

Darfur genocide essay sample



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In March of 2003, two rebel armies, the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) that consisted of mainly orphaned children, and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) took up arms against the oppressive Sudanese government complaining about the lack of protection from attacks led by nomads on civilians. The government responded by unleashing Arab militias, the Janjaweed, who attacked hundreds of villages. The Sudanese Government devastated many rebel areas, and as Zoe Chafe of World Watch believed to “empower roaming militias to assist with the killings.” Over 400 villages were entirely destroyed and millions of citizens were killed or forced to flee their homes. The ten years of carnage became known as the Darfur genocide and represented one of the worst atrocities in the modern era, that still rages on today. Many of the defined stages of genocide can be recognised in this period including classification, organisation, preparation, extermination and ultimately afterwards denial. Thanks to the UN, as well as various Journalists, the rest of the world was informed, and thousands of lives have been saved. Darfur is the major region in the west of Sudan. The major demographic of Sudanese people that live in Darfur are Muslims.

When General Omar Bashir took control of Sudan in 1989 through military upheaval, and this allowed The National Islamic Front government to exacerbate the situation. The conflict of Darfur was entirely internal. The Genocide was led by a group of government-armed and funded Arab militias called the ‘Janjaweed’. The Janjaweed systematically destroyed Darfurians by burning villages, looting economic resources, polluting water, and murdering, raping and torturing civilians. After Sudan became independent from Britain in 1956, Sudan became involved in two lengthy civil wars for

most of the remainder of the 20th century. These conflicts were based in the non-Arab southern Sudanese. The competition for scarce resources played a large part in the initiation of the conflicts. The genocide still continues today. The overall conflict and genocide in Darfur has claimed the lives of more than 2.5 million people and has displaced over 6.5 million people. Even today, over a hundred people continue to die every day, and five thousand people die each month. Currently, four million people in Darfur are in desperate need of aid, which represents nearly two thirds of the entire population.

The North and South Sudanese civil war was often characterized as being based on racial or religious conflicts, between the Arabs in the central government of Sudan and the African people of South Sudan, or between the Muslims of the north, against the Christian and other traditional African religions. In the south, Northern Sudan was governed by Britain as a colony in 1899, after a pressured integration in 1946, Britain refused to assist the South of Sudan. Another factor attributing to the war, were the natural resources of the south, consisting of vast amounts of oil fields, the south also has greater access to water and thus, being more fertile, and produces more vegetation. The first civil war finished in 1972 but began again in 1983. The second war and famine related occurrences resulted in more than 4 million people being evacuated and according to rebel estimates, more than two million deaths over a period of two decades. As the peak of the conflicts was reached in the 90's, the government ignored reports of increasing violence.

When the Comprehensive Peace Agreement ended the North/South War in 2005, South Sudan refuse to take into account the effects of the war, as they

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were in denial. The Government neglected hereafter with a lack of infrastructure and development assistance. When rebels attacked a Sudanese Air Force Base in north Darfur, this sparked a chain of governmental retaliations on residents of Darfur. The Sudanese Government organised and prepared the attack by arming the Arabic Janjaweed to destroy the Darfurnians. The government would attack from the air, in helicopters and jets, while the Janjaweed forces would enact a scorched earth campaign, burning villages to the ground, and poisoning wells in order to exterminate the populations of the Darfuris. Although there have been two peace agreements signed between the Darfur rebel groups and the Government of Sudan, conflict still continues today and casualties continue to increase. The Sudanese Government recently signed a ceasefire with the Justice and Equality Movement in attempt to revive a stalled peace process. The UN have been assisting with the process, by setting up various camps throughout Darfur, UN spokesman for Sudan, Kouider Zerrouk stated that “ more than 1. 4 million currently live in camps across Darfur”.

CITATIONS

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