

January 5, 2018

Senator Bob Corker, Chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Senator Ben Cardin, Ranking Member, Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Senator Jeff Flake, Chairman, Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy
Senator Cory A. Booker, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy
Rep. Ed Royce, Chairman, House Foreign Affairs Committee
Rep. Eliot Engel, Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Committee
Rep. Chris Smith, Chairman, House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations
Rep. Karen Bass, Ranking Member, House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations
Rep. Jim McGovern, Co-Chair, Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission
Rep. Randy Hultgren, Co-Chair, Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission
Rep. Mike Capuano, Co-Chair, Sudan and South Sudan Caucus
Rep. Jeff Fortenberry, Co-Chair, Sudan and South Sudan Caucus
Rep. Barbara Lee, Co-Chair, Sudan and South Sudan Caucus
Rep. Tom Rooney, Co-Chair, Sudan and South Sudan Caucus

RE: Ongoing Human Rights and International Law Violations by the Sudan Regime

Dear Esteemed Leaders of Congress,

We, the undersigned 106 Sudanese, scholars, human rights organizations and leading activists, write to alert you to ongoing human rights and international law violations committed by the Sudan regime with regard to sponsoring radical Islam, religious intolerance and persecution, arbitrary arrests and disappearances, press attacks and restrictions, forced displacement and slavery, restricting and blocking of humanitarian aid, and non-compliance with the International Criminal Court (ICC) and U.S. Courts. We urge Congress and the U.S. Administration to impose consequences on the Sudan regime for these violations and to prioritize engagement with opposition and civil society groups who courageously seek freedom, justice and equality for all Sudanese.

We also write to underscore our concern about the premature removal of some U.S. sanctions on the Sudan regime. While various policy professionals suggest that the Sudan regime is heading in a more positive direction, lifting of sanctions has not ushered in a new order.

- Transparency International ranks Sudan as the 4th most corrupt country in the world, and notes that “corruption is present in all sectors and across all branches and levels of government: public servants are known to demand bribes for services that individuals or companies are legally entitled to; government officials hold direct and indirect stakes in many enterprises, which

distorts the market through patronage and cronyism; and the head of state and government is believed to have embezzled up to US\$9 billion from oil revenues.”

- According to Brad Brooks-Rubin, Enough Project Policy Director, in his April 2017 testimony to Congress, the Sudan regime “used the provisional easing of the sanctions put in place in January, not to begin the necessary reforms of the structural deformities of the country’s economy, but instead to order fighter jets and battle tanks from its traditional suppliers, Russia and China.”
- In November, the president of Sudan, Omer al-Bashir, met with Russian President Vladimir Putin and asked for protection from “U.S. aggressive actions.” Furthermore, discussions are taking place “at the head of state level about building a Russian base on the Red Sea” according to John Prendergast at the December 13, 2017 discussion in Congress regarding religious freedom and human rights in Sudan.
- In December, Al-Tayyib Mustafa, a Member of Parliament, a newspaper publisher and Bashir’s uncle, described the United States as the “evil of the age”, warning Washington against “playing with fire.” According to the same Sudan Tribune article, Mustafa warned that a visiting American jazz trio “should be worried about their safety especially after the U.S. administration decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, pointing to the murder of a U.S. diplomat in Khartoum ten years ago.” The U.S. Embassy in Khartoum acknowledged that “the expressions of Mr. Mustafa were deliberately designed to incite hatred and promote violence towards the United States, its government and its people.”

These concerns, in addition to structural issues such as Bashir’s recent changes to the constitution to support his re-election, demonstrate the need for a bold and immediate response by the U.S. that includes targeted sanctions. In addition, we are urging the Administration to appoint an Assistant Secretary of African Affairs with significant experience in Sudan and South Sudan given the grave dangers facing millions of people and due to the significant threat ongoing conflict poses to international security.

Sponsoring Radical Islam

- According to the Enough Project’s December 2017 report, “Radical Intolerance”, the Sudan regime:
 - Retains “its overall strategic objectives... a narrow interpretation of Islam as the official religion, Arabic as the language, and *Sharia* as the sole legal system for all of Sudan’s diverse people.”
 - “Tolerates radical Islamist groups and clerics, allowing them to spread virulent ideologies including those of the Islamic State group and other international terrorist groups.”

- Allows “international terrorist groups such as al-Qaida, the Islamic State group, Boko Haram (active in several countries in West and Central Africa), and the Somali al-Shabab group” to operate freely in Sudan, which involves “recruiting followers within Sudan.”
- Cultivates “ties with Salafist groups (those who adhere to an ultraconservative interpretation of Islam) and Salafist jihadi groups (ultraconservatives who support holy war against Muslims and non-Muslims they consider as threats to their interpretation of the religion) to protect the dominance of *Sharia* law in Sudan and to intimidate and repress those of other faiths and beliefs (including Christians and many others) who seek greater rights and freedoms in Sudan.”
- Maintains “documented, long-standing links with active extremist religious groups within Sudan” to:
 - Increase political support for itself as a guarantor of stability;
 - Demonstrate support for jihad to international extremists;
 - Gain and hold an edge in intelligence-gathering for counterterrorism efforts with Western intelligence actors;
 - Protect the dominance of Islamic Sharia law in Sudan and repress calls for expanded rights and freedoms; and
 - Suppress religious diversity and tolerance in Sudan.

Religious Intolerance and Persecution

- A November 1, 2017 Radio Dabanga article, “Trial of Five Church Leaders Postponed,” provides a detailed account of how Christians are “increasingly prone to oppression” and how the Sudan regime is trying to seize control of churches and their assets.
- Currently, five leaders of the Sudan Church of Christ in Khartoum are awaiting trial after being detained for praying, which was considered a “public nuisance”, and for rejecting the Ministry of Endowments decision to “appoint a new church administration that will supervise anyone who wants to pray at the churches of the SCC.”
- The Enough Project’s report, “Radical Intolerance”, indicates that the regime’s intolerance includes “routine attacks on Sufi Islam’s followers and shrines and harassment of Muslim minorities.”
- With regard to persecution of Christians, the Enough report points to “a systematic effort to circumvent existing constitutional guarantees of freedom of religion by preventing the construction of new churches, overtaking and shutting down services such as church-run schools, and reducing the number of existing churches and institutions through the use of administrative and judicial tools.”
- The Enough report notes that others “victimized by the Sudanese regime’s intolerance are intellectuals, activists, rights defenders, and those who promote freedoms of thought,

conscience, religion, speech, and expression – and those who resist the forcible imposition of Islamic beliefs, Arabic language, and *Sharia* law on everyone in the country.”

Arbitrary Arrests and Disappearances

- On December 6th, Rudwan Dawod, an American citizen who was rescued from detention in 2012 through the help of the U.S. government, was kidnapped and transported to an unknown location by Sudan’s security apparatus. Rudwan was protesting illegal land grabs in Algarif East by the regime to give to “foreign investors.” This week, Rudwan was moved to Kobar prison in Kharotum North. His family reports that he was severely beaten and tortured, and he was not allowed access to a doctor.
- The arrest of Rudwan is part of wider arbitrary arrests against the members and advisers of “Sudan of the Future” campaign (SoF). Five members of the campaign were arrested, including Mohamed Saif Alnagar, Dr. Sabah Kiela, Amal Madani, Osama Elshiekh, and Bomidyan Taha.
- Naser Aldeen Mukhtar Mohamed, the former chairperson of the Darfur Students Association, was arrested on August 22, 2017 by NISS agents and is being held without charge in solitary confinement. According to Amnesty International, NISS consistently denies him visits from his lawyers and his family.
- According to the ICC Prosecutor’s 26th report to the UN Security Council, “In September, the GoS security services reportedly arrested about 30 Darfuri students” and “Darfuri students also faced other human rights violations including extra-judicial killing, arbitrary dismissals from universities, raids/expulsions from dormitories, and unfair trials.”
- Public Order Courts (22 in Khartoum and almost one in every town across Sudan) are described as spontaneous courts that only listen to the prosecution and police and disproportionately target Sudanese women. Both courts and police take advantage of the risk to the social status of women, if their arrests are made known, to collect heavy fines. These courts earn \$1.8 million per month according to Mail & Guardian in collaboration with Ayin, an independent Sudanese media house. Civil society activists are seeking to overturn the Public Order Act as it violates human rights, the 2005 Constitution and international conventions.

Press Attacks and Restrictions

- For nine days, as of December 6th, NISS confiscated all copies of four opposition newspapers, Al-Tayar, Al-Watan, Al-Jarida, and Akhir Lahza, violating the freedom of the press and causing significant financial losses. According to the Arab Network for Crisis Information, the move is intended to force the newspapers to close.

- The regime seeks to pass the Press and Publications Law, which would allow the National Press Council to order the confiscation of critical newspapers for up to 15 days instead of 3 days and would allow the council to suspend a journalist's credentials for "the period that it sees fit" according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.
- The European Parliament resolution of 16 November 2017, notes it "is deeply worried about freedom of expression in Sudan, the ongoing censorship and seizures of newspapers, and the increased restrictions on journalists...[and] deplores the fact that numerous reports have emerged regarding repeated violations of media freedom and continued harassment of journalists by the NISS..."
- On Monday, December 18th, NISS confiscated copies of Al-Watan newspaper and detained the chief editor, Youssef Siraj, according to the Sudan Tribune, for "constantly publishing reports discussing the rising commodity prices and a high cost of living."

Forced Displacement and Slavery

- According to OCHA, 2.1 million people from Darfur are internally displaced and 312,000 are refugees in Chad. In the Nuba Mountains/Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, 230,000 are internally displaced, 241,500 are refugees in South Sudan and 40,000 are refugees in Ethiopia. Of the over 2 million Sudanese in need, 48% are children.
- The ICC Prosecutor, in her 26th report to the UN Security Council, expressed that she is "deeply concerned by Mr Al Bashir's recent speech calling for the dismantlement of the IDP camps in Darfur...[she] joins the Council in reiterating the importance of achieving "dignified and durable solutions for refugees and IDPs."
- Sudanese who are trying to escape the Sudan regime risk being sold as slaves. Amjed Farid, in a December 9th article titled, "The Judas Face of Europe: What Can You Do With Thirty Coins of Silver? The EU and Refugees Once Again", wrote "The investigation of the CNN anchor Nima Elbagir contained video footage of human auction that took place in Libya, in which bidders' voices are heard putting prices for buying slaves...that are not more than 400 USD for some... Young people from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia, Chad, Nigeria, and Niger...are trying to escape tyranny and sufferings... The ugly fact about the outrageous western reaction to the slave trade crisis is about the attempts to use it to force asylum seekers /refugees back to the situations they were trying to flee in the first place without working on solving the roots of their problems and guaranteeing their safety." Mr. Farid is referencing the Khartoum Process that funds, empowers and legitimizes Sudan's Rapid Support Forces, formerly the Janjaweed, by assigning it to implement the European Union's measures to curb immigration.

Non-Compliance with the ICC and U.S. Courts

- The ICC Prosecutor's 26th report to the UN Security Council notes that the government of Sudan has not cooperated with the Court "by arresting and surrendering all suspects in the Darfur situation" and highlights Sweden's observation to the Council that "the suspects' ability to travel internationally 'sends a public message that the decisions of the Court can be ignored without any consequence, which in turn, undermines the authority of the Council.'" It should not be forgotten that the President of Sudan has been indicted by the ICC for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.
- Despite rulings by U.S. federal judges, Sudan has failed to pay damages to victims of the 1998 bombings of U.S. Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, in which over 200 people were killed, and the bombing of the USS Cole in October 2000, which resulted in the murder of 17 American servicemen and women.

Restricting and Blocking Humanitarian Aid

- The October 2017 humanitarian update from South Kordofan / Blue Nile Coordinating Unit reports that "food security remains a major challenge due to the shortage of farmland caused by the military frontlines... A significant number of farms (21) and pastoral land were reported destroyed by fire along the frontlines in South Kordofan." The report indicates that the fires were allegedly set by "government forces or affiliated militias."
- Baroness Cox, in a December 11, 2017 debate in the House of Lords, stated that "the humanitarian situation in the Two Areas continues to deteriorate: 23.9% of children suffer from acute malnutrition and 8.4% from severe malnutrition." Furthermore, "In Blue Nile, 39% of households had reached levels of severe food insecurity in July and 11% are at the highest possible level of household hunger."
- According to USAID's Sudan – Complex Emergency Fact Sheet dated December 1, 2017, "Insecurity, access restrictions, and bureaucratic impediments limit the ability of relief agencies to respond to humanitarian and recovery needs in Sudan. Since mid-2016, GoS actions have led to meaningful improvements in humanitarian access and enabled relief organizations to deliver assistance to vulnerable populations in previously inaccessible areas of the country, including in Jebel Marra. Despite improvements, relief agencies continue to face a challenging operating environment in Sudan."

The failure of the United States to vigorously protest and impose consequences for such actions allows a regime, which has a deplorable track record, to continue these and other practices with impunity. We respectfully request your assistance in pressuring the Sudan regime, in part, by bringing these serious issues to the attention of the President and his Administration. The U.S. must make clear to the Sudan regime that any future positive actions with regard to engagement between the two countries requires genuine, demonstrable, and verifiable changes and failure to do so will result in the imposition of

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targeted sanctions through the Global Magnitsky Act and by other means. We look forward to supporting anticipated legislation along these lines in 2018.

These violations committed by the Sudan regime not only have immediate and serious impact on the people of Sudan but they fundamentally damage nation-building efforts and the ability of Sudanese to achieve a common agenda for the future. Therefore, we strongly urge Congress and the U.S. Administration to place freedom, justice, and equality at the heart of its relationship with Sudan and to prioritize engagement with opposition and civil society who are aligned with these values.

We thank you for your continuous efforts on behalf of the people of Sudan.

Sincerely,

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative, Nathan Wineinger, Director of Policy Relations, Washington, DC

Abdelbagi Jibril, Geneva, Switzerland

ACROSS, Elisama W Daniel, Executive Director, South Sudan

Act for Sudan, Eric Cohen, Co-Founder, Boston, MA

Adil Abdel Aati, Independent Candidate for Sudan Presidency 2020; Leader, Sudan of the Future Campaign

Ahmed H. Adam, Research Associate, School of Law, SOAS University of London, UK

Akulia Foundation, Lita Muki, Chairperson, Juba, Central Equatoria, South Sudan

Al Khatim Adlan Centre for Enlightenment & Human Development (KACE), Albaqir A Mukhtar, Director, Kampala, Uganda

Asha Khalil Elkarib, Activist and Human Rights Defender, Sudan

Brooklyn Coalition for Darfur & Marginalized Sudan, Laura Limuli, Coordinator, Brooklyn, NY

Christian Solidarity International-USA, The Rev. Heidi McGinness, Director of Outreach, Denver, CO

Collectif Urgence Darfour, Dr. Jacky Mamou, President, Paris, France

Colorado Coalition for Genocide Awareness and Action, Roz Duman, Founder / Director, Denver, CO

Comité Soudan, Diagne Chanel, Présidente, Paris, France

Concerned Citizens for Change, Gene Binder, Member Steering Committee, Bronx, NY

DAAM (Sudanese Pro-Democracy Activists Abroad), Ali Abdelatif M. Hussein, UK

Darfur Action Group of South Carolina, Richard Sribnick, MD, Chairman, Columbia, SC

Darfur and Beyond, Cory Williams, Co-Founder, Phoenix, AZ

Darfur Community Org, Bakheit Shata, Director, Omaha, NE

Darfur Interfaith Network, Martha Boshnick, Co-Chair, Washington, DC

Darfur Vigil Group, Helga Moore, Coordinator, New York, NY

Dear Sudan Love Marin, Gerri Miller, Founder and Coordinator, Tiburon, CA

Doctors to the World, C. Louis Perrinjaquet, MD, MPH, Medical Director, Breckenridge, CO

Dr. Caroline Faria, Department of Geography and the Environment, University of Texas at Austin

Dr. Deborah Mayersen, Research Fellow, University of Wollongong, NSW, Australia

Dr. Gregory H. Stanton, Founding Chairman, Genocide Watch

Dr. Paul Slovic, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

Dr. Robert K. Hitchcock, Adjunct Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM

East African Ministries (EAM), Alex Radler, Director of Development, Fort Worth, TX

Elhag Ali Warrag Sidahmed Warrag, Editor in Chief, Hurriyat, Egypt

Elijah M. Brown, Ph.D., General Secretary, North American Baptist Fellowship, Washington, DC

Ellen J. Kennedy, Ph.D., Executive Director, World Without Genocide, St. Paul, MN

End Impunity Organization (EIO), Angelina Daniel Seeka, Regional Director, Juba, South Sudan

Eric Reeves, Senior Fellow, Harvard University's François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Northampton, MA

Face Past for Future Foundation (FP4F), Abdelrahman Gasim, Chairman, Kampala, Uganda

Genocide No More - Save Darfur, Marv Steinberg, Coordinator, Redding, CA

Genocide Watch, Elisa von Joeden-Forgey, PhD, President, Galloway, NJ

Georgia Coalition to Prevent Genocide, Melanie Nelkin, Chair, Atlanta, GA

Global Partnership for Peace in South Sudan, Sarah Rial, Founder and Executive Director, Boston, MA

Greater Nuba Action Coalition (GNAC), John Jefferson, Founder, San Mateo, CA

Hamid E. Ali, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Public Policy and Administration, The American University in Cairo, New Cairo, Egypt

Help Nuba, Rabbi David Kaufman, Des Moines, IL

Humanity Is Us, Kimberly Hollingsworth, Founder and President, New York, NY

Idaho Darfur Coalition, Marilyn Griep, Co-Founder, Boise, ID

Independent Movement Organization, Adil Taha, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Fairfax, VA

Institute for Sustainable Peace, Randall Butler, CEO, Boulder, CO

Institute on Religion and Democracy, Faith McDonnell, Director, Church Alliance for a New Sudan, Washington, DC

International Growth Centre, Richard Newfarmer, Country Director, Washington, DC

International Justice Project, Monica Feltz, Esq., LL.M., Executive Director, Newark, NJ

Investors Against Genocide, Susan Morgan, Co-founder, San Francisco, CA

Jews Against Genocide, USA, Sharon Silber, Co-Founder, New York, NY

John H. Weiss, Associate Professor of History, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Joining Our Voices, Slater Armstrong, Founder/Director, Baton Rouge, LA

Kentuckiana Taskforce Against Genocide, Phil Nippert, Coordinator, Louisville, KY

Ladu Jada Gubek, National Salvation Front (NAS) Diplomatic Representative to the United States of America and the United Nations, Minneapolis, MN

Leadership Office of the Dams Affected Communities / Sudan, Ali Askouri, Chairman, London, UK

Long Island Darfur Action Group, Nancy Walsh, Coordinator, Farmingdale, NY

Massachusetts Coalition for Darfur, William Rosenfeld, Director, Boston, MA

Mia Farrow, Actress and Humanitarian

My Sister's Keeper, Rev. Gloria White-Hammond, M.D., Executive Director, Boston, MA

Mustafa Sharif, PhD., College Station, TX

Nasredeem Abdulbari, Doctoral Candidate, Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, DC

Nehemiah Initiative, Gavin Gramstad, Executive Director, Washington, DC

Never Again Coalition, Lauren Fortgang, Policy Director, Portland, OR

New York Coalition for Sudan, Eileen Weiss, Co-Director, New York, NY

Nuba Christian Family Mission, George Kouri Tuto, Chairman and James Spence Flournoy, Director, Denver, CO

Nuba Mountain Peace Coalition, Tito El Gassai, Dallas, TX

Nuba Mountains Advocacy, Gogadi Amoga, Chair, Cincinnati, OH

Nuba Mountains International Association, Komi Elaiaiser, President, Lorton, VA

Nubia Project, Nuraddin Abdulmannan, President, Washington, DC

Nubian Language Society, Nubantood Khalil, VA

Our Humanity in the Balance, Terry Nickelson, Executive Director, Deming, NM

Persecution Project Foundation, Brad Phillips, President, Culpeper, VA

Philip Tutu, Human Rights Activist, Kansas City, MO

Pittsburgh Darfur Emergency Coalition, David Rosenberg, Coordinator, Pittsburgh, PA

Professor Elihu D. Richter MD MPH, Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Hebrew University-Hadassah School of Public Health and Community Medicine, Jerusalem, Israel

Rabbi Abraham Cooper, Associate Dean, Simon Wiesenthal Center

Rev. Sylvia Carlson, Redstone Presbytery Mission Committee, Greensburg, PA

Rights for Peace Foundation, Osman Habila, General Director, Kansas City, MO

San Francisco Bay Area Darfur Coalition, Mohamed Suleiman, President, San Francisco, CA

Seed for Democracy for South Sudan, Justin Laku, Sr., Ottawa, ON, Canada

Seif Barsham, Activist, Boston, MA

Skills for Nuba Mountains, Lazim Suleiman Elbasha, Director, Kauda, South Kordofan/Nuba Mountains, Sudan

Society for Threatened Peoples - Germany, Ulrich Delius, Director, Göttingen, Germany

South Sudanese Global Community Network, Benjamin Taban Avelino, Sheffield, UK

STAND: The Student-Led Movement to End Mass Atrocities, Justin Cole, National Policy Coordinator

Stop Genocide Now, Katie-Jay Scott, Coordinator, Redondo, CA

Sudan Democracy First Group, Anwar Elhaj, Executive Director, Kampala, Uganda

Sudan Relief and Humanitarian Agency, Ishraga A. Khamis, Deputy Director, Blue Nile, Sudan

Sudan Sunrise, Tom Prichard, Executive Director, Reston, VA

Sudan Unlimited, Esther Sprague, Founder and Director, San Francisco, CA

Sudanese Community Association of Illinois, Peter Magai Bul, Chicago, IL

Sudanese Community Church, Episcopal Diocese of Colorado, The Rev. Ayyoubawaga (Oja) B. Gafour, Ph.D., Vicar, Denver, CO

Sudanese Community of Kentucky Inc, Abdulrahim Adam, President, Louisville, KY

The Abaunza Group, Bonnie Abaunza, Founder, Los Angeles, CA

The African Middle Eastern Leadership Project (AMEL), Mohamed Abubakr, President, Washington, DC

The Boma Assistance Group, Bill Andress, Chairman, Lexington, SC

The Elsa-Gopa Trust, Nell Okie, Director, Madison, CT

The Reverend Ronald D. Culmer, St. Clare's Episcopal Church, Pleasanton, CA

Thomas Merton Center, Gabriel McMorland, Executive Director, Pittsburgh, PA

Timothy Oslovich, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Vernon, CT

Unite for Darfur Organization, Bahar Arabie, CEO, Gaithersburg, MD

Use Your Voice to Stop Genocide RI, Sandra Hammel, Director, Portsmouth, RI

Victoria Sanford, PhD, Professor & Chair, Department of Anthropology, Lehman College, Director, Center for Human Rights & Peace Studies, Doctoral Faculty, The Graduate Center, City University of New York, New York, NY

Waging Peace, Maddy Crowther, Executive Co-Director, London, UK

World Peace and Reconciliation (WR&P), Adeeb Yousif, President, Washington, DC