UN is responsible for world security, it has not been directly involved in the process of stopping genocide in Darfur. Instead, it provides funds and equipment for the

AU peacekeepers. The AU is responsible for settling the disputes on the African continent and protecting civilians from genocide and human right abuses. In the case of Darfur, the responsibility is for the AU to contribute peacekeeping troops and be in charge of operations. The failure to stop the ongoing genocide in Darfur represents another failure of the UN and the AU as when both failed to prevent the genocide that occurred in Rwandan in 1994.² This paper examines the history of the on going conflict in Darfur and recommends appropriate UN and U.S. actions.

Historical Background of Conflicts in Sudan

The historical background of conflicts in Sudan, and in Darfur in particular is complex. The thirty nine million inhabitants of Sudan are a mixture of various ethnic groups comprised of Africans and Arabs. Sudan is one of the largest countries in Africa which occupies an area of about two million square kilometers. It has borders with the Red Sea, Eritrea and Ethiopia to the East, and Uganda, Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo to the South, the Central Africa Republic and Chad to the west, and Libya and Egypt to the North.³ Fundamentally, the conflict in Sudan has arisen as the result of the Arabs controlling power in the central government; and imposing their culture on the rest of the country. Arabic is officially taught in schools and used in government business, while the significance of the majority indigenous black population's culture is disregarded. For example, Sudan joined the organization of the Arab League which changed the national identity of the country into an Arab state, despite the fact the majority of the population of the country are Africans and need to remain as such.⁴

Changing the national identity, religious fundamentalist ideology, and the clear intention of transforming people of African origin into Arabs are factors that are contrary to beliefs and values of the indigenous population, therefore, contributing to Sudan's long years of conflict. These activities have generated fear among the people of Southern Sudan and the indigenous black population in the rest of the country in general. "The northeast African nation of Sudan is a country where relationships between ethnic and regional groups are ravaged by violence and the country is now on the verge of disintegration."⁵ The people of South Sudan perceived the Sudanese independence as another form of colonialism that transferred power from the British to the Arabs.⁶

Various colonial policies may have contributed to the political crisis in Sudan. For instance, under colonial rule, education was not provided to the indigenous people who lived in regions remote from the centers of the government power. Another colonial policy legacy is that education was concentrated in areas inhabited by Arabs. As a result, the colonial rule handed over the government power to the Arabs who were more educated than the indigenous people of African descent. As blacks were not educated, they were under represented in the Parliament and Executive branch. The Arab elite government favored Arabs and ignored the indigenous population. The government also developed policies promoting Arabic and eliminating African cultures. For example, school children are prohibited from speaking local languages in school yards. If African cultures had been equally respected, they could have played a significant role in creating political stability in Sudan. Unfortunately both the distribution of political power and the resources of the country are concentrated in the central region inhabited by

Arabs. As a noted expert has said: "Religious and racial extremism by members of a single faith in a multi-faith society or deliberate hegemonic control by one racial group in a racially diverse group society can only lead to extremism in all others."⁷ In fact, the Sudanese government has been designed to serve Arabs only and excludes non-Arabs. The majority of the black people in Sudan, particularly the southern Sudanese, have not agreed with the government policies changing the national identity of the country.⁸

The successive governments ruling Sudan have failed to establish policies to unite the country or develop the outer regions that include Darfur, South Sudan, the East and the North. When marginalized groups claim their rights to share power and resources with the ruling elite, their claims are ignored and the government usually responds with violence to suppress any sign of revolts. In most cases the government responds with heavy military force and, consequently, this results in genocide.⁹

Based on such grievances the first conflicts in Sudan began in 1955, after the government decided to remove soldiers of southern origin from southern Sudan and send them to the North. These troops revolted against the government policy and refused to move to the north. This crisis developed into a civil war that ended after 17 years. In 1972, a peace agreement was signed between the former Sudanese President Jaafar Mohammed Nimeiri and a rebel leader named Joseph Lagu in Addis Ababa to end the hostilities. The agreement guaranteed autonomy to the South and promised a referendum or self-determination after six years.¹⁰ As a result, Sudan enjoyed a short time of peace until 1983, and then the conflict broke out again after President Numeiri dissolved the Addis Ababa peace agreement and introduced the Sharia (Islamic Law) in Sudan. Numeiri's violation of the peace agreement caused a popular uprising in South

Sudan, and which subsequently escalated into a civil war. Colonel John Garang formed the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) and began an armed struggle against the Khartoum regime. The SPLM launched intensive military operations not only in the south, but the war extended to the Kordofan, the Upper Nile, and the Darfur regions.¹¹

President Numairi government collapsed following a popular uprising in 1985. After one year of a transitional government, Sadiq al-Mahdi was elected President of Sudan in 1986. Despite the fact that Mahdi was democratically elected by the people, his government failed to bring peace in Sudan. The reason is that whoever came to power in Sudan demonstrated favoritism towards Arabs while neglecting others. The civil war between the South and the North continued until a military coup took place in 1989. The National Islamic Front, affiliated with a fundamentalist Muslim-brotherhood, was behind the coup. General Omar Hassan Al-Bashir became President of Sudan. He constituted his cabinet with members of the National Islamic Front and declared Jihad on the South. The SPLM rebels continually fought the Arab Islamist regime in Khartoum until the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in Kenya in January 2005. The SPLM and the National Congress Party (NCP), previously known as NIF, currently share power in Sudan, and a referendum will be held in 2011 for South Sudan self-determination. The conflicts in Sudan have not been limited to the people of South and Darfur regions, but extended as well in the Eastern and the Northern parts of the country. For instance, a new conflict developed recently in the Manassir area in the North, following the announcement of the government's plan to relocate people from their homes and farms to construct a water dam.¹²

The war in the Darfur region began in 1980 as the direct result of Arab tribes attacking Fur, Zagawa, and Masalut ethnic groups. The Arabs wanted to evacuate non-Arab tribes from their land and occupy it. This plan came from an organization known as the Arab Gathering or Arab Assembly, which had its roots in Libya. The Arab Gathering organization seeks to spread Arab culture in Chad, Niger, and Mali. This organization received money and weapons from Sadiq al-Mahdi's government between 1986-87. Similarly, the NIF government continued supporting the Arab organization. The NIF later on changed to the NCP fearing criticism from the outside world for advocating Islamist extremist ideology. The fact is that the Sudanese Islamist government has similar objectives to the Arab Gathering. Occupying land and spreading radical Islamist ideology and Arab culture in Africa are its main objectives. Since the arrival of the NIF, President Bashir and members of his regime openly support the Arabs in eliminating the indigenous people of African origin and occupying their lands.¹³

The Janjaweed Militias and the Sudanese government forces are conducting joint military operations attacking people and destroying their villages. They indiscriminately kill people, burn villages, destroy or poison water sources, and cut down trees in fruit plantations. In addition, these state-sponsored criminals illegally seize properties, animals, and force local populations to abandon their villages. Currently more than 400,000 people have been reported killed since the war started in 2003. These numbers may be higher today because the killing has not stopped. More than half of the population of seven million in Darfur is Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and over 460,000 sought refuge in neighboring Chad. The Government of Sudan

continues training and arming Arab-Janjaweed Militias in addition to recruiting them into Sudanese army and civil security services.¹⁴

Insurgency Groups

Responding to the Sudanese government policies of marginalization and violence against the civilian population, two rebel groups emerged in 2003. The rebels' factions are the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). They launched an armed struggle against the Islamic regime in Khartoum, claiming equal rights to the distribution of resources, development in the Darfur region, and participation in government positions. The JEM and the SLM insurgency groups have failed to settle their differences. At the beginning of their struggle, they conducted successful operations against government troops. However, over time, due to the lack of military equipment and poor leadership, these movements were unable to resist the well equipped government troops supported by Janjaweed militias. Unfortunately, the organizational structures of these rebel groups were based on ethnic lines which made them to split into several factions and they have not been able to unite to fight the Sudanese regime. Additionally they have divided into several factions which have greatly reduced their capability to fight the government. These insurgency groups lack political leadership and a clear vision to guide them in their struggle. They have no sources of financial and military assistance to build a strong army to conduct a successful war. The divisions among the insurgent groups contributed greatly to the success of government troops and its Janjaweed militias in destroying the villages and the killing of innocent civilians.¹⁵

The Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), signed in Abuja (Nigeria) in May 2006, represented only one revolutionary faction led by Mini Arku Minawi. Therefore, it does not fully represent the people of Darfur or the interests of the other factions. The government of Sudan also refuses to implement the agreement, as a result; the peace deal has consequently failed to restore peace in Darfur.¹⁶ The DPA not only failed to restore peace, but has allowed President Bashir to deceive the international community and commit more human right abuses.

United Nation-African Union Failed Peace Efforts

The United Nations and African Union (UN-AU) have failed to convince the Sudan government to allow the deployment of a joint UN-AU intervention force to replace the currently badly equipped AU troops in Darfur. The current African Union Force in Darfur (AMIS), has been deployed since 2004, but has failed to provide adequate security protection to the population. These troops have categorically failed to provide security because they are neither properly equipped nor provided with a UN mandate to allow them to use force.¹⁷ Despite the support that Sudan enjoys from China, the international community continues to make efforts to deploy UN peacekeeping forces in Darfur.¹⁸

In 2004, the UN considered Darfur one of the most dangerous humanitarian crises in the world and called on the international community to take urgent measures to contain the situation. This problem arose as a result of the Sudanese Government launching indiscriminate military attacks, supported by Arab Janjaweed militias, on civilian populations with the intention not only to suppress the insurgency emerging in the region; but to inflict total destruction of the indigenous population. The troops burned

down thousands of homes and seized properties. Some of the people moved into the remote areas of the region where there are not enough water resources or food. Others, going to areas controlled by the government, found they were systematically denied access to humanitarian organizations.¹⁹

After the Sudanese Government completed the destruction in Darfur, the Janjaweds extended their operations into eastern parts of Chad, where they have burned and destroyed the homes of more than 100,000 Chadians. These people became refugees in their own country at the beginning of 2007 and have remained in refugees camps. Furthermore, the Sudanese Government has been supporting and arming various rebel groups to overthrow the government in Chad. The Sudanese regime also continually arms and supports the Central Africa Rebels with the specific objective to overthrow government of President Francois Bouzezi.²⁰ As mentioned earlier, the origins of the conflict in Darfur result from the Khartoum government's policies of controlling power since independence and their refusal to share with non-Arabs. My experience in regard to Sudan reveals the successive regimes that ruled in Khartoum intentionally excluded the indigenous people from the system of government and refused to develop the peripheral regions.

The conflict in the Darfur is similar to conflicts occurring in other regions of Sudan throughout the years since independence.²¹ The international community has also refused to accept that the crimes committed in Darfur amount to genocide and to hold the Sudanese government responsible. However, the "UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1769, in September 2007, creating the mandate authorizing the deployment of a 26,000-strong United Nations-African Union Mission in

Darfur (UNAMID).”²² These troops will be mixed UN-AU forces and were expected to be deployed in Darfur by the end of 2007. Such a force is to provide security for the IDPs along the borders of the Central African Republic, Chad, and Darfur, respectively. However, the Sudanese Government continues to reject the involvement of the UN in Darfur and refuses to allow forces under control of the UN to be deployed there. The European nations were expected to contribute troops and donate equipment, but these countries have offered neither equipment nor troops for this mission.²³

The Sudanese Government has also launched extensive diplomatic and political campaigns to gain credibility among the international community and to give them more time to execute their plans. The African Union troops currently deployed in Darfur are under funded and badly equipped. These troops are operating under Chapter VI of United Nation Mandate which does not give them the power to conduct military operations. Hence the Sudanese Government has successfully used the AU and UN's mandate to its advantage, since they have no power to impose their will on the Sudanese Government. Currently, President Bashir has taken advantage of the UN mandate by accepting troops coming from China, Egypt, and Jordan, while rejecting those of Nepal and Thailand. The Sudanese Government also insists that the commander of the forces should be a Nigerian.²⁴ All of these actions are to delay the UN action and accords additional time for the further destruction in Darfur

The AU troops deployed in Darfur as part of the AU mission have failed to bring peace and stability to the region. AU forces lack the material support as well as experience in handling such operations. As a result, the international community requested the intervention of the United States and European military forces to

participate in the mission under the UN authority. In May 2006, the UN passed a resolution to handover responsibility of the AU peacekeeping mission to the UN in September. In August 2006, the UNSC passed another resolution suggesting the UN deploy its Peacekeeping troops that were operating in southern Sudan to Darfur with the permission of Sudanese government. China, Qatar, and Russia abstained from voting. The Government of Sudan has rejected such a move. Since then AU peacekeepers have remained in Darfur and the UN has approved extra funds to support them. It is important to note the international community reluctant to deploy troops to help people of Darfur. In February 2006, the United States proposed the international community should send 12,000 to 20,000 troops in addition to the 7000 AU forces already operational in Darfur. President Bashir of Sudan opposed this idea so no country has contributed additional troops.²⁵

The security situation in Darfur has continued to deteriorate. The international community has repeatedly called on countries to contribute troops and materials for the new forces to deploy. On 31 December 2007, the 9000 AU troops changed their berets from green to blue and now call themselves a UN-AU force.²⁶ The UN Undersecretary General Jean-Marie Guehenno stated that of the 26,000 troops authorized by the UN, only 9,000 are currently deployed in Darfur. He noted the poorly equipped force lacks the technical expertise necessary to provide security in the large and vast region of Darfur, which is similar in size to France.²⁷ The people of Darfur should recognize that the international community has no means to protect them; therefore, they have to unite and protect themselves.

Joint Sudanese Military and Janjaweed Attacks on Darfur Population

The racial discrimination against indigenous people in Sudan has been common to all the regimes that have ruled Sudan since independence. But unlike in previous regimes, since President Bashir took power in 1989, the Islamic extremist Arab elite government in Khartoum openly uses racial ideology, segregating Arabs from blacks in resolving conflicts. Cases of mass killing, raping of women, and looting of properties have been widely reported in the war zones.²⁸ Most of these atrocities are committed by the Sudanese armed forces, supported by Janjaweed militias. The Sudan Army's conventional forces include "Popular Defence Force militias and Border Intelligence." During military operations, the army can recruit civilians to support fighting the war.²⁹

The Janjaweed are Arab tribal militias recruited and armed by the government to support the army in military operations in Darfur. However, the Sudanese government authorities deny supporting these notorious militias. The International Commission of Inquiry, created by the UN, investigated crimes in Darfur and confirmed that the Janjawees not only receive weapons and logistic support from the government, but they also have close ties with government officials.³⁰ The name Janjaweed is originally derived from "fursan, (horsemen, Knight) mujahedeen"³¹ Janjaweed also refers to "bandits who prey on rural people through, among other things, the stealing of cattle and highway robbery"³²

The Janjaweed militias began in the 1980s when President Qaddafi had ambitions of overthrowing the governments in Chad and Niger, and change these countries into Arab states. He recruited Arabs who lived in those states and formed a military force called the Islamic Legion. He used them in the Chad-Libya War of that period. When Qaddafi failed to achieve his objectives, he decided to dismantle the

Islamic Legion. They rejected his decision to disarm and moved with all their military equipment to Darfur in 1987. The Islamic Legion divided into several groups. One group, led by Sheik Ibn Omar, signed a peace agreement with President Hussein Habre of Chad and joined the government. Another group remained in Darfur and formed the political party known as the Arab Gathering (AG) and others simply deserted. The Arab Gathering is organized into four main parts: "A political party, tribal paramount chiefs, militia commanders, and ordinary citizens."³³ In 1987, they wrote a letter to President Sadiq al-Mahdi of Sudan and requested that the government provide them with financial support, weapons and supplies. The objective of this organization is to eliminate blacks and make the Darfur region an Arab land. The government accepted their request and provided them with weapons.³⁴

The AG first struck in 1987 when its members attacked Fur ethnic groups around Marra Mountain. They killed several people, burned villages and looted properties. They also cut fruit trees and graze their own animals on the local people's farms. Many thought that this was a tribal war, like many other wars that have happened in the history of the Darfur region. During the attacks, people saw the war they were fighting was different from previous ones. The Arabs were killing men, women, and children. Furthermore, burning villages and cutting down of fruit trees is something new for the Darfur wars. The clear intention was total destruction. In 1987, it is estimated over 3,000 people from the Fur ethnic group died as the result of Arab attacks before resistance took hold. When the government observed Arabs losing the war, it called for reconciliation and settled the dispute between the two groups.³⁵

In 1991, the same Arabs launched new attacks on the Zagawa ethnic group; but their attempt failed. In 1997, they attacked the Masalit tribe in western Darfur province with the support of government troops. For the first time they succeeded in defeating and dismantling an indigenous group. They killed many people, burned their villages and forced most to move to Geneina city. About 2000 others sought refuge in Chad. It is clear that genocide has been practiced in Darfur since the 1980s, but has been concealed from the international community. The lack of media coverage and government control of information has prevented the outside world from seeing the facts.

According to the policy of Sudan and Libya, Arab land should expand southward deep into sub-Saharan Africa. The real problem of Darfur is founded on such beliefs by the Khartoum government and its Arab Janjaweed Militias. According to their own documents, known as the black book, Kureesh I and II, they should create two or three Arab states in the Sahel region which covers Chad, Central Africa, and Niger, by the end of 2020. The conflict in Darfur is neither religious, as some people think nor tribal. This conflict is also not about the scarcity of land between the farmers and herdsmen as the Sudanese government stated in its reports. The root causes of this conflict are about a power struggle between the central government and its Arab militias on one hand and the indigenous peoples on the other. It is about the Arabs wanting to occupy the indigenous peoples' land. In their greed, the Islamist regime and the Janjaweed have destroyed the relationship that co-existed for hundreds of years between the various ethnic groups in the Darfur region.³⁶

For example 1995, the governor of Western Darfur divided the region that had been inhabited by the Masalut for centuries, into thirteen “emirates”³⁷ of which only five were left to their original occupants. Later on the Arabs seized the remaining five as well. The other eight areas were given to Arab settlers who came from Chad, fleeing from civil wars and drought affecting the region. The government immediately requested Arabs to appoint their own sultans based on their tribal divisions. When the Arabs occupied the land, they began attacking Masalut villages, killing people, confiscating livestock and occupying the rest of the land. In 1996, Arabs attacked villages just outside of Geneina, killed several people and seized 400,000 cattle. They destroyed crops to prevent the inhabitants from returning to their villages. The government did not intervene to stop these Arabs from attacking the poor villagers. Instead, they gave the Arabs weapons and support. The government also organized a conference in al-Fashir, the capital city of Northern Darfur, and officially declared that the Arabs should keep the land they occupied.³⁸

Furthermore, the government rearmed the Arab militias and conducted patrols and captured young people of Masalut ethnicity and forced them to join the military to serve in South Sudan. In addition, soldiers searched the villages and seized weapons from the villagers so that Janjaweed attacks could not be resisted. Arabs attacked the villagers the next day, killed several people, displaced hundreds of thousands from their homes and occupied the lands. The Masalut continued resistance to Arab attacks and consequently created security problems. Following the destruction of the villages, the government “declared a state of emergency” and appointed General Muhammad Ahmed al-Dabi governor and sent him to establish order in the region. He brought in

more Arab militias from the Kordofan region, which had been recruited to fight the Nubians and the South Sudanese people. Supported by government troops, these militias trained Arabs in the Western province and began attacking non- Arab tribes in different parts of Darfur. Since then, the Western Darfur region has become a base for Janjaweed militias launching attacks on Fur and Zagawa villages. For instance, the Janjaweed killed one hundred and twenty five people, including two school teachers, in Abu-Gamra villages and stole a large number of livestock. This incident forced the indigenous people to organize themselves with the objective of defending their villages from Arab attacks.³⁹

The Janjaweed Militias continue to receive support from the Sudanese Government through a number of people who are members of the NCP and the Arab Rezeigat tribe in North Darfur. These individuals include General Abdallah Safi al-Nur, the former governor of North Darfur; Jibril Abdallah, and General Abdallah Husayn Jibril, who is a Member of Parliament in Khartoum.⁴⁰ These individuals are the masterminds behind the planning and support to the Janjaweed Militias. Others include Abdallah Ali Massar, who is currently an advisor for President Bashir; Hasabu Abd al-Rhaman, Abd al-Hamid Musa Kasha, who is a Minister in the Khartoum regime; and General Adam Musa, who was the Governor of South Darfur. The latter supported Musa Hilal in obtaining weapons from the government. General Adam Musa also mobilized Arab ethnic groups in Chad, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Mali to support the Janjaweed Militias. They opened training camps for each of the tribal group in different parts of Darfur region. These training camps are run by Sudanese army trainers. The greatest numbers in Janjaweed militias come from the following Arab tribes: "Rezeigat, Baqqara,

Ma'alia, Sa'ada, Bani Halba, Targam, Ta'aisha, and Salamat.”⁴¹ They receive training, arms, salaries, and compensation from Sudanese Government Intelligence Agencies, the army, and high-level government officials.⁴²

Sudanese Government Policy of Genocide and Crimes against Humanity

At the beginning of the Darfur crisis, the world had great difficulty in comprehending the level of the genocide and ethnic cleansing going on in Darfur, and the Sudanese Government simply denied the facts. UN officials in Khartoum stated that war crimes had been committed; the government denied these and refuted the UN officials' statement as false. At the time, the government successfully blamed the indigenous insurgents for what was going on in Darfur. The reality is that the Sudanese government authorized the killing of innocent people and directed the local authorities in the region to support the Janjaweed militias in their deadly mission.⁴³

When the international community became aware of the killings and destruction of the villages, the Sudanese government created a clear cover story by saying that the situation was out of control and the government was trying to reestablish order. The government also presented false information by stating that it had disarmed the Janjaweed Militias and sentenced the criminal ones to prison terms. The government continually denied the facts until large numbers of the refugees arrived in Chad. They told their stories about the Janjaweed and government troops that destroyed their villages. Relief agencies requested the government to allow them to assist the starving IDPs that gathered around the big towns of Geneina, al-Fashir, Zaleingi, and Kutum. Publicly the government did agree to allow humanitarian interventions. Privately, it created a series of obstacles to block or slow down the relief agencies from reaching

the people. Using its prior experience in South Sudan and Kordofan province in starving people to death in 1992 and 1993, the regime adopted a similar strategy in Darfur. In October 2004, the UN declared Darfur is one of the “worst humanitarian disasters in the world”⁴⁴

The authorities in Khartoum used numerous strategies and tactics to delay the relief work. They created conditions to make it difficult, if not impossible, for the humanitarian employees to travel to the Darfur region. Among these were: authorization for “travel permits, fuel permits, safety tests, and customs delay of vehicles.”⁴⁵ The government also sometimes said the security situation was so bad, they could not authorize travel. In 2004, UN officials estimated some ten thousand people were dying each month inside the IDP camps. In addition, the government sometimes moves IDPs from their camps a day or two before the arrival of foreign visitors to mislead them and preclude the worst stories from being told. In July 2004, the U.S. Department of State interviewed 1,136 refugees in Chad; sixty percent said they had seen their close relatives executed by Janjaweed or government soldiers in front of them. Sixteen percent of the women claimed they had been raped or had heard of other women who had been raped. In some cases, all the people in a village were killed; therefore, no one remained alive to tell their stories. The government also suppressed the media from writing about Darfur as well as discrediting truthful information that came out.⁴⁶

The report the International Commission of Inquiry presented on Darfur to the UN Secretary General, showed that cases of genocide and human right abuses were clearly committed by Sudanese Government forces and Janjaweed militias. For instance, in January 2004, Government forces and the Janjawees conducted a joint

military operation in a Surra village east of Zalingi. Over 250 people were killed. About ten men were summarily executed inside a mosque. Women were searched and baby boys were killed, for no more than being male.⁴⁷ In another example, the commission reported that 110 girls were stripped and systematically raped in February 2004 in a school yard in Tawila town.⁴⁸ These are just a few examples of hundred of attacks carried out by government forces. The international commission of inquiry on Darfur mentioned in their report that “various provisions of human rights and international humanitarian law are relevant to the protection of civilians in armed conflict.”⁴⁹ The commission also reported that there are numerous cases of rape, killing, torture, abduction of women and young girls, and wide and indiscriminate destruction of villages. But the commission stated in committing these crimes, the “government of Sudan has not pursued a policy of genocide.”⁵⁰

Possible Options

In Conclusion, the following are options international community could consider for future actions.

Unification of Various Rebel Groups

Unification of various rebel groups around a common goal is a key option for any possible success in rectifying the situation in Darfur. The rebel movements continue to split into more factions while the Sudanese government commits more atrocities and human rights abuses in Darfur. Resolving this conflict is increasingly problematic for the international community as the suffering worseness. Lack of political will exists among the UN member states to find a suitable way to convince Sudan to allow deployment of the UN peacekeeping force. For example, they failed to agree on a course to punish the

Sudanese Government for failing to comply with UN resolutions. The United States and European Union members have the capability to compel the Sudanese regime to accept an urgent deployment of UN-AU troops to protect the civilian population in Darfur and should proceed to do so. Equally important, the United States and like-minded states should take steps to unify the different rebel groups operating in the region under one leader in order to successfully negotiate and sustain a comprehensive peace settlement. The rebels should clearly identify their objectives and goals to help the international community to understand their needs. The UN-AU should continue in efforts to get the rebels to unite, but they must also be careful not to create more factions that will only undermine unity. To avoid creating more splinter groups, conferences should be organized in liberated areas with calls on all faction commanders and political leaders to participate in selecting viable leadership and identify objectives for the movement.⁵¹

While the rebels establish their objectives, negotiations must address the root causes of the problems of all the marginalized regions of Sudan. The issues to be addressed should include security of civilian population; the end of the policy of Arabization and occupation of land by the use force, and stopping government arming and support of the Janjaweed militias. There is a need to rebuild destroyed villages, pay compensation for loss of life, property and moral damages. Those who committed war crimes should be prosecuted. Refugees and internally displaced persons need to be returned to their villages. Stolen properties and land occupied illegally needs to be returned to owners. There is a need to establish a system of democratic government in Sudan with power sharing, including representation from marginalized regions and a

more equitable distribution of resources. Finally, there needs to be greater development of the affected regions, focused on economy, health care, education, construction of road networks, and communication systems. Such an agenda must be achieved over time, but the international community can assist with resources if the whole of the Sudanese people can agree on political participation for all.

Sanctions

In case Sudan continues to refuse to comply with the UNSC resolutions, the international community must impose economic and other sanctions on the Government of Sudan. Furthermore, travel restrictions should be placed on individuals who are suspected by the International Criminal Court (ICC) of committing genocide and crimes against humanity in the Darfur region. If the UN lacks the will, the United States Government and other like minded nations should freeze the assets of the regime. The NCP and their Janjaweed Militias are believed to control commercial companies operating secretly and to have diverted large amount of public funds to foreign banks and enterprises. The government may also have companies and Islamic organizations belonging to the NCP, secretly run by individuals and agencies loyal to the system. These should be identified and seized. The international community can also ban travel of persons whose names appeared on the ICC list and freeze their assets. These actions will affect the Khartoum regime by making it difficult to conduct international trade and by making their continued actions unproductive.⁵²

Oil exports are one of the important resources that generate income for the Sudanese government. The existing UNSC “Resolution 1564”, approved in 2004, threatened to impose sanctions on oil, in case the Khartoum regime refuses to disarm

the Janjaweed militias this should be enforced. Sanctions on Sudanese oil will cause huge damage to the NCP and its supporters. Furthermore, countries can form a coalition to shut down oil production and block exports via sea lanes. The European Union can introduce laws to ban corporations in their respective countries from conducting business with the Sudanese oil companies. The U.S. government should encourage companies and institutions to execute the Divestment Bill signed by President Bush.⁵³ All of these would cut the resources of the Arab movement and provide for the protection of individuals in villages.

Protection of Civilians

The international community should take full responsibility to protect IDP's and refugees in both Darfur and in the eastern parts of Chad and the Central African Republic. This protection can best be done by deployment of the whole UNAMID force approved by the UNSC. The United States and other concerned states should urge the UN member nations to provide the necessary money and equipment for troops. The authorization of a UN Chapter VII mandate for the use of force for peacekeeping and peace enforcing operations is of great importance in Darfur. The Janjaweed Militias and bandits in Darfur must be disarmed. Further, the demarcation of a No-Fly Zone for Sudanese army air planes in Darfur should be adopted to preclude their reinforcement, logistics transportation, or participation in combat operations. Make clear that genocide will not be tolerated by prosecuting those who committed war crimes and violation of human rights.⁵⁴

In the summery, the situation in Darfur grows worse everyday. It is an ongoing genocide that must be addressed because humanitarian concerns demand it and the

UN charter requires it. If unchecked, this genocide will encourage other regimes to follow similar policies.

Endnotes

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