

# A cry for help gone unheard

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In the summer of 2004, Andrew Loewenstein, an international lawyer who served on the Atrocities Documentation Team, traveled to eastern Chad to interview refugees from the Darfur Genocide. One story of the atrocities committed during this war between the Ethnic Arab Government and Ethnic African rebel forces was recounted by a woman who, while fleeing from her village when it was attacked by Sudanese soldiers and the Ethnic Arab Janjaweed militants, encountered the remains of several young boys whose “[...] throats had been cut, their hands chopped off, and their feet sliced from the big toe to the ankle. She saw that their heads had been broken open and their brains removed” (Loewenstein).

Many more gruesome stories have emerged from survivors of the brutal attacks on the Western Sudanese region of Darfur in a war waged by the Sudanese Government in order to target and destroy villages believed to be supporting Ethnic African rebel movements such as the Sudanese Liberation Movement and the Justice and Equality Movement. During this war and the resulting genocide, Darfur has evolved into a new Rwanda, where political conflict has become a backdrop for a battle between religious sects in order to achieve complete dominance and power in the country. Although a cease fire has been declared, many issues remain unresolved, the most pressing of which include the fact that Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir has not yet been brought to stand trial before the International Criminal Court on charges of genocide, and recent violence in Sudan threatens to restart a genocidal war that the U. N. estimates to have claimed three hundred thousand lives and displaced 2.5 million people.

In examining the state of affairs in Darfur, we, as ethical members of the global community, can conclude that the member nations of global peace keeping organizations, such as the United Nations, have a utilitarian obligation to intervene in Darfur due to the direct threat to both regional and international peace posed by the president of Sudan, the history of oppression by the Ethnic Arab Government towards the Ethnic African people of Sudan, and the gravity of the recent genocidal campaign that was waged by the Sudanese Government-Janjaweed alliance against the Ethnic African tribes of Darfur. In a report by the Associated Press, the public was informed that the International Criminal Court's ruling on the guilt of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on charges of genocide "...paves the way for President Bashir to become the first sitting head of state to be charged with humanity's worst crime... [but] President Bashir refuses to acknowledge the International Criminal Court, and says he will never surrender" (" Sudan's Leader Could Face Darfur Genocide Charge"). In President Bashir's current status as a sitting head of state charged with genocide, he poses a serious threat to regional peace in Africa due to his ability to continue supplying and supporting the ruthless Janjaweed militants and resume his devastating scorched earth campaign against the Ethnic African people of Sudan and neighboring nations, such as Chad, at any time he finds it necessary. In his promise to never surrender himself to the International Criminal Court, al-Bashir further threatens international peace in potentially starting a precedent of weakness on the part of the international community in punishing genocide, which could encourage future crimes against humanity due to a perceived immunity by the perpetrators. Up to this point in time, the major world peacekeeping organizations have had justifiable reasons as <https://assignbuster.com/a-cry-for-help-gone-unheard/>

to why they could not take military action against some of the most devastating genocides in history, in the case of Rwanda, the immediate trial of the perpetrators of the genocide was impeded as a result of the inability of U. N.

investigators or personnel to enter Rwanda due to the extent of the violent conflict raging during the war between the Tutsi and Hutu ethnic groups, but with all the evidence and a warrant of arrest issued for President al-Bashir by the International Criminal Court, organizations such as the U. N. and NATO no longer have the ability to avoid intervention in Darfur without the possibility of presenting an appearance of weakness to the nations of the world. Although a popular solution in dealing with conflict in Sudan has been to pressure regional powers in Africa to implement military force in order to end the devastating war and bring war criminals to justice, the regional powers of Africa, organized in the African Union, have proved their unwillingness to do so when President al-Bashir was permitted to enter and leave Kenya after attending a celebration for the adoption of the new Kenyan Constitution; when questioned as to why Omar al-Bashir was allowed to go free, Kenyan Ambassadors revealed that although “[...] Kenya is a signatory to the ICC, and is required by ICC rules to carry out its warrants [...] Kenya is also a member of the African Union, which directed its members not to arrest al-Bashir” (“ Darfur”). This incident in Kenya illustrates that, with the African Union only considering the immediate regional effects of arresting Omar al-Bashir, the responsibility falls upon the members of the world’s global peacekeeping organizations to consider the potential long term damage of allowing al-Bashir to continue his political policies, and intervene in Darfur in

order to prevent the possibility of al-Bashir committing actions with potential results such as the further exacerbation of the already devastating refugee crisis that has spread from Darfur to neighboring nations such as Chad, Nigeria, and Cameroon.

Actions must be taken in order to bring Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir to justice in order to demonstrate that the interests of regional organizations, such as the African Union, will not hinder the punishment of war criminals by global organizations who are seeking the greater good in punishing crimes against humanity and genocide. In understanding the long standing and continuing oppression of the Ethnic African people of Sudan under the Ethnic Arab regime that has ruled the country since the 1990s, responsible members of the global community, such as ourselves, can conclude that the members of the international peacekeeping organizations have a utilitarian duty to intervene in Darfur in order to put an end to the violent repression occurring in the area. In order to find evidence of the violent repression of the Ethnic African tribes of Darfur, one only needs to look at the Sudanese Government's unjustified brutality in suppressing any assumed opposition to their rule; interviews with survivors of the Darfur genocide have confirmed that " Ground assaults on villages were invariably preceded by bombardment from the Sudanese air force's fleet of Antonov bombers, MiGs, and helicopter gunships; and survivors have almost universally reported [...] that their attackers included contingents of both the Janjaweed [...] and the Sudanese military [...]" (Loewenstein). The reported battle strategy utilized by the Sudanese Government-Janjaweed alliance illustrates that, unless the members of international peacekeeping organizations intervene to end these

practices, the Sudanese Government will continue to have the ability to devastate and wrongfully destroy the lives and livelihoods of an entire region of Sudan with indiscriminate aerial and ground assaults on villages in Darfur strictly under the assumption that they support Ethnic African anti-government movements simply due to the characteristics of shared race and home region. Moreover, the Sudanese Army's providing military support for the Janjaweed despite the atrocities that the Janjaweed often commits in these attacks reveals that, unimpeded, the Sudanese Government will ally itself with the violent Ethnic Arab militias in order to achieve and preserve the dominance and power of their shared race both in tribal ownership of land and in control of the government over racial groups such as the Ethnic African population of Sudan. Further evidence of the historic racial repression by the Ethnic Arab government of Sudan over the country's Ethnic African population can be seen in the Sudanese Government's noteworthy connection with Ethnic Arab militant groups, this became evident in reports where " According to journalists and local observers, the government relied heavily on the Janjaweed to attack Darfuri villages [...] Besides burning hundreds of villages, the Janjaweed were responsible for mass killings, rapes, and whippings" (" Darfur").

In examining the Sudanese Government permitting the Janjaweed to wage total war against the Ethnic African villages of Darfur, it can be concluded that the Sudanese Government is willing to compromise the security and lives of the Ethnic African villagers of Darfur at the hands of the Janjaweed in order to ensure that all possible resistance to their government is eliminated; it is therefore the utilitarian responsibility of the members of international

peace keeping organizations to intervene in Darfur in order to provide security and safety to those who will not be protected by their own government. Although some have argued that the Sudanese Government uses the Janjaweed out of necessity for a cheap counterinsurgency force, no excuse can be given for the Sudanese Government permitting the Janjaweed to commit heinous acts of violence against the Ethnic African villagers of Sudan with impunity, and since the Sudanese Government values the military advantage of the Janjaweed to the point that they will not punish them for their crimes, the utilitarian obligation to end the lawlessness of the Janjaweed and punish them for their crimes rests on the shoulders of the world's international peacekeeping organizations. One of the most staggering examples of racial repression by the Ethnic Arab Government of Sudan against the Ethnic African population can be seen in the government's attempts to destroy any future political potential that could arise from the Ethnic African region of Western Sudan. In attacking the Ethnic African rebel movements in Darfur and the local Fur population by association, a leaked military memo gave the Janjaweed orders from the Ethnic Arab Government in Khartoum to "...kill all Fur leaders, representatives and intellectuals and to use all means possible to capture Fur cattle, donkeys, and horses" (War-Crime Prosecutions Will Not Bring Peace to Darfur"). These military orders exemplify that the Ethnic Arab Government of Sudan is not only attempting to destroy the presently threatening Ethnic African anti-government movements of today, but also those of the future generations by enacting a destructive campaign on infrastructure that directly results in the devastation of the Ethnic African population's ability to support even the meager subsistence farming that they require to survive. In addition to <https://assignbuster.com/a-cry-for-help-gone-unheard/>

destroying the only means of survival that the Ethnic African population of Darfur has in this area of heavy desertification, the destruction of the leadership and physical infrastructure of the Ethnic African tribes of Darfur greatly affects the international community due to the fact that the inhabitants of these destroyed villages become completely dependent of the United Nations to be given shelter and a constant supply of the necessities of life until they can reenter their home country, with this issue only growing since the start of the war in 2003, international organizations, such as the United Nations and NATO, must take action to restore the safety of Darfur for the Ethnic African population before the already stretched refugee camps grow just as inhospitable to life as their destroyed villages have become.

With all of the physical reasons for intervention in Darfur, from a president prepared to destroy both regional and international peace to remain in power all the way to a long standing and perpetual history of extreme racial repression, no reason for military action can be more pressing than to finally quiet the pain-ridden screams of agony and genocide that have been heard since the late 1900s by the tortured Ethnic African Masalit ethnic group, and continues to be carried on today by the expelled and tormented Fur and Zaghawa ethnic groups. In examining the genocide waged against the Ethnic African people of Darfur, which occurred in conjunction with the Sudanese Military and Janjaweed scorched earth campaign against Ethnic African villages in Darfur, the genocidal gravity of the genocidal events that took place during the course of the 2003-210 war against the JEM (Justice and Equality Movement) and the Sudanese Liberation Movement definitively prove that military action must be taken by the member nations of the



international peacekeeping organizations against the Sudanese Government and their Janjaweed allies. In order to truly grasp the severity of the genocide brought upon the Ethnic African Tribes of Sudan by the Sudanese Government-Janjaweed alliance, one must be informed of the similarities between the genocide that occurred in Darfur and that which occurred in the nation of Rwanda. In the case of Rwanda, escalating conflict between the Tutsi and Hutu ethnic groups came to its melting point when the Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana died when his plane was shot out of the air by what was believed to be rebel Tutsi forces, when news of the president's death was heard, " The Rwandan authorities quickly announced a curfew, and Hutu militias and government soldiers erected roadblocks around the capital. Radio Mille Collines, the Hutu extremist radio station, named ethnic Tutsi, those they called [...] cockroaches, the targets" (Power 330). The racial extremist takeover by the Hutu's of Rwanda at the instance when their racial superiority was most greatly challenged was indeed present in Darfur, when the JEM and the Sudanese Equality Movement began to gain a greater military advantage over government forces, the Sudanese Government responded similarly to the Hutu military leaders of Rwanda by contracting the aid ethnically related militias and setting the stage for unrestricted military assault against their rival ethnic group by organizing devastating military strategies based on resources available and permitting the ethnically tied militias to wage complete war against their enemy through shared tactics such as rape, mutilation, and infanticide.

Another dark similarity between these two African genocides exists in the presence and driving force of racism, in the case of Rwanda, the Tutsi ethnic

group was hatefully referred to as “ cockroaches” by the Hutu forces, a similar name given to the Ethnic African people of Darfur by the Janjaweed is the hateful racial slur of “ Nuba”, with the force of long standing racism which manifested in political conflict resulting in the death of 800, 000 people in Rwanda (Statistic: Power 334), the similarly motivated Sudanese Government-Janjaweed alliance must be removed from their position of power prior the death toll in Darfur rising if the conflict is restarted. Despite the end of armed conflict in Darfur, the remnants of the still unpunished genocide are ever-present in mass existence of refugee camps for the refugees of the Darfur Genocide. Fig. 1. Refugees from the Otash refugee camp in South Darfur being forced to flee from their refugee camp upon learning from the U. N.

that the Sudanese Government was stepping up pressure on Darfuri Refugees to vacate their already substandard living conditions in the refugee camps. Source: AP Images. Figure one illustrates a Darfur refugee camp where the inhabitants were forced to flee upon learning the Sudanese Government’s intentions to clear out refugees that remained in Darfur after their villages had been destroyed. In witnessing the utter dishevelment and destitution in which the Darfur refugees live, the forceful expulsion of these refugees illustrates the Sudanese Government’s genocidal intent in attempting to force the Ethnic African refugees from even the bleakest situation of survivability into one where they will either die from lack of necessities or be killed for refusing to obey government commands. In addition to witnessing the destitution of a Darfur refugee camp which the government will not permit, the images of the inhabitants, such as the

elderly and younger woman, illustrate the genocidal gravity of the situation in Darfur in the government not even permitting innocent civilians to stay in allowing the Janjaweed to brutally attack and sexually assault these women in order to stop the propagation of the Ethnic African race in Sudan. Based on the events that have occurred in Darfur, we, as concerned members of the global community, can make an informed conclusion that it is the utilitarian duty of the foremost international peacekeeping organizations to enact an intervention in Darfur in response to the threat to global and regional peace presented by the ICC charged Sudanese President al-Bashir, the historic oppression of the Ethnic African people of Sudan by the Ethnic Arab Government, and the gravity of the genocide waged against the Ethnic African people of Darfur under the backdrop of a war against Ethnic African rebel movements.

While the points enumerated illustrate the need for action in Darfur, the looming issues of today have provided a spark that threatens to reignite conflict in Sudan. With the Southern region of Sudan electing and preparing to separate from the religiously different Muslim Northern region of the country, the question stands if the Sudanese Government will take action to stop the separation in order to preserve the Ethnic Arab domination over all of Sudan. With the world watching Sudan, it is up to the global peacekeeping organizations to decide if they will correct the wrongs committed against Darfur and its Ethnic African population or stand by and let the crimes go unpunished both for the Ethnic African people of Darfur and encourage future actions of violence against the newly seceding region of Southern Sudan. Works Cited “ Darfur.” Global Issue in Context Online Collection.

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