

Inside Darfur: Ethnic Genocide by a Governance Crisis¹

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Introduction

In this study, I argue that the Arab-oriented central government's biased policies vis-à-vis the Darfur non-Arab African Sudanese is a major source of the current crisis in the region. Equally importantly, I contend those writers who negate the ethnic component of the crisis are irresponsibly falsifying or obliterating the painful realities of the situation, and escalating the impact of racism in the Darfur scourge. My argument draws heavily on the work of Sudanese writers, many of whom are closely related to the indigenous groups of Darfur, as well as the work of Sudanist scholars and other Sudanese formal and popular sources. While the hazards of human geography exist—as they exist in all world deserts, from Australia to the African Sahara—the Darfur crisis is not a geographical slot machine opened and closed by a bunch of weeds or showers of rain. The crisis is political and state-made. It results from the misadministration, abuse of authority, and economic greed of a governing elite committed against the powerless Africans of Darfur. Above all, the crisis demonstrates a deep disrespect for human dignity by the fundamentalist religious ideology of Arab supremacy.

Social and Ethnic Composition

The Darfur region, an area about the size of France, lies in western Sudan; to the northwest it borders Libya, to the west Chad, to the southwest the Central African Republic, to the south the Bahr al-Ghazal region of Sudan, and to the east the Kordofan and Northern regions. Historically, Darfur has been considered a strategic location, according to Baballa Haroun Nor Adam, “being the trade route linking the ancient Kanem Borno kingdoms with central and Nilotic Sudan, and a meeting point for caravans plying that route across Africa.”² Darfur has three ethnic zones: the northern includes Arab and non-Arab people, mainly camel nomads (Zaghawa). The central zone is inhabited largely by non-Arab sedentary farmers such as the Fur and Massalit, who cultivate millet. In the south live Arabic-speaking

cattle nomads, the Baggara. “All are Muslim,” writes R. S. O’Fahey, “and [yet] no part of Darfur was ever ethnically homogeneous. For example, once a successful Fur farmer had a certain number of cattle, he would ‘become’ Baggara and in a few generations his descendants would have an ‘authentic’ Arab genealogy.”³ Rather than by skin color or other physical traits, Darfurians, like other Sudanese, have always identified themselves in ethnocultural or tribal terms. These terms have only recently been polarized into Arab versus African identifications in response to deep political and ideological disputes in which state repression and economic underdevelopment of the country’s marginal regions have played a significant role.

The region has been inhabited for centuries by Arab and non-Arab ethnic groups. The Fur, the oldest non-Arab group, make up approximately 36 percent of the total population (5.5 million by the 1996 census).⁴ “Arabic is more likely a second language rather than the primary language at home,” writes Richard Lobban. “The skilled use of Arabic is emblematic of higher social position; the awkward use of the language can be twisted to imply people of a lesser degree of social status.”⁵ Saif Elnasr Idris, a Darfurian activist, contends that despite “extensive [social and economic] interaction and intermarriages between members of these tribes, it would be difficult to assert that there has developed any real assimilation among the tribes. Most of them maintain original languages, customs and traditions—a fact which suggests that ethnic conflict could easily be triggered amongst them.”⁶

Economic Resources, Drought, and Migration

The Fur-inhabited region is endowed with rich agricultural lands, and perhaps up to 65 percent of the inhabitants live on agriculture. Except for the camel-riding Meidoub and Zaghawa tribes in the north, the non-Arab tribes engage in farming and cultivation. The Arab ethnic groups are mainly engaged in animal rearing, “moving from place to place with animal herds, as dictated by

the seasonal cycle and the availability of water and pastures.”⁷ The region is equally endowed with mineral resources, which have recently motivated part of the elite, particularly in the oil-rich areas of the south, to displace the indigenous populations. Human Rights Watch’s report *Sudan, Oil, and Human Rights* describes this trend: “In the 1980s government troops and horsebacked militia of the Baggara, Arabized cattle nomads of Darfur and Kordofan, invaded the northwest, destroying communities and expelling much of the population from the initial exploration areas ... In the 1990s the government ... bought off rebel factions and exacerbated south-south ethnic differences with arms supplies.”⁸ While there is no production yet from southern Darfur, Lobban writes, “The oil is there. Oil buys weapons for Khartoum. Oil attracts foreigners ranging from Germany to China; but so far most of the conflict [lies] in the central regions of Darfur.”⁹ Or, as Makau Mutua rightly contends, “Khartoum’s genocidal policy in Darfur and the south is also a grab for resources. In the west, in Darfur, Arabs seeking to escape the spreading desert kill and displace Africans for more productive land.”¹⁰

The dichotomy between nomadic pastoralists and sedentary farmers produced a system of mutual interdependence, which persisted over time despite instances of violent clashes that were triggered by untimely rains or passages of the pastoralist herds that conflicted with crop harvesting or storage. “But these were usually quickly contained,” according to Adam, “thanks to the [arbitration] system of native administration that arranged for amicable settlement with the ‘*Rakoba*’ [a makeshift wood-and-grass shelter] under which the leaders of the concerned communities sat to peacefully resolve the conflict.”¹¹ In addition to the friendly arbitration of these community-based meetings, “land ownership, and ethnic boundaries have been respected amicably by different ethnic groups in Darfur,” writes Ali Ali-Dinar. Until recently, “disputes were resolved in traditional conferences (*ajaweed/mutamarat al sulb*) whose rulings were always respected and honored. Even at times when the government was involved, it served as a facilitator and not as an enforcer. Government neutrality contained ethnic conflicts not only in Darfur but also in Kordofan and in the south.”¹²

Sudanist scholars such as Lobban and O’Fahey agree that “this conflict has emerged at the present in the context of persistent ecological crises of increased desertification and lack of production and limited grazing lands among the pastoral and agricultural peoples.”¹³ O’Fahey writes, “One of the root causes of the present crisis goes back to the 1980s, when prolonged droughts accelerated the desertification of northern and central Darfur and led to pressure on water and grazing resources as the camel nomads were forced to move

southwards. Conflicts over wells that in earlier times had been settled with spears or mediation became much more intractable in an era awash with guns.”¹⁴ Darfurian scholars Adam, Idris, and Ali-Dinar, among others, recall the waves of climatic changes in the early 1970s that forced many interethnic migrations: in 1972, northern Darfur was affected by a severe spell of drought and desertification that covered the sub-Saharan African belt. Zaghawa and some nomadic Arab tribes started to migrate to the south and southwest of the region to settle in the lands of the Fur, Arabs, Massalit, and Birged, as well as many urban centers in Darfur and beyond. Another drought occurred in 1983–4, causing another wave of migration, this time in much greater numbers and with greater permanency, south of El-Fashir up to Bahr El Arab.¹⁵

Until the early 1980s, writes Ali-Dinar, “this movement took place without reported incidents and without assistance from the government. The same could be said of the movement of nomadic Arabs looking for pastures for their livestock.”¹⁶ By the late 1980s, however, as Darfurian writer Ismaeil Abakr Ahmed documents, “the migrant groups increased in numbers, and in the absence of social harmony, tribal factions developed and culminated in violent conflicts.”¹⁷ The *Rakoba* and the *ajaweed* or *mutamarat al sulb* indigenous conciliatory tools played a significant role in restoring peace and stability. Ahmed records fourteen such conferences by both Arab and non-Arab groups that helped to settle ethno-economic disputes before escalation of the current crisis.

Khartoum Governments and Native Administration

Since colonial times (1899–1955), the Darfur region has been strongly influenced by Khartoum-centered groups, especially the Umma Party led by the al-Mahdi family and, to some extent, its political rival, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) led by the al-Merghani family of the Khatmiya sect. The Umma and the DUP have both supported the traditional, ethnically organized native administration of Darfur. The military governments (1957–64, 1969–85, and 1989 to the present) that succeeded the short-lived Umma/DUP coalition governments ruled Darfur, the south, and the other marginal regions directly from Khartoum. The post-independence governments retained the general structure of native administration to curtail oppositional activities by modernizing groups that struggled for state reform. These modernist parties included the Communist Party of Sudan, the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement and Army (which waged an armed struggle to force Khartoum to realize equal sharing of power and wealth and grant the south the right of self-determination), and the professional groups and trade unions through which low-wage workers, progressive

army personnel, and many public service employees have expressed their concern for the political and economic crisis of Sudan. While these groups exerted some influence in Darfur, the central government, native administration, and Umma Party remained the main players.

The country's political organization was dramatically affected by the growth of the National Islamic Front (NIF), a fundamentalist Islamist Brotherhood party with a strong Arab-centric ideology that, allied with the military government of General Ja'far Nimeiri in the mid-1980s, transformed state law into a strict version of the *shari'a*, and ultimately usurped political power from the Umma-DUP elected government by military coup on 30 June 1989, under Brigadier Omer al-Bashir. In the early 2000s, the NIF split into two groups: the Bashir ruling party, al-Mutamar al-Wattani (the National Congress), and the NIF opposition party, al-Mutamar al-Sha'bi (the Popular Congress), led by Dr. Hassan al-Turabi, a former law professor, mentor of the NIF coup leaders, and lifelong leader of the politically active wing of the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood. For purposes of clarity, I will refer to the Nimeiri military rule (1969–85) as the May government, the elected government of Sadiq al-Mahdi (1986–9) as the democratic government, and the Bashir military rule (1989 to the present) as the NIF government.

Throughout its time in power, the May government pursued policies aimed at undermining the political influence of the Umma, the DUP, and their alliances with conservative groups. As Adam puts it, "Claiming that [native administration] was a primitive system that had to be overhauled, [the May government] introduced a system of local government run by administrative officers who knew very little about the tribes and communities they were supposed to govern."¹⁸ One result was an increasing mistrust between the Khartoum rulers and the native administration. The government's plan to undermine the powers of the local chiefs was rendered even more offensive by a number of presidential decrees during the 1980s, one that declared Darfur to be part of Kordofan (the neighboring region) with El-Obeid as the regional capital, and another that appointed a former governor of Kordofan as governor in Darfur. Both of these decrees were strongly challenged and finally overturned by massive demonstrations. The Sudanese-Libyan dispute_Mua'mar Qadafi was supporting the Sudanese opposition_motivated the Libyan government to support the opposition led by Sadiq al-Mahdi, which infiltrated weapons into the country through Darfur. "It is those weapons," according to Adam, "that were used in the attempted take-over of the government in Khartoum on the 2nd of July 1976. But a lot of weapons were subsequently used in ethnic strife that continues to bedevil the region."¹⁹ Following

active operations by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in southern Kordofan and southern Darfur (mostly in collaboration with non-Arab ethnic groups), the May government "used this [conflict] as a plausible pretext to arm specific tribes, claiming that such arms would help such tribes defend themselves against the southern insurgents. This has led to the worst state of insecurity in Darfur since independence in 1956. The situation continued to deteriorate even after the fall of Nimeiri."²⁰

The transitional military government of General Swar al-Dahab that succeeded the Nimeiri regime in 1985 adopted the same policy of arming the contact-area tribes. Again, these tribes did not use their guns only to fight the SPLA; they frequently used them to rob and terrorize their neighbors in Darfur and Kordofan whom they suspected to be sympathetic with the SPLA. In the years of the subsequent democratic government, the ruling Umma planned to combine the Baggara militias into a Popular Defense Force (PDF) under the army command.²¹ But political conflicts over a peace agreement, the spread of arms from Libya into Darfur, poor relations with Egypt, and other issues prevented the initiative to establish government-controlled PDFs from implementation and, under the democratic government the security situation only worsened.

The Islamists' Escalation of the Crisis

Escalating Ethno-Administrative Cleansing

The current NIF government is directly responsible for the ethnic cleansing of the non-Arab people of Darfur. According to O'Fahey, "The ethnicization of the conflict has grown more rapidly since the military coup in 1989 that brought to power the regime of al-Bashir, which is not only Islamist but also Arab-centric. This has injected an ideological and racist dimension into the conflict, with the sides defining themselves as 'Arab' or '*Zurq*' (black)."²² Despite this racist attitude, which is the major reason Sudanese regions have revolted one after another against the central government, several writers have wrongfully reduced the crisis to a matter of tribal feuds or scarcity of natural resources. But as opposition activist Suliman Hamid al-Haj emphasizes, "Darfur's crisis is a full-fledged state conspiracy plotted by Hassan al-Turabi [secretary-general of the NIF party, the National Congress; speaker of the state parliament, the National Council; and thus top guide of the NIF political bodies] and subsequently pursued by Arab militias in full collaboration with the Sudan government and its ruling party, the National Islamic Front."²³ It is thus the government, to a much greater degree than the militias it established and systemically manipulated, that is squarely responsible for the crisis in Darfur and the heinous atrocities resulting from it.

According to Hamid's documentary, *Wad' al-Nuqat fi*

al-Hurof, Hassan al-Turabi, at the height of his power with the NIF regime, issued a decree clearly stating the following:

The Islamists of Negro tribes became hostile to the Islamic Movement. The Islamic Front aims to support the Arab tribes by these steps: forced displacement of the Fur from Jebel Merra to Wadi Salih, followed by complete disarming of the Fur people, for good; they are to be replaced with the Mehairiya, Itai-fat, and Irayqat (Arab tribes). Arms must never return to the Zaghawa, who must be moved from Kutum to Um Rwaba (North Kordofan State); the Arab tribes should be armed and financed to act as the nucleus of the Islamic Arab Alliance.²⁴

This official fatwa is the basis of the state plot in Darfur. It has been literally executed, as revealed by current events in the region, even after al-Turabi was purged from the party. "This plot represents the class interests of Islamized capitalists, which include strata of the Arab tribes as well as some of the *Zurqa* [tribes of non-Arab descent]. The majority of Arab tribes have not participated in this scheme; they have not only rejected it; but actively resisted it since it was first implemented," claims Hamid.²⁵ Only the few *Zurqa* who share class interests with the ruling party have taken part in the government's plot.

A great many Sudanese consider the NIF military government disqualified to rule the country. "They have no heritage of political leadership and their ideology is alien to the Sudanese people, particularly in the rural areas," writes Ahmed.²⁶ But the NIF government, he points out, "started from day one to find a niche in the Sudanese society through which to impose 'the civilization Project'—the *Islamization* and the *Arabization* of the Sudanese state and society. It requires that the total Sudanese cultural, political and religious heritage that had cumulatively taken shape since time immemorial be abandoned and a new political culture based on NIF ideology be adopted." Demanding allegiance to the NIF and its ruling junta, the new administrative system of the regime in Darfur and Kordofan is known as the *Emirates*. Ahmed continues, "Such old traditional tribal titles as *King*, *Demangai*, *Nazer*, *Omda* and *Sheikh* have been cancelled and replaced by '*Amir*.' But the local tribes are used to their old system of native tribes which automatically convey a lot about the tribe rank and status of the holder."

The Massalit exemplify the resentment among Darfurian Africans toward the Muslim Brotherhood and Arab emirate system. The Massalit administrative system, Ahmed writes,

has been divided into 13 emirates, five of them belonging to migrant Arab tribes in accordance with a decree proclaimed by the NIF *Wali* [governor] in March 1995. The Massalit feel that they are the ones

targeted by this policy, which aims at Balkanizing their territory and giving away large portions of land to migrant Arab tribes. This is the real cause of the violent conflict, which recently erupted between the Massalit and the Arab tribes in their area ... The regime-organized peace conferences have been ineffectual because the regime really never addressed the basic causes of the conflict. Instead, it turned them into its sloganeering and sweet talking without really solving the disputes in issue.²⁷

In May 1991, members of the Zaghawa tribe presented a political memorandum to the president of the Republic. The memorandum referred to

the recent events which took place in the areas of Khazan Jadid, Shaeriya, Argod, Mawarit and Um Katkot, all of which were tribally motivated and were aimed at undermining the security situation in the region. We hold the Governor of Darfur Region responsible for these incidents, together with the security committee, the commanders of the military convoys and leaders of native administration in the area. There were indications that these incidents were planned.²⁸

The document ended with "urgent demands" for immediate government attention "to 1) bringing to justice the culprits who perpetrated the above-mentioned crimes, involving massacres, burning of homes and property, robbery, looting and torture targeting our tribe; and 2) ending the state of siege imposed around the water points."

The Darfur Rebellion

Early in 2003, with the NIF's escalation of the Darfur crisis, the Sudanese political arena witnessed the emergence of two Darfurian non-Arab parties: the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) led by lawyer 'Abd al-Wahid Mohamed Nur, and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) led by Turabi's disciple Khalil Ibrahim, a former minister in the Bashir administration. Seeking to establish immediate autonomous rule independent from Khartoum, both the SLA and JEM advocated armed struggle to force the NIF government to allow a politics of self-determination as well as fair wealth sharing. While the SPLM/SPLA is strongly antagonistic to the NIF's Islamist ideology, many members of the SLA and JEM, by contrast, were once part of the NIF ruling systems.²⁹ In addition to the hegemony of Khartoum over the Darfurian native system, according to Lobban, "there are many long standing economic grievances that precipitated the SLA and JEM to initiate this round of fighting."³⁰

The NIF government responded by unleashing the Janjaweed on the rebels, side by side with the PDF and army troops. Since then, the Janjaweed, formerly known as the *murablin*, or Baggara horse riders, have been ac-

cused of widespread killings, rape, abduction, torching of villages and crops, and cattle looting aimed at black Muslims in Darfur. Aid agencies say up to 50,000 people have died from the conflict, while more than 1.4 million have been displaced. About 170,000 of these have fled into neighboring Chad for fear of being attacked by the Janjaweed.³¹ The indigenous people's resistance to the NIF assaults on native administration and land ownership was sporadic before the emergence of the SLA, which opened a massive offensive

by twice seizing a major town in Northern Darfur in February 2003. Unable to cope with the rebellion, the Government opened negotiations but quickly breached the cease-fire. In retaliation, the SLA now joined by the JEM, attacked El-Fashir, Meleit, and Kutum. The capture of large numbers of troops from El-Fashir and north of Kutum forced the Government to sign a cease-fire and agree to negotiations in Abeche, Chad on 3 September 2003. The Government of Sudan and the SLA agreed to curbs on the Arab militias, the release of war prisoners, and the delivery of aid. However, with continuous violations, the cease-fire did not last long and the conflict quickly escalated to full-scale war against the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa. Cease-fires in 2004 have followed the same fate. The Government's new tactics included heavy aerial bombardment, the burning of villages, bombing of water sources, the killing of livestock, looting of homes, the destruction of farms, and ethnic cleansing. Arbitrary arrests, the widespread use of torture, abductions and extra-judicial executions of those suspected of supporting the rebels, as well as the systematic raping of women and girls are regularly reported.³²

In spite of the increasing drive for peace in Sudan, the NIF government's escalation of the Darfur crisis, its theological impositions, ethnocentric ideology, and Islamized war propaganda have created a climate inconsistent with peace in the country. Moreover, the regime's crimes against humanity in Darfur were not secretly planned: just a few days before renewal of the Emergency Law, President Bashir publicly pledged "to shed the blood of political opponents" in a famous rally of the Popular Defense Forces (PDF).³³ This public outrage was immediately followed by a massive state-organized war to subdue the "renegades, traitors, and highwaymen of Darfur."³⁴

The harsh threats of the president were taken seriously by human rights organizations and democracy groups. They promptly called on the international community to put the strongest pressure possible upon the Sudan presidency to adopt peaceful measures instead of military action, and to convene an all-Sudanese democratic conference to save the nation the danger of further subjection to the Security Council's punitive in-

tervention (as occurred in the mid-1990s with anti-terrorism measures against Sudan). Ignoring both these pleas and the vital role of the Sudanese democratic opposition and civil society groups in potentially ending the crisis, the government hurried to: 1) escalate security operations inside Darfur, arresting and detaining those engaged in opposition activities;³⁵ 2) air exaggerated media programs on the government's judicial, security, and administrative measures to control the Janjaweed; 3) escalate ideological attacks on the West as an interest group aggressively planning to attack the Islamic Republic of Sudan and possess the country's wealth; 4) strongly appeal to the Arab League for political support; and 5) display technical compliance with Security Council demands by cooperating with the United Nations and the African Union.

The political complexities of the Sudan's crisis are not militarily winnable, whether by the warmongering NIF government or the other warring groups. Makau Mutua, director of the Human Rights Center at the State University of New York, calls for a "reality check. Khartoum has been unable to vanquish Africans militarily in the south. That's why Khartoum now appears ready to conclude its peace agreement with the south."³⁶ The Sudan's largest democratic opposition, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA)_established in October 1990 by the DUP, Umma, SPLM/A, Union of the Sudanese African Parties (USAP), the Communist Party, trade unions, and other opposition groups_welcomed the Darfur rebels as "patriots victimized by the injustices of the Sudan central governments" and finally included them as full members of the NDA Leadership Council.³⁷ A few Sudanese critics, however, rejected the Darfur rebellion as an NIF-led movement that hijacked Darfur's genuine striving for principled social change. Mutasim Elagrar, a Sudanese writer, asserts, "There is a substantial presence among them of disgruntled Islamic Brothers who fell out with the Khartoum regime during the infamous power struggle between president Bashir and the godfather of the Sudanese Islamic movement, Hassan Al-Turabi."³⁸

NIF Government–Opposition Relations

As we have seen, Adam, Ahmed, O' Fahey, and Lobban all consider the Umma to be closely involved in the Darfur crisis. From the early 1970s up to this day, the Umma Party consistently claimed a strategic alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood Movement. The NIF Turabi/Bashir coup of 30 June 1989, however, denormalized the alliance of the Umma party and the NIF. In the wake of the al-Merghani-led Democratic Unionist Party's bitter failure to ensure full leadership of the NDA democratic opposition in exile, the Umma Party annulled its partnership with the NDA leadership and opted for separate deals with the DUP, the SPLM, and

the NIF government. As expected, on 22 May 2003, the Umma Party signed an agreement with the ruling NIF National Congress Party "based on a common vision and the willingness to share with all other groups the responsibility of redressing the crisis."³⁹

The Umma Party might have been hoping to assume a leadership role with the NIF government to control the Darfur crisis, as well to influence the entire country's state of affairs. The Umma plan, however, was subject to the ruling junta's determination to maintain the upper hand over all opposition parties and civil society groups. The Umma-NIF agreement speaks of

the conversion of the Darfur crisis from a traditional conflict over resources and a tribal dispute to an open rebellion due to the occurrence of other factors that were not known before the present crisis, such as the growth of tribal and regional orientations; the growth of school drop-outs and a graduates' high rate of unemployment; the culture of violence and abundance of arms; a general belief that the government negotiates only with armed groups; the presence of armed militias; political maneuvering; and the engagement of neighbors and international bodies in the crisis.⁴⁰

The agreement then mentions the efforts made to resolve the crisis, the most important being the Nirteti conference; the Abeshi talks sponsored by the Chadian government (which led to the government-SLA cease-fire agreement on 3 December 2003); and mediation by individuals and tribal *Shura* councils. The agreement considers "the military action to crush the rebellion following the attack on Tina in March 2003 and the military operations occurring after violation of the Abeshi Agreement as part of the effort to solve the crisis." This is surely an oblique evaluation of the massive military brutalities carried out by the NIF government that have made the humanitarian crisis "one of the worst catastrophes of the day," in the words of the UN official report.⁴¹ The Umma-NIF coalition ignores the role of central government in initiating and escalating the Darfur crisis through its poor political decisions and wrongful administrative practices; it further ignores the urgent need to ensure, in affirmative terms, full participation of the Darfurian intellectuals inside the country or abroad, including women activists.

The real question, nonetheless, is the extent to which the NIF ruling party would be willing to participate with groups that openly criticize the regime's atrocious record, given the public's increasing insistence on prosecution of the regime's top officials and demands for real change of government leadership and structures. The state's peace assurances and media programs are not substantiated by the realities of the Muslim Brotherhood rule. Ali Ali-Dinar, director of the African Studies Center at the University of Pennsylvania, asserts that a large percentage of Sudanese soldiers are from the

western Sudan, so that it's in the government's interest to create division among them; as well as to manipulate the Janjaweed to spread fear and animosity between the Arab and African peoples of Darfur, weaken the Umma Party's support among non-Arab Darfurians, and counteract the presence of the NIF's rival Islamist faction, the Popular Congress (headed by NIF ideologue Hassan al-Turabi):

If successful, the current peace talks in Naivasha [a suburb in Nairobi, Kenya, where the NIF/SPLM peace protocols were signed on 26 May 2004] will lose the NIF Government the use of war to rally the country behind it. Darfur could serve as a substitute for its war in the south. The National Islamic Front Government of Sudan's war in Darfur is influenced by the following: 1) The only internal threat to the NIF is the army and the war in Darfur keeps it pre-occupied; 2) The Darfur war provides a pretext for the extension of emergency laws and other repressive polices; 3) This war can serve as an excuse for delaying the elections required by the [Kenya peace] protocols.⁴²

The NIF government has been trying to pit all opposition parties against one another. The NIF flatly rejected NDA participation in the north-south peace talks sponsored by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The 2003 Jeddah Agreement between the NDA and the NIF government was later unilaterally frozen by the NIF political leadership in protest at the NDA's acceptance of the Darfur rebels (SLA) into membership, which indicates the government's lack of interest in carrying out the peace process within a democratic national framework. The government's hostile stance against the NDA, whose forces embrace the SPLM/A, Darfur SLA, JEM, and the Eastern Sudan Fatah, Beja Congress, and Free Lions armed groups is one major factor inhibiting the IGAD-sponsored peace protocols in Naivasha, Kenya, and threatening renewed civil war all over the country.

The NIF-incited hostilities in Darfur further overshadowed the peace process in southern Sudan, according to Joyce Mulama: "Talks to end the 21-year conflict, between the black Christian south and the Arab Muslim north, were kicked off in neighboring Kenya in 2002, under the auspices of the seven-nation IGAD."⁴³ Six protocols on subjects including wealth sharing, power sharing, and security arrangements were signed by the two sides. What remained was discussing details of the implementation of the agreement and compiling the six protocols into a single document. But the talks adjourned on 28 July 2004 without an agreement on a permanent cease-fire, despite the great effort of the Kenyan mediator Lazaro Sumbeiywo, IGAD's special envoy to the talks. Although the NIF government and the SPLM/A held optimistic meetings in Nairobi the

following October, the government remained reluctant to expedite the peace process consistently.⁴⁴ For example, as Mulama has documented, “The SPLA leader Dr. John Garang ... offered to deploy 10,000 SPLA troops in Darfur as part of an African Union (AU) peacekeeping force,” but the NIF government hastened to reject the offer.⁴⁵ This situation reveals the NIF’s elusiveness, lack of trust, and partisan dealings, which come at the expense of a timely and comprehensive settlement of the country’s crisis.

The NIF government–SPLM/A Naivasha Peace Agreement guarantees the south effective participation in the central government’s agencies and authoritative bodies. This strategic executive partnership, however, is organically based on the legislative branch of an interim government that would rule the country as soon as the peace agreements are finalized. Apart from the SPLM/NIF negotiators, the Umma Party and other opposition groups believe that the power-sharing percentages in the peace protocols need to be adjusted, as they undeservedly reserve a majority of parliamentary representation in the interim government for the NIF alone. Equally importantly, critics of the agreement express discontent with its handling of the national army, which would be fully controlled by the NIF-SPLA peace partners in the interim government. According to the agreement, by the end of the interim government’s six-year term, the south and other regions would decide by referendum whether to unify with the north. In accordance with the Naivasha Peace Framework, an NDA Program of Action requires the Sudanese government to create a climate conducive to peacemaking and to insure popular participation in all matters leading to the country’s national unity. The government is strongly urged to immediately abandon all laws inhibiting the popular enjoyment of public freedoms to favor the upcoming democratic transition. All political prisoners, especially those from Darfur, must be immediately released to join the peace efforts in their region.

The NDA, the SPLM/A, Darfur rebels, and many other Sudanese groups believe that the Darfur crisis is part of the center-region crisis of Sudan. “The situation in Darfur is no different from that of southern Sudan,” concludes Ali-Dinar. “Peace in Darfur is necessary for stabilising the surrounding regions which include southern Sudan, Chad, and Central African Republic and to prevent the conflict spreading. The future of the region is at stake.”⁴⁶ And, as Lobban contends,

Equally to the east, Eritrea has its reasons to destabilize Khartoum simply because Khartoum threatens to do the same in Asmara. The case of Chad is not less complicated since several of the ethnic groups of Darfur range into Chad either as war refugees or habitual nomads. Amidst all of this, the only slightly patched together Naivasha agreement between the

government of Sudan and the SPLA is at risk of collapse if the conflict in Darfur cannot be better managed ... few of the neighboring regimes have positive, working ties with Khartoum.⁴⁷

The government, moreover, is hampered by lack of financial and material resources. For these reasons, it is in urgent need of effective assistance from the international community.⁴⁸

The Muslim Brotherhood’s Ethical and Doctrinal Crisis

The failures of the Muslim Brotherhood’s rule in Sudan have been augmented by the International Muslim Brotherhood’s failure to address the Darfur crisis. It must have been a painful experience for Dr. Mohamed Saleem al-’Awa and his colleagues, including Sheikh Dr. Yousif al-Qaradawi, to suppress their consciences to the point of denying the Darfur holocaust. But this is what they have done through the Muslim ‘Ulama International Union, an organization newly launched by al-Qaradawi and other Muslim Brotherhood leaders to promote Muslim life in the diaspora and exert influence on the Arab media, especially on al-Jazeera.⁴⁹ The interview conducted by Ustaz Ahmed Mansour of al-Jazeera on 15 September 2004 with the Muslim ‘Ulama secretary general, Mohamed al-’Awa, who had reportedly just returned from a trip to Darfur, affirmed the most unreasonable strands of the ‘Ulama’s political agenda towards the Sudan and its rulers, to a degree that raises doubts about the intentions of the hosting program.⁵⁰ The interview revealed the blindness of the Muslim Brotherhood’s ideological dogmatism, which, irrespective of the ‘Ulama’s academic, juristic, or professional credentials, is contrary to the most fundamental demand of spirituality that supposedly values human life and claims this principle as the very essence of natural law. For example, al-’Awa was oversimplistic and disingenuous to state that the inhabitants of Darfur “were all relatives, the same people, *unless they identified themselves in tribal terms,*” when these “tribal terms” have, for centuries, accommodated the whole social structure and all interrelationships of the region. One purpose of the al-Jazeera program was obviously to emphasize the ‘Ulama’s partnership with the ruling Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan. Indeed, in a mission aimed at reconciling the two warring factions of the NIF, al-’Awa, al-Qaradawi, and other ‘Ulama representatives met as privileged diplomats with the top officials of the NIF government; the international secretary general met with President al-Bashir for many hours.

In addition to persistently negating the NIF government’s responsibility in the Darfur crisis, the Muslim ‘Ulama secretary general has also misrepresented the government’s role through understatement. While rightly criticizing the “mischievous behavior on the part

of the Darfur rebels” as well as “the government’s reaction,” in the September interview he acknowledged only one case in which the government had failed to enforce due reparations to a Zaghawa African Sudanese injured party.⁵¹ “The government’s reaction” to which he referred, moreover, was nothing other than the governmentally organized war that killed thousands, displaced over a million, and allowed an unchecked campaign of savage rapes and other crimes against humanity. However, the ‘Ulama secretary general was never able completely to release the Sudan’s Muslim Brotherhood from the guilt of escalating the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. Al-’Awa had to affirm that “Darfur is a humanitarian tragedy since people were forced to leave their homes. The government is blamed for this humanitarian tragedy, as well as the Muslim nations and the international community.” Insisting on “material evidence” such as cemeteries of the murdered citizens from Human Rights Watch to “prove the acts of genocide,” al-’Awa nonetheless contradictorily averred that “the Sudan Government did not do any wrong. All allegations are false! There wasn’t a Pagan-Christian alliance warring against a Muslim Arab alliance.”

Mohamed al-’Awa’s juristic expertise subsequently led him to realize that the women of Darfur would not talk about rape to the Presidential Committee, whose members did not hear of a single reported rape from the interviewed women. The bare fact is that raped humans, as all law trainees understand, naturally need the highest level of privacy to help redress their broken dignity, and would certainly not participate in a publicized sham by a government-selected committee in an orthodox Muslim society. The Presidential Committee’s inattention to the urgent need to include women from Darfur, as well as international human rights specialists, in its deliberations has certainly contributed to the poor performance of the committee. Negligence of the facts, as well as denial of the ethnic dimension of the crisis, are at the root of al-’Awa’s allegation that “these cases [of rape and human rights abuses] were basically alleged to defame the government and the people of Sudan to allow foreign intervention in the country. Only the sources influenced by Americans repeated the accusation of genocide.”⁵² The ‘Ulama’s secretary general further stressed that “what is going on in Palestine and Darfur is a part of the conspiracy. The Zionist enemies are working against Darfur.” While this allegation has also been raised by Muslim Brotherhood groups with respect to Iraq, what was new in al-’Awa’s speech was his generalized alarm: “All the Arab region will be destroyed if the Darfur crisis remains without resolve.” But unlike these cases, Darfur is strictly a Sudanese affair that has to be handled in the first place by and for the Sudanese themselves.⁵³

The Muslim ‘Ulama’s incorporation of the Darfur crisis into the Palestinian and Iraqi conflicts is another

politicized formula intended to mystify the state-constructed Arab-African cleavages in Darfur and, with an overused doctrine ill-suited to Sudanese society, incite a jihad that justifies and prolongs state violence in the whole region.⁵⁴ Exploiting the cliché of a Zionist-Western conspiracy against the Arabs (which acts as a ready-made explanation for all state-incited violence or governmental failures), the Muslim ‘Ulama leader averred that “Darfur is the gate of Islam to Africa. The unified Muslims of Darfur are a threat to the West. That is why Darfur is a target.”⁵⁵ Al-’Awa did not hesitate, however, to appeal to the “Zionist West” for more funds for humanitarian assistance despite the Muslim Brotherhood’s flourishing businesses and monopoly of the Sudanese national economy claiming, incredibly, that “the Sudanese government is not responsible for the crisis” and that “the Islamic organizations working in Darfur are doing so with limited resources.”

Regional and International Reactions

The UN Security Council Resolutions

On 30 July 2004, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1556 on the Darfur issue, requiring the Sudanese government to disarm the local Arab militia and ease the crisis within one month or else face sanctions. Eleven of the fifteen council members voted in favor of the U.S.-drafted resolution, while China, Russia, Pakistan, and Algeria abstained. The envoys of Pakistan, Algeria, and Russia echoed China’s view that sanctions cannot resolve the problem, with Algerian UN ambassador Abdallah Baali accusing the resolution of lacking justice and infringing on Sudan’s sovereignty. However, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan warned a meeting of the Security Council that “the whole world is watching this tragedy unfold and it is watching us.”⁵⁶ And Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo, the current chair of the African Union, stated, “The humanitarian emergency in Darfur is growing,” and said that the AU “has the troops but needs money from the international community to fund the operation.”⁵⁷ The UN Security Council issued a thirty-day deadline to the Sudanese government, which expired on 30 August, to rein in the marauding Janjaweed militias. UN special envoy Jan Pronk’s 2 September 2004 briefing to the Security Council reported that Sudan had failed to control the Janjaweed and that a large international force was required in Darfur as soon as possible.⁵⁸ The subsequent Resolution 1564 of September 2004 stated that the UN

welcomes and supports the intention of the African Union to enhance and augment its monitoring mission in the Darfur region ...; urges Member States to support the African Union ... by supporting the efforts aimed at a peaceful conclusion of the crisis and the protection of the welfare of the people of Darfur ...; affirms that internally displaced persons, refugees

and other vulnerable peoples should be allowed to return to their homes voluntarily, in safety and with dignity, and only when adequate assistance and security are in place; reiterates its call for the Government of Sudan to end the climate of impunity in Darfur by identifying and bringing to justice all those responsible, including members of popular defense forces and Janjaweed militias, for the widespread human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law.⁵⁹

In the midst of the NIF's political hardships and misadministration, the adoption of Resolution 1564 prompted bitter criticism of the UN: Nicholas D. Kristof of the *Independent Record* wrote, "Agencies like the U.N. World Food Program are working heroically to keep the victims alive, but the United Nations as a whole has failed to respond to Sudanese atrocities."⁶⁰ The government's response to the resolution, moreover, has revealed the Muslim Brotherhood's inconsistencies and lack of popular support, a symptom of the deep chasm that has been emerging between the ruling NIF military faction led by President Omer al-Bashir (in collaboration with the party's civilian group, led by his first vice president Ali Osman Taha) and the NIF Popular Congress opposition faction led by the dissident Sheikh al-Turabi. After multilateral mediation, the Sudan has, albeit with some reservations, stepped up the work of taking over weapons. Comprehensive humanitarian assistance has been initiated, thus relieving the situation to a certain extent. However, expenditures on the 5,000 to 12,000 government-supported police (regular and Janjaweed), estimated at up to \$1 million a day, could clearly be better directed toward humanitarian assistance, building hospitals, schools, factories, or farms for the welfare of the people of the region.

The African Union

African Union Chairman Obasanjo has written to President al-Bashir urging him to put an end to all attacks on civilians by government forces and Janjaweed to avoid jeopardizing Darfur peace talks currently under way in Abuja. The leadership of the AU in the solution of the conflict in Darfur has been fully endorsed by the European Union.⁶¹ Rwanda and Nigeria have each sent 150 troops to Darfur. But Khartoum has refused the deployment of a larger peacekeeping force of 2,500 as requested by the AU. According to Wang Fengfeng and Li Dawei,

African initiatives are nearly always dogged by insufficient funding; however, a senior AU official has said the AU has no funding problem in its ongoing efforts to maintain peace in the troubled Darfur region. The AU now has 23 observers on the ground in Darfur, and a total number of 60 observers will be deployed to the region. Also, the AU has a number of organs

involved in resolving the crisis, and two committees which brought together all parties involved in the Darfur crisis were also operational, and had already convened in Chad's capital of Ndjamená.⁶²

The Sudan's African neighbors have exerted considerable effort to support the country's stabilization.⁶³ Until very recently, however, the NIF government was strongly accused of supportive engagement with the Brotherhood jihad groups of Egypt and other Arab Muslim groups, including Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, both of which maintain offices in Khartoum. Despite renewed agreements between Sudan and Egypt, tensions between the two countries over the al-Merghani-Garang/NDA alliance clouded their political relations. Despite active UN efforts to resolve the Eritrean-Ethiopian border dispute, tensions are still unabated between the two states, and frequently exacerbate tensions between the NDA supporter Eritrea and the Khartoum rulers. The same situation surfaced in Darfur with increasing tensions between Chad and Sudan and an immediate deployment of French forces at the Chadian border with Sudan, purportedly to facilitate humanitarian relief aid.

The Arab League

While the Obasanjo-led African Union paid consistent attention to resolving the crisis in Darfur, the regional organization of the Arab states, the Arab League (AL) showed greater concern for the Arab populations of Sudan than for the humanitarian needs of the African people of Darfur. However, the head of the AL's African Department, Ambassador Sameer Husni, issued a report expressing grave concerns about the human rights violations committed as a result of the "abuses of the Sudanese local administration in Darfur."⁶⁴ The report accused the Arab tribes in the area of launching attacks against the local tribes; these are apparently the first words of condemnation ever issued by the AL against a member state. While the committee's factual evaluation has not been approved by the AL Summit, the AL secretary general and his assistants affirmed the NIF government's full responsibility for the Darfur crisis. This policy stand supported the firm position of the United Nations and the African Union in their attempts to frustrate the government's war strategy. The AL, however, failed to provide any substantive support to Darfur, while the Western powers pumped millions of dollars into alleviating the suffering of the displaced population.

For decades, the Sudanese politician Mansour Khalid has been urging the power managers of Khartoum, and their Arab counterparts, to tighten relations with Africa and African organizations. With the abhorrent failures of Arab leaders to develop healthy political and economic relations with non-Arab Africans, however, the

promise of Sudan as a cross-fertilizer of African and Arab cultures has been turned into a racial quagmire by the anti-black practices of many Arab states.⁶⁵ Pan-Africans and other concerned humanists, including millions of politically conscious Sudanese nationals, concur with Makau Mutua's sharp critique of the Arab leaders:

Arab states should condemn Sudan. Otherwise their anger over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict rings hollow. How can they protest the killing of Palestinians when their kin exterminate Africans in Sudan? The tragedy of Darfur wouldn't be permitted if it were taking place in Europe. But African states must take advantage of the interest by the UN and the US to bring about maximum diplomatic and economic pressure, including sanctions to hasten regime change in Sudan. Khartoum must be put on notice that only an open and inclusive democracy will save it from partition into two states, one black African, the other Arab.⁶⁶

The European Union

According to the *Sudan Tribune*, "The European Union fully supports [Resolution 1564,] the appeal made by the Security Council on the Government of Sudan to meet its obligations towards all Sudanese and the international community." The EU, it reported,

welcomes the Council's preparedness to consider taking additional measures as contemplated in Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, should the Government of Sudan fail to comply fully with resolution 1556 (2004). The EU will continue to provide the AU with full support for its mission in Darfur. The European Union recalls its Council Conclusions of 12 and 26 July and of 13 September and confirms its full commitment to contribute to the solution of the conflicts in Sudan as a matter of great priority.⁶⁷

Several EU members, including the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Italy, and Norway, have been collaborating with the IGAD and the United States government in the Sudanese peace process. The pressure on European oil companies to observe the human rights of the indigenous Sudanese, members of human rights groups, and others in the southern oil-rich areas forced Swedish and Canadian firms to abandon their oil concessions (only, unfortunately, to be replaced by firms from China, Malaysia, India, and Qatar less concerned with human rights).⁶⁸ The Darfur crisis elicited strong pronouncements from France, which holds massive interests in Western African countries such as Chad and Central African Republic that border the Darfur region, as well as from Germany, which aspires to a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. Referring unequivocally to the Darfurian crisis as "genocide," German defense minister P. Struck said in an interview published in *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* that "Berlin might contribute soldiers to a UN mission in Darfur. We cannot sit by while

genocide is going on somewhere on the continent (of Africa)."⁶⁹

The United States of America

The American administration has been actively involved in Sudan's peace process. Darfur occupied a significant place in the 2004 American presidential race. In the debate of 30 September at the University of Miami, both President Bush and Senator John Kerry affirmed that the conflict is "genocide."⁷⁰

Earlier on 6 April 2004, Congressmen Frank R. Wolf, Thomas G. Tancredo, and Donald M. Payne requested

the Secretary of State investigate and submit a report to Congress documenting (A) the involvement in or support of senior officials in the current Government of Sudan in support of acts of terrorism against the United States; (B) the nature and extent of the participation, if any, of senior Sudanese government officials in (i) the 1993 World Trade Center bombing; (ii) the assassination attempt of President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt; and (iii) the bombings of the embassies of the United States in Kenya and Tanzania; (C) the nature and extent of support being provided to Hamas and Hezbollah by Sudan; (D) the presence of Sudanese "volunteer" fighters currently in Iraq who have been involved in terror attacks against United States.⁷¹

While this congressional request is clearly most concerned with American security, the congressmen named for the secretary of state's investigation numerous members and allies of the NIF government and its military forces.⁷²

Senator John Danforth, the U.S. special envoy for Sudan's peace, has repeatedly stressed that the effort of the U.S. administration to help the Sudanese finalize a permanent and just peace agreement has not been sufficiently supported by the NIF Government. U.S. Congressional resolutions might decisively affect the relations between the two governments and therefore have a significant impact on the stumbling process of peace. If passed, the congressional requested resolutions would generate a seriously negative impact on the NIF government, whose senior security managers are directly addressed by congressmen for White House investigation into alleged linkages with acts of international terrorism.

China: The Opportune Investor

Human Rights Watch reports that the oil concession holders of Sudan include the China National Petroleum Company (40 percent since 1996), Petronas Nasional Berhad of Malaysia (30 percent since 1996), and Sudan's state-owned Sudapet Limited (5 percent since 1996). China is also investing heavily in the Merowe Dam, which, according to Ali Askouri of the Hamadab Af-

affected People, hopes to “double Sudan’s generating capacity. Project funds of \$1.5 billion are to be provided by Middle Eastern financial institutions and the Chinese and Sudanese governments. The state-owned China International Water and Electric Corporation is the main contractor of the dam.”⁷³

However, many Sudanese have been disillusioned by the Chinese companies, which they expected to show humanitarian interest in, and make development efforts benefiting the war-affected peoples of the oil-rich areas. They didn’t. While Chinese companies have reaped millions of dollars annually since 1996 from huge monopolies in the Hamadab-Merowe Dam and oil concessions, they have not built a single hospital, school, veterinary service, cultural center, or radio or TV station, despite the fact that these constructions are urgently needed to develop the areas their investments have disrupted. Instead, the Chinese and other Asian investors have put all their energies into supporting the NIF military government with the single goal of ensuring continued oil operations. Unsurprisingly, at the September 2004 Security Council meeting on the Darfur crisis, the Chinese ambassador to the UN, Wang Guangya, reiterated China’s firm opposition to imposing UN sanctions against Sudan over the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. As the *Sudan Tribune* reported, “China had serious reservations on the draft resolution and was concerned that it would not help contribute to the solution of the problem.”⁷⁴

Military Intervention versus Political Solutions

Urging American military intervention in Darfur, Eric Reeves, a professor at Smith College, Northampton, MA, who has recently contributed with detailed reports on the crisis of civil war in the South and Darfur, wrote of the genocide: “It is distinctly the most credible and urgent basis for the humanitarian intervention that has heretofore been only implicitly recognized in calls for UN authorization under Chapter VII of the UN Charter (this is the basis for forceful UN military intervention).”⁷⁵ Reeves both criticized the NIF government’s failure to promptly enforce measures in Darfur to stop the genocide and insisted that the Sudanese democratic opposition maintains the clearest understanding of the Darfur crisis. He further argued, “All that can halt this continuing violence, and allow for civilians to feel some measure of security, is a humanitarian intervention that includes a large and robust military force.” However, in my own view, a “large and robust military force,” even if accompanied by “humanitarian intervention” would more likely than not fail to control the tense conflict in Darfur and would, in addition, entail serious casualties to foreign armies that would, in turn, fuel the armed conflict—as has been the case in Congo, Rwanda, Uganda, Iraq, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Palestine, Israel, and

elsewhere.

John Prendergast, a former U.S. State Department adviser and National Security Council director for African affairs, has posed an alternative. He has stressed that the NIF government is using the AU-supervised peace talks in Abuja to “tie the disarmament of the [Janjaweed] to the cantonment [placement in camps] of the rebels. The truth is, there are two things that need to be signed: issues that deal with humanitarian assistance and protocols that deal with civilian protection. In the view of the rebels, this has to be a package.”⁷⁶ Prendergast therefore calls for an “asset freeze” on Sudanese companies doing business abroad, which “would have a significant impact on the actions of the regime.”

A Sudanese Comprehensive Solution

This study has presented a detailed account of Darfur’s complex dilemma. As Mutua puts it, “Darfur is not an accidental apocalypse of mass slaughter, enslavement, pillage and ethnic cleansing. The Darfur pogrom is part of a historic continuum in which successive Arab governments have sought to entirely destroy black Africans in this biracial nation.”⁷⁷ Instead of full adherence to international human rights law and the moral obligations of good governance established by national and international norms, the Muslim Brotherhood ruling elite resorts to official lies to support a hypocritical policy of publicly negating the army’s and militias’ repression of Darfur. This has occurred while the government continues to restrict external relief assistance to the region, as well as the participation of Darfur intellectuals, women activists, and human rights groups in resolution of the crisis. The Arab-oriented government policies biased against the non-Arab African Sudanese of Darfur are a major source of the problem.

In a document entitled “Appeal to the World on the Human Crisis of Darfur,” prepared in July 2004 by Sudanese intellectuals abroad (myself included) and signed by hundreds of concerned parties around the world, the authors contend:

The main responsible party, the government, must be accountable before the United Nations Security Council for all breaches of security along the Peace Corridors. We call for the creation of safe havens, full re-instating of the victimized indigenous population into their misappropriated lands and for the simultaneous removal of recently settled government militia and their supporters from such lands. Legal, administrative, and financial compensation and humanitarian aid for these victimized people must be fully ensured before they return to their identified homes. We call on the competent authorities to apprehend and to put on trial all of the war criminals who committed heinous crimes—including killing and other bodily injury, burning of homes, crops and entire villages, looting

and pillage, branding and mass rape of women and children against the innocent civilians of Darfur. The Darfur war criminals, and their main accomplices, whether Janjaweed militias or government officials, must be fairly tried before an international war crimes tribunal. These trials should be independent, publicly supported, and guided by the principles of international law and customary law. We believe the final resolution to end the Darfur conflict lies mainly with the Sudanese people.”⁷⁸

The core component of a viable program of action for state reforms hinges on insuring a politically decisive, democratic, and comprehensive Sudanese settlement, more than on any development promises, military interventions, or bureaucratic-authoritarian plans. Sudan needs a ruling establishment that is willing to make peace and committed to a stable democratic transition for the people of Sudan. To salvage the nation from a repetition of the NIF's terrorism, antinational separatism, racism, and ethnoreligious chauvinism, the Khartoum central government's dominance over Sudan's marginal regions must be adjusted to favor the national interests and privileges of the entire population, rather than a group of antidemocratic governing elites. The Naivasha agreements clearly express the yearning of non-Arab as well as Arab Sudanese to enjoy in political, economic, religious, ideological, and cultural terms fully egalitarian center-region relations with the government's Arab elite. Ultimately, it is the creative struggles of the Sudanese people that will bring about the permanent peace and good governance of the country via the principled enlargement of the peace protocols to truly represent the nation's multiethnic and multireligious population.

NOTES

¹Acknowledgements are due the Darfurian writers Baballa Adam, Saif Idris, and Ismaeil Ahmed, whose analyses alerted the world to the crisis in the *Sudanese Human Rights Quarterly* special issue on Darfur in 1999. I also thank Dr. Ali B. Ali-Dinar, Dr. Adam Abdel-Moula, Mohamed Yahya and the Massalit Community in Exile, former governor of Darfur Dr. Tigani Sisi, Dr. Sharif Harir, Ahmed al-Zubair, and the many other Sudanese or Sudanist intellectuals whose publications and public discussions helped me in my attempt to understand the complexities of the crisis. Thanks are equally due Mohamed Nagi of the *Sudan Tribune* online journal for the timely updated reports the *Tribune* compiles on Sudanese political affairs in general and the Darfur crisis in particular, and Dr. Marlin Tadros, the SHRO-Cairo website coordinator, for the site's maintenance. Special thanks are due Dr. Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi for his follow-up, Dr. Sarah Wight for her comments, and Dr. Rebecca Saunders, co-editor of the *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, for her generous invitation to prepare this essay and her constructive criticisms and suggestions. Personal appreciation is expressed

to Zeinab Osman al-Hussain and Angie El-Tigani for their lovely support.

²Baballa Haroun Nor Adam, "Ethnic Composition, Economic Pattern, and Armed Conflicts in Dar Fur," *Sudanese Human Rights Quarterly* 8 (July 1999): 9–10.

³R. S. O'Fahey, "W. Sudan: A Complex Ethnic Reality with a Long History," *International Herald Tribune*, 15 May 2004, posted in Sudan Tribune, Saturday May 15th, 2004.

⁴In addition to the Fur, the non-Arab tribes include the Tonjor, Dajo, Zaghawa, Massalit, Bertti, Sambat, Gimir, Bargo, Barno, Tamu, Fellata, Jebel, and Kanein. The Arab tribes include the Rezeigat, Missiriya, Habaniya, Banu Halba, Ta'aisha, Bnu Jarrar, Zeyadiya, Atefat, Humur, Khuzam, Khawabeer, Hawarah, Mahameed, Dar Hamid, Hilaliya, Banu Hussein, Ma'alia, and Ziyadiya. Adam, "Ethnic Composition," 10.

⁵Richard Lobban, "The Complexities of Darfur," *Sudan Tribune*, Tuesday August 3rd, 2004, <<http://sudantribune.com>>.

⁶Saif Elnasr Idris, "The History of Darfur," *Sudanese Human Rights Quarterly* 8 (July 1999): 11.

⁷Adam, "Ethnic Composition," 12.

⁸Human Rights Watch, *Sudan, Oil, and Human Rights* (New York: 2003) <<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/sudan> 1103/> (22 December 2004).

⁹Lobban, "Complexities of Darfur."

¹⁰Makau Mutua, "Racism at the Root of Darfur Crisis," *Sunday Standard*, 25 July 2004 (posted in Sudan Tribune, July 25th, 2004).

¹¹Adam, "Ethnic Composition," 15–16.

¹²Ali Ali-Dinar, "Why Khartoum wants a war in Darfur" in Sudan Tribune: Friday July 30th, 2004. Also see a brief summary of the article as "A Dozen Reasons Why Khartoum Wants a War in Darfur," *Parliamentary Brief*, 30 July 2004, 12.

¹³Lobban, "Complexities of Darfur." *Sudan Tribune*, Tuesday August 3rd, 2004.

¹⁴O'Fahey, "W. Sudan a complex ethnic reality with a long history" in: *Sudan Tribune*, Sunday May 15th, 2004.

¹⁵Ismaeil Abakr Ahmed, "Causes of Tribal Conflicts in Dar Fur," *Sudanese Human Rights Quarterly* 8 (July 1999): 24.

¹⁶Ali-Dinar, "Why Khartoum wants a war in Darfur," in *Sudan Tribune*: Friday July 30th, 2004.

¹⁷Ahmed, "Causes of Tribal Conflicts," 24.

¹⁸Adam, "Ethnic Composition," 16.

¹⁹Adam, "Ethnic Composition," 16–17.

²⁰Adam, "Ethnic Composition," 18–19.

²¹Ann Mosley Lesch, *The Sudan: Contested National Identities* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 82. The PDF is a large NIF disciplinary group recruited and controlled by the Act of National Service since 1989.

²²O'Fahey, "W. Sudan." *Sudan Tribune*, Saturday May 15th, 2004.

²³Suliman Hamid al-Haj, "Darfur: Wad' al-Nuqat fi al-Huruf," *Al-Midan Journal*, August 2004, p.3. (<http://www.net/nm/private/almidan/50yrs/Darfur.Chapter.pdf>). All translations from Arabic are my own.

²⁴Hamid, "Darfur: Wad' al-Nuqat fi al-Huruf."

²⁵Hamid, "Darfur: Wad' al-Nuqat fi al-Huruf."

²⁶Ahmed, "Causes of Tribal Conflicts," 25.

²⁷Ahmed, "Causes of Tribal Conflicts," 25.

²⁸The “Zaghawa Political Memorandum” is published in the bilingual *Sudanese Human Rights Quarterly* 8 (1999), 3-4.

²⁹The SLA advocacy of “electoral changes to empower the poor inhabitants” was repeatedly announced by the SLA spokesperson on al-Jazeera in 2004.

³⁰Lobban, “Complexities of Darfur.”

³¹Joyce Mulama, “Darfur Overshadows the Peace Process in South Sudan,” *Sudan Tribune*, 2 September 2004, <<http://sudantribune.com>>.

³²Ali-Dinar, “Why Khartoum wants a war in Darfur.”

³³Sudan Human Rights Organization, Cairo Branch (SHRO-Cairo), annual report, “The Situation of Human Rights in Sudan 2003,” <<http://www.shro-cairo.org>> (22 December 2004). The president threatened to crush the rebellion in a series of public announcements between June and December 2003, which witnessed massive government offensives against the rebels.

³⁴al-Bashir quoted in: SHRO-Cairo, “Situation of Human Rights.”

³⁵This includes the humanitarian Darfur Call Group in Khartoum. Members of the DUP, Communist, Congress, and Nasserist parties were arbitrarily arrested before holding a meeting authorized by the Ministry of Interior to collect humanitarian aid for the victims of Darfur. See the SHRO-Cairo press release “Government Forces Arrest the Darfur Call Activists,” 7 August 2004, <<http://www.shro-cairo.org>>. Amnesty International closely monitors the situation in Darfur. See, for example: “AI Urges Action in West Sudan before Rains,” 1 May 2004; “AI Calls for Protection of Human Rights in W. Sudan,” 8 June 2004; and “AI Calls for Arm Embargo on Khartoum,” 22 September 2004, all at <<http://www.amnesty.org>>.

³⁶Mutua, “Racism at the Root.”

³⁷Farouq Abu Eissa, the NDA chairman assistant for constitutional affairs, repeatedly described the Darfur rebels as “patriots” in the Arab media, especially on Egyptian television.

³⁸Mutasim Elagraa, “Season of Migration from Allah to Race,” 28 June 2003, <www.sudansecular.net>. Last access on June 2004.

³⁹See Umma Party, “Rowiya Mushtaraka baina al-Mutamar al-Watani and Hizb al-Umma al-Qawmi hawla Mushkilat Darfur” [Shared vision between the National Congress and the Umma Party on the Problem of Darfur], in the Umma File on Darfur, <<http://www.umma.org>>.

⁴⁰Cited in Mahgoub El-Tigani, “Government Lies Will Not Solve the Sudan’s Crisis: A Critique of the Umma-National Congress Agreement on Darfur,” *Sudan Tribune*, 25 May 2004, <<http://sudantribune.com>>.

⁴¹See “Interview with UN’s Jan Egeland on the situation in Darfur,” *Sudan Tribune*, Monday July 5th, 2004; and “Sudan denied UN report estimating 70,000 dead in Darfur refugee camps,” by Mohamed Osman, Associated Press Writer, in: *Sudan Tribune*, Saturday October 16th, 2004.

⁴²Ali-Dinar, “Why Khartoum wants a war in Darfur.”

⁴³Mulama, “Darfur Overshadows.” She reports, “During the initial stages of the talks, there were a lot of optimisms as the United States, Britain, Italy and Norway exerted pressure on the belligerents to reach a peaceful settlement.”

⁴⁴“Protocol between GOS and SPLM on power sharing,” in: *Sudan Tribune*, Thursday May 27th, 2004. The Security Arrangements during the Interim Period as signed between the Government and the SPLM (*Sudan Tribune*, September 26th, 2004) include: “(a) The Joint/Integrated Units (JIUs) in Eastern Sudan; (b) Establishment of JIUs Service Arms; (c) Collaborative approach of handing other armed groups; (d) Other aspects of permanent ceasefire including the role of United Nations Peace Support Mission. The technical committee on the ceasefire negotiations will continue to discuss and resolve any remaining issues including the funding of the armed forces and timing of incorporating and integrating other armed groups into the respective structures of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/SPLA). Furthermore, the two Parties recommitted themselves to finalize and conclude the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in recognition that that prompt completion of the Peace Process is essential for all the people of the Sudan as it will help in resolving all challenges facing the country.”

⁴⁵Mulama, “Darfur Overshadows.”

⁴⁶Ali-Dinar, “Why Khartoum wants a war in Darfur.”

⁴⁷Lobban, “Complexities of Darfur.”

⁴⁸See “Sanctions Cannot Solve Crisis in Sudan: Chinese Paper,” *Sudan Tribune*, 16 September 2004, <<http://sudantribune.com>>.

⁴⁹The Muslim ‘Ulama International Union has been repeatedly announced by Sheikh Qaradawi on al-Jazeera in the state of Qatar, where the sheikh teaches and preaches.

⁵⁰*Bila Hudud*, hosted by Ahmed Mansour, aired on al-Jazeera on 15 September 2004. Since no transcript of the interview was posted on al-Jazeera’s website, the statements quoted here are taken directly from the broadcast interview. A full report on this interview with commentary is available on the Sudanese List at MSU <Sudanese@mus.edu> “Belying the DarFur’s Crisis

⁵¹Al-’Awa, interview on *Bila Hudud*.

⁵²Al-’Awa, interview on *Bila Hudud*.

⁵³Needless to say, the Palestinian crisis is tragically unabated due to the escalated warring practices between Israeli and the Palestinian armed groups, which continue to paralyze endeavors to solve the problem. The activities of Muslim armed groups in Iraq, however, are not moved to challenge the active presence of the American-led international forces directly by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but motivated by deeply entrenched religious conflicts.

⁵⁴The Muslim ‘Ulama issued an emphatic appeal in 2000 to “Ahl al-Sudan” decrying the split of the NIF terrorist factions and calling on the people of Sudan to support their unification. See the full text of *Nida ila Ahl al-Sudan* [Call on the People of Sudan] at www.shro-cairo.org.

⁵⁵Al-’Awa, interview on *Bila Hudud*.

⁵⁶Kofi Annan quoted in Agence France-Presse, “Secretary General Made Another Appeal on Darfur,” *Sudan Tribune*, 24 September 2004, <<http://sudantribune.com>>.

⁵⁷Olusegun Obasanjo quoted in Agence France-Presse, “Secretary General.”

⁵⁸Mulama, “Darfur Overshadows.”

⁵⁹The Security Council resolved: “Recalling its resolution

1556 (2004) of 30 July 2004, the statement of its President of 25 May 2004, its resolution 1547 (2004) of 11 June 2004 and resolution 1502 (2003) of 26 August 2003, and taking into account the Plan of Action agreed by the Secretary-General's Special Representative to Sudan and the Government of Sudan; welcoming ... the progress achieved on humanitarian access, and expressing concern that ... the Government of Sudan has not fulfilled the entirety of its commitments under resolution 1556 (2004) ... deplors the recent ceasefire violations by all parties, in particular the reports by the Cease Fire Commission of Government of Sudan helicopter assaults and Janjaweed attacks on Yassin, Hashaba and Gallab villages on 26 August 2004." Resolution 1564 (2004), 18 September 2004, <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_resolutions04.html> (22 December 2004).

⁶⁰Nicholas D. Kristof, "Urgent Action Needed to Stop Sudan Atrocities," *Independent Record*, 12 September 2004.

⁶¹"European Union welcomes the adoption of UNSL resolution 1564 on Sudan," *Sudan Tribune*, 22 September 2004, <<http://sudantribune.com>>.

⁶²"AU Commission Chairman Alpha Oumar Konare flew to Ndjamena and launched a ceasefire commission [representing] the Sudanese government and the opposition as well as mediators from the AU, the US, and the host nation Chad." Wang Fengfeng and Li Dawei, "Sufficient Funding for AU's Darfur Peace Efforts Indicator of Commitment," *Sudan Tribune*, 4 July 2004, <<http://sudantribune.com>>.

⁶³Besides the efforts of Sudan's western neighbors, to the south, Kenya hosted the north-south peace talks and Uganda's government is bitterly fighting the Lord Army rebels throughout its border with the south, to say nothing of the embattled Congo. Sudan is near three Arab states, Egypt to the north, Libya to the west, and Saudi Arabia across the Red Sea. The eastern border accommodates the Horn nations, Ethiopia and Eritrea. For a recent report on the Ethiopia-Eritrea border dispute, see Anacler Rwegayura, "Ethiopia-Eritrea: Has the Algiers Accord Been Ditched?" *Sudan Tribune*, 2 June 2004, <<http://sudantribune.com>>.

⁶⁴The AL Fact Finding Commission report of May 2004 has not been made public. The report's condemnation of gross human rights violations in Darfur, including its attribution of responsibility to government administrators, however, has been widely cited. See, for example, Susan Taylor Martin, "Arab Hands Stained by the Bloodshed in Sudan," *St. Petersburg (FL) Times*, 8 August 2004; "Rights Group Call on Arab League to Condemn Atrocities in Darfur," *PolitInfo.com*, 7 August 2004; and El-Tigani, "Government Lies."

⁶⁵The experiences of SHRO-Cairo are revealing in this area: Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria scored among the worst records of harassing Sudanese African refugees even when they asked only for a short stay until they could be received through UN refugee agencies by a Western host country.

⁶⁶Mutua, "Racism at the Root."

⁶⁷"European Union welcomes the adoption of UNSC resolution 1564 on Sudan," *Sudan Tribune*, 22 September 2004, <<http://sudantribune.com>>.

⁶⁸Human Rights Watch mentions that Swedish Lundin Oil AB, a lead partner in the consortium that owned Block 5A, sold its owned 40.375 percent to Petronas of Malaysia. Canadian Talisman also sold its holdings and left the area in re-

sponse to American and international pressures to observe the human rights of the inhabitants. On the other extreme, ignoring the human rights issue, Qatar Gulf Petroleum Company, with China National Petroleum Company, Al Harth (private), and state-owned Sudapet, developed Block 387 in Eastern Upper Nile. The site was rife with government militias fighting SPLA and other southern warring groups. Gross human rights violations were thus committed, destroying the area and disrupting the environment and the social life of the indigenous populations. *Sudan, Oil, and Human Rights*. <<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/sudan1103/>>

⁶⁹*Sudan Tribune*, 18 September 2004, <<http://sudantribune.com>>. See also "Germany to send aircraft planes to Sudan," *Sudan Tribune*, Saturday November 13th, 2004.

⁷⁰"Transcript of the Candidates' First Debate in the Presidential Campaign," *New York Times*, 1 October 2004.

⁷¹"US Congress to examine a resolution on the support of terrorism by Sudanese officials," *Sudan Tribune*, Tuesday April 6th, 2004. Earlier "Congressmen request President Bush to investigate the role of Sudanese official in terrorism acts," *Sudan Tribune*, Wednesday February 11th, 2004. Also see: Sudan PM reacts to US Congress members call for trial of 12 officials," *Sudan Tribune*, April 10th, 2004.

⁷²These included Ali Osman Mohammed Taha, first vice president; Dr. Nafee Ali Nafee, minister of the federal government and former minister of the interior (external intelligence); Dr. Ghazi Salahadin, presidential advisor and senior member of the National Islamic Front; Dr. Awad Ahmed El Jaz, minister of energy and mining; Dr. Mutref Sadig Nimeri, director general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and intelligence chief at the time of the assassination attempt against President Hosni Mubarak; Dr. Qutbi Al-Mahdi, former external intelligence chief; Major General Salah Abdallah, director of the Internal Security Branch; Major General El Hadi El Nakasha, minister of cabinet affairs; Dr. Abul Karim Abdalla, director of the External Security Branch; Major General Osama Abdalla, National Congress Party; Major General Jamal Zamgan; and Major General Emad El Din Hussein.

⁷³See the article by Ali Askouri, president of the Leadership Office of Hamadab Affected People, "The Merowe Dam: Controversy and Displacement in Sudan," *Forced Migration Review* 21 (2004): 56-7.

⁷⁴*Sudan Tribune*, 18 September 2004. However, under the urging of the African Union and the UN secretary-general, China did refrain from blocking the adoption of the draft resolution supporting the AU deployment in Darfur.

⁷⁵Eric Reeves, e-mail to Sudan-L and Sudanese mailing lists, "In response to the question, 'Is the Darfur conflict genocide?'" 21 June 2004. Also see this writer's reply in the same lists.

⁷⁶John Prendergast quoted in Charles W. Corey, "Sudan Government At Critical Point, Africanist Warns," *allAfrica.com*, 27 September 2004, <<http://allafrica.com/stories/200409280181.html>> (22 December 2004).

⁷⁷Mutua, "Racism at the Root."

⁷⁸"Appeal to the World on the Human Crisis of Darfur" was originally drafted in July 2004 by Dr. Hassan Mohamed Salih and edited by Suad Ibrahim Ahmed, Dr. Laura Nyan-tung Beny, and Mahgoub El-Tigani. It was posted on the In-

ternet by Jamal Mahgoub and Nasr Haggam of the Dar al-Intifadah list, adopted by the Darfur-Task Group led by Dr. Sondra Hale, Dr. Laura N. Beny, Dr. Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, and other members of the U.S.-based Sudanese Studies Association, and then widely disseminated by SHRO-Cairo, sudanonline, and the other Sudanese websites. Hundreds of people signed the appeal from all over the world, including Sudanese nationals at home and abroad.