


## **The International Failure to Confront Khartoum, March 17, 2005**

(4907 total words in this text)

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Consequences going forward for southern Sudan and Darfur

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March 17, 2005

"The United Nations has withdrawn all international staff in part of western Sudan to the state capital after Arab militias said they would target foreigners and UN convoys in the area, the top UN envoy in Sudan said on Wednesday. 'The Janjaweed militia have said that they will now target all foreigners and all UN humanitarian convoys, so we have withdrawn all people to El-Geneina [capital of West Darfur],' [the UN's Jan Pronk] said. The militias gave the warning to the drivers of seized UN trucks, he said." (Reuters, March 16, 2005)

The Janjaweed are not an independent force issuing this threat: they are the military proxy of the National Islamic Front regime in Khartoum. The "targeting of all foreigners and all UN humanitarian convoys" must be heard as a threat ordered or sanctioned by Khartoum. The facts are unambiguous: the Janjaweed militia have since spring 2003 militarily coordinated with the regime's regular ground and air forces; Khartoum has supplied and heavily armed the Janjaweed since first recruiting this brutal militia as a counter-insurgency force; and the regime has for almost two years paid, rewarded, and directed this savage genocidal weapon of destruction.

The direct, ongoing relationship between Khartoum's regular military and intelligence forces and the Janjaweed has been established beyond any reasonable doubt by human rights groups (particularly Human Rights Watch), the UN Commission of Inquiry, the African Union monitoring force in Darfur, and by virtue of variously obtained internal regime documents. The full extent of the present Janjaweed threat to humanitarian workers in West Darfur is unclear but deeply ominous; the origin of this threat in Khartoum is unmistakable.

We must see this Janjaweed threat against humanitarian personnel in West Darfur both as a means of curtailing the international witnessing of Khartoum's accelerating military efforts in the area (see below), as well as an extension of Khartoum's resumed campaign to obstruct relief efforts, a development highlighted by Kofi Annan in his February 2005 briefing of the UN Security Council:

"December and January saw increasing harassment of international nongovernmental organizations by [Khartoum's] local authorities [in Darfur], particularly in South Darfur. In a worrying sign that earlier progress is being rolled back, systematic arrest, false and hostile accusations through the national media outlets, and outright attacks were combined with renewed restrictions on travel permits and visa applications. Almost all NGOs operating South Darfur faced some form of intimidation that delayed and restricted their operations." (February 4, 2005 Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1556, Paragraph 21)

This obstructionism marks resumption of a strategy that was evident as long ago as December 2003, when UN Special Envoy for Humanitarian Affairs Tom Vraalsen reported Khartoum's "systematic" denial of humanitarian access to non-Arab or African tribal populations in Darfur. Even more insistently, in recent testimony before the House of Commons (UK), Mukesh Kapila describes what he witnessed as UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan prior to being forced from his position by Khartoum in March 2004 (the regime was outraged at Kapila's frank assessment of what he testifies was clearly then in Darfur a "form of genocide"):

"[Kapila:] I would say that 75-80% of the problem we had on the humanitarian side [in responding to Darfur] was certainly due to the systematic obstruction by the Sudanese government of humanitarian access." (Q 185 from Corrected Transcript of Oral Evidence; to be published as HC 67-v; taken before the International Development Committee, House of Commons, February 22, 2005)

It is almost impossible to conceive a more brazen defiance of the international community than Khartoum's renewed, calculated assault on humanitarian efforts in the most distressed region in the world today. The direct human consequences, if this present act of genocidal destruction is not reversed, will be many tens of thousands of lives lost. In a statement issued in mid-December 2004, UN Under-Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Egeland declared that mortality in Darfur could reach to 100,000 deaths per month if insecurity forced the withdrawal of humanitarian assistance (Financial Times, December 15, 2004). What we are witnessing in West Darfur is the first step in that forced withdrawal.

For West Darfur is the most precariously situated of the three states that make up Darfur Province, and the geographic region where the UN's World Food Program must work hardest to pre-position food before the advent of the rainy season in late spring/early summer. Every day of delay in this effort will add more casualties to an already unforgivably large number (the most recent Darfur mortality assessment by this writer, based on a survey of all extant data, argues for a figure of 380,000 dead since the outbreak of large-scale conflict in February 2003; see <http://www.sudanreeves.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=44&mode=thread&order=0&thold=0>).

#### THE ESSENTIAL TRUTH ABOUT THE KHARTOUM REGIME

It is long since time that international community accepted fully the most important truth about Sudan:

Peace will neither come to Darfur nor survive in southern Sudan without a fundamental shift in world attitudes towards the National Islamic Front regime in Khartoum, even when it is nominally succeeded in July 2005 by a "government of national unity" as a result of the January 9, 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in Nairobi. For years the international community has behaved---despite all evidence to the contrary---as though this military junta is capable of fundamental reform, that it can be "moderated" in significant ways, and that it can be weaned of its recourse to genocidal domestic security policies.

In fact, the only shifts within the regime have been calculations about which of its policies must be accommodated to international pressures that wax and wane. The very same brutal men who came to power by military coup in June 1989 continue to rule the country, with the complex exception of Hassan al-Turabi. The senior members of the NIF now under sealed indictment for massive "crimes against humanity" (per the UN Commission of Inquiry in Darfur) were all part of the regime that came to power in large measure to abort the peace process that was reaching towards culmination during the government of Sadiq el-Mahdi (1986-89).

[Africa Confidential (February 18, 2005, Volume 46, No. 4) has published an extensive list of members of the National Islamic Front who have been implicated in "crimes against humanity," and who have as a consequence increasingly little interest in accommodating international concerns about justice and "accountability." Included is First Vice-President Ali Osman Tahja, with primary responsibility for Khartoum's Darfur policy.]

#### RESUMED WAR IN SOUTHERN SUDAN?

The process that produced the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the National Islamic Front (NIF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) must be seen for what it is: a process that is still very much underway, and extremely vulnerable. For Khartoum counts on the remarkable, and unprecedented, international pressure that sustained this process diminishing under the costly burdens of

ongoing commitment to protecting the peace, both financially and militarily (in the form of a UN peace-support operation). There is already considerable evidence that Khartoum's calculation is all too accurate.

Moreover, since the regime acceded to the agreement of January 9 so clearly under duress, so obviously needing to offer the international community something while it pursued a genocidal counter-insurgency policy in Darfur, it is difficult to see this context of "agreement" as auguring any but an ominous future. When the Darfur matter is resolved, Khartoum will be in a position to resume war in southern Sudan, the Nuba Mountains, and Southern Blue Nile if it wishes.

Certainly the massive human destruction and displacement already achieved in Darfur suggest that the genocide is so far along as to be unstoppable before there has been a fundamental shift in the region's demographics, as well as its economic and political power arrangements. Khartoum's counter-insurgency operation has achieved ghastly success: the rebel groups have fractured politically and militarily, and agricultural production among the non-Arab or African populations from which the insurgents have recruited has collapsed.

Why would the regime choose to resume war with the south? Why would the historic opportunity of peace be foregone? Because there is great oil wealth in the south that the NIF still believes it can control in its entirety (rather than share evenly with the people of southern Sudan); because the regime remains committed to an Islamizing and Arabizing agenda; and because it calculates that the international consequences of resuming war, and reasserting full political control in Khartoum, will be manageable. It is no secret that a number of powerful voices within the regime have felt that in accommodating international pressure through the Naivasha peace process, too much was given away to the south. These voices, of a more brutally calculating survivalism, may very well prevail when Darfur is extinguished or becomes merely a chronic humanitarian warehousing operation.

And how can we gainsay such vicious calculation? If the world continues to conduct business as usual with this regime, if commercial and capital investment continues to come from European and Asian countries even at the height of the 21st century's first great episode of genocidal destruction, if the World Bank blandly declares it "expects to normalize relations with heavily indebted Sudan within a year" (Reuters, March 9, 2005), why should the regime believe that things will be any different after a carefully contrived breakdown of the peace agreement with southern Sudan? Certainly there will be ample opportunities for such contrivance; the regime-allied militias of Upper Nile Province are only the most conspicuous means available. For this reason alone the international community should be registering a great deal more concern about recent militia activities in the oil regions of Eastern Upper Nile, particularly the Akobo and Nasir areas (see below).

At the same time, Khartoum is more than willing to use the peace agreement of January 9 as a means of deflecting or warning off greater international pressure over Darfur, declaring in effect that the north/south peace agreement is in danger if the world community decides to act more aggressively on Darfur. We have what is only the most recent installment in this pattern of behavior in comments by Khartoum's Justice Minister Ali Yassin (one of those who is under sealed indictment for "crimes against humanity").

Yassin was speaking on the convening of the UN Commission on Human Rights (the NIF regime holds a seat on this now disgraced international body), and his reference to Sudan's impending "government of national unity" was a clear invocation of the power-sharing agreement that was a central part of the January 9 Comprehensive Peace Agreement:

"Unmeasured, uneven and unbalanced pressure and signals have exacerbated the already volatile situation in Darfur," Sudan's Justice Minister Ali Yassin said in a speech to the 53-strong committee [of the UN Commission on Human Rights] which began its 61st annual session here on Monday. 'Any undue pressure on the government of national unity will retard its ability to implement the comprehensive peace

agreement,' he said." (Agence France-Presse [Geneva], March 14, 2005)

This strategy of using as a threat the possible collapse of the completed north/south peace agreement is entirely continuous with the strategy the regime deployed for months in holding out the prospect of an "impending" agreement. In recent, quite remarkable testimony before members of the UK Parliament, former UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan Mukesh Kapila was asked pointedly by the Chair of the International Development Committee (Tony Baldry):

"[Baldry:] Did you have any suggestion from the UK Government that you should ease up your comments and your criticisms on Darfur until the Naivasha agreement was concluded?"

"[Mukesh Kapila:] Yes."

(Q 201 from Corrected transcript of Oral Evidence; to be published as HC 67-v; taken before the International Development Committee, House of Commons, February 22, 2005)

In other words, for well over a year, Khartoum used the southern peace process as a means of muting international criticism---especially by the UK, the US, and Norway---of genocide in Darfur. Now the regime's diplomatic manipulation has reversed itself: as criticism over Darfur mounts, Khartoum is resorting to clear threats to undermine the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The assumption is that the international community will again find expediency the easiest way to respond to Sudan's ongoing agony, and make a series of trade-offs and concessions that will cumulatively compromise the effectiveness of any response to Darfur or to the urgent transitional needs of southern Sudan. This attitude on the part of the international community is perfectly reflected in comments attributed to a "senior US official," likely Charles Snyder, the chief State Department official working on Sudan:

"A senior US official argued that the main US constraint [in considering humanitarian intervention in Darfur] was fearful that too much pressure over Darfur would destroy the US-mediated agreement signed in January that ended Sudan's separate north-south conflict, Africa's longest-running civil war, which cost some 2 million lives." (Financial Times, March 14, 2005)

In other words, despite the finding by the US State Department that genocide is occurring in Darfur---a finding nominally echoed by the White House---and despite hundreds of thousands of casualties to date, and with many more clearly in prospect, the US is worried about excessive pressure on the regime orchestrating this genocide.

The National Islamic Front is easily able to sniff out such expedient instincts and fashion responses accordingly. This is moral cowardice on the part of the US, which in its painful transparency constitutes very poor policy.

#### SOUTHERN SUDAN AND THE COSTS OF EXPEDIENCY

There are a number of deeply worrying signs and trends in southern Sudan. Some can be easily identified; others require closer examination of geography, recent history, the terms of the peace agreement, and the particular needs of a land ravaged by 21 years of brutally destructive civil war and scorched-earth clearances, particularly in the oil regions of Upper Nile Province.

The lack of financial commitment to emergency transitional aid is one obvious measure of the fragility of the peace process. Speaking of the agreement, UN Under-Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Egeland declared:

"In the south of Sudan, the world has really achieved something fantastic in putting an end to the bloodiest war in this region. But it is not willing to foot the bill of building the peace and providing for the return of refugees,' [Egeland] said. 'My (UN) people have built up very dramatically in anticipation that

the money will be coming because they simply cannot believe that the donor community will not assist them.”

“[Egeland] told the New York Times in an interview that only 25 million dollars of the total 500 million dollars pledged by donors last October had been received by his office. The funds are destined to economic development and build a democratic system to support the peace accord.” (Deutsche Presse Agentur, March 7, 2005)

Only 5% of the internationally pledged emergency assistance has been received, this as southern Sudan has entered into what will be the most precarious moment of a nascent peace. Even the food needs of southern Sudan have not been funded: senior spokesman for the World Food Program Peter Smerdon recently noted:

“The reality is that as of this week the 2005 [UN World Food Program] operation for south and east Sudan, totaling [US] \$301, is less than 10% funded.” (UN Integrated Regional Information Networks, March 9, 2005)

The failure to commit to substantial resources for emergency transitional needs in southern Sudan ensures that the means for accommodating the many hundreds of thousands of returning Internally Displaced Persons and refugees will not be in place in a timely fashion. The threats to stability created by such a large influx of bereft civilians, in regions that are destitute and bearing the terrible scars of war, are far too many.

At the same time, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations has proposed an exorbitantly expensive and very poorly conceived peace-support operation for southern Sudan---one that will cost over \$1 billion per year and yet still fails to address in meaningful fashion the greatest military threat to the negotiated peace, viz. the potent Khartoum-allied militias, especially in Eastern Upper Nile (EUN). The Akobo and Nasir regions of EUN have seen heavy recent fighting between these militias and forces of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army. Akobo has been captured and re-captured, and present insecurity (“red no-go”) prevents all humanitarian relief operations in the area (e.g., Akobo, Nasir, Wandeng, Mandeng, Wanding, Kier, Thot liet).

Citing “humanitarian sources,” the UN’s Integrated Regional Information Networks [IRIN] gives us an unusually good account of these under-reported developments:

“Recent movements of armed militias around the eastern Sudanese town of Akobo in Jonglei State have led to increased tension in the area, humanitarian sources told IRIN. ‘Some 700 militia were heading to Akobo from Nasir [near the Ethiopian border], during the first week of March,’ one source said on Wednesday. ‘The troops came very close, up to an hour’s walking distance, and camped there for a day or so.’”

“On 17 [2005] February, fighting broke out when armed militias attacked Akobo. They were reportedly under the command of Taban Juoc, who was recently promoted to the rank of Brigadier by the Sudanese government. ‘The unprovoked attacks on SPLM/A positions in the town of Akobo by renegade Commander Taban Juoc are a direct violation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement,’ Samson Kwaje, spokesman for the SPLM/A said in a 4 March [2005] statement.” [ ]

“The SPLM/A retook Akobo on 20 [2005] February and its Commander Dou Yaak said the armed group that briefly occupied Akobo had killed three SPLM/A soldiers. He also said the armed men had destroyed part of the hospital and the church, and burnt down approximately 2,000 tukuls (grass huts).” (IRIN [Nairobi], March 11, 2005)

What is the nature of the UN peace-support operation that must confront such situations as the most

likely threat to peace in southern Sudan? How well is this force prepared to avert military confrontation in Upper Nile? or the three contested areas of Abyei, the Nuba Mountains, and Southern Blue Nile? Very poorly indeed, even as its budget is absurdly bloated.

We should first recall that the Protocol on "implementation modalities" that became part of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of January 9, 2005 was signed on December 31, 2004 by the Khartoum regime and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) ("Agreement on Permanent Ceasefire and Security Arrangements Implementation Modalities"). This key protocol is the only language concerning a UN peacekeeping operation to which the SPLM/A has committed itself and on which it has been consulted. The Protocol stipulates:

"The Parties [Government of Sudan and SPLM/A] agree to request the UN to constitute a lean, effective, sustainable, and affordable UN Peace Support Mission to monitor and verify this Agreement and to support the implementation of the CPA as provided for under Chapter VI of the UN Charter;" (Section 15.1)

There is no evidence that the proposed UN peace support operation for southern Sudan (UNMISUD) will be either "lean" or "affordable" for the purposes that should guide deployment. It is thus difficult to see how such an operation can be "sustainable." The force proposed in the original US-drafted Security Council resolution of February 2005 ("up to 10,000 uniformed personnel, plus 715 civilian police, and an appropriate civilian component") could hardly be more vaguely described. Moreover, though articulated under the auspices of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the proposed deployment of this force is not defined in terms that are specific to the particular military situation in southern Sudan.

There is no indication of how UNMISUD would confront military hostilities initiated by Khartoum-controlled militia forces, even as present evidence makes clear that this is distinctly the most likely source of cease-fire violations and the greatest single threat to the peace agreement. The US proposal speaks of a mandate to "monitor and verify the Ceasefire Agreement, and support implementation of the CPA," and "to observe and monitor the movement of armed groups," and to "investigate violations of the ceasefire agreement" Section 2, (a)(b)(c), but not how it would respond to violations that threaten the existence or viability of the ceasefire.

The mandate includes "assisting in the establishment of the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration program as called for in the CPA and its implementation through voluntary disarmament, and weapons collections and destruction." But without much more specific rules of engagement, and a much clearer role in the disarmament of the militias, the bulk of this vast UNMISUD force, well in excess of 10,000, will have no role other than to protect approximately 750 actual monitors on the ground.

Indeed, as described by Jan Pronk in a briefing of the UN Security Council, UNMISUD will have 750 military observers, a 5,000-strong "enabling force," and a "protection component" of 4,000 (UN Press Release [New York], February 7, 2005). Observation and monitoring are certainly of fundamental importance, and must without question be provided, and protected. But a force well in excess of 10,000, costing over \$1 billion per year, without a meaningful mandate other than observation, is the very opposite of "lean" and "sustainable," especially in the context of the overwhelming transitional needs of civilian southern Sudan.

The present international commitment to southern Sudan reflects a poor allocation of resources, a failure to recognize the real threats to the tenuous peace, and an unwillingness to confront the realities in Khartoum that remain so insistently evident. In short, the similarities to the international response in Darfur are many and deeply troubling.

PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN DARFUR RECEDE FURTHER

For in Darfur, we see a version of the same unwillingness to confront Khartoum: instead of the humanitarian intervention that has been clearly dictated for over a year, the international response has been to provide only what humanitarian assistance Khartoum permits. The woefully inadequate African Union monitoring force of 2,000 under-equipped personnel constitutes the entire international response to the vast and urgent security needs of a region the size of France. Whether we look to the UN, the European Union, the US, or the AU itself, there has been such a consistent lack of willingness to confront Khartoum over its intransigent pursuit of genocidal counter-insurgency policies in Darfur that we can hardly be surprised by the regime's willingness to threaten humanitarian operations by means of its Janjaweed militia proxy.

Moreover, it is not accidental that the violent threat to humanitarian workers has been so bluntly issued in West Darfur, which has been relatively more quiet in recent months. For increasingly, this is the region within Darfur where fighting is concentrated. Khartoum has seen the AU deploy its highly limited resources in North and South Darfur, and as a consequence has simply shifted the military "front," thereby eluding a great deal of whatever scrutiny the thinly deployed AU might provide.

Reuters recently reports (dispatches of March 14 and 16, 2005) on fighting between Khartoum's forces and the National Movement for Reform and Development (a third Darfuri rebel movement) in the Jabel Moun area of West Darfur. The Darfur Relief and Documentation Center (Geneva) has also recently reported in detail on intense fighting in the same area, and gives a much fuller sense of the impact of fighting on humanitarian operations:

"Lawlessness, banditry activities, violence and the threat of violence are rampant in the region with serious implications on the situation of food security in many affected areas especially in the Jabal Marra massive and Jabal Moun in West Darfur. Banditry activities and growing security risks are leading to suspension of relief operations and delivery of food and other lifesaving material to thousands of internally displaced persons and vulnerable host communities. Fighting and violence are also causing more displacement and casualties among the civilian populations. DRDC received reports of fighting and intensive unrest in the Nertiti, Wadi Azoum, Habilla and Seleia areas (West Darfur) since the beginning of March 2005. As a direct result the UN declared these areas as No-Go Zones."

"Threat of violence by militiamen forced UN agencies in West Darfur to withdraw their personnel from the countryside into El-Geneina town since 10th March 2005. Other humanitarian organisations followed the UN and are withdrawing their workers into the town from the countryside."

"DRDC is concerned that most of the attacks and banditry activities were carried out in areas controlled by the government of Sudan, and in some cases the army and police were visibly present. The indiscriminate targeting of humanitarian organisations and relief workers appears to be a calculated attempt to cause starvation among the internally displaced populations." (Darfur Relief and Documentation Center, Geneva, March 14, 2005)

But the UN Security Council remains paralyzed, unable to reach consensus on even a mildly threatening sanctions regime. This is so despite the urgent call for humanitarian intervention yesterday (March 16, 2005) from fifteen distinguished UN human rights experts:

"We are gravely concerned about the ongoing violations of human rights and humanitarian law in the Darfur region of Sudan [ ] and we call upon the international community to take effective measures to end the violations on a basis of utmost urgency. [ ] Despite efforts by the international community to commit troops and assistance to the region, the violence continues virtually unabated in a context of wholesale impunity, and the threat of famine is looming."

"The violations in Darfur have been staggering in scale and harrowing in nature. [ ] If the vow that the international community will 'Never Again' stand idly by while crimes against humanity are being

perpetrated is to have any meaning, now is the time for decisive action.”

“A robust international solution is urgently needed, as the Secretary-General affirmed when he called upon the Security Council, on 16 February 2005, ‘to act urgently to stop further death and suffering in Darfur, and to do justice for those whom we are already too late to save.’” (UN Human Rights Experts Call for Urgent, Effective Action on Darfur,” UN Information Service [Geneva], March 16, 2005)

But instead of humanitarian intervention, with all necessary military support, “the world is only putting an expensive humanitarian plaster on the open wound in Darfur.” [Jan Egeland, UN Under-Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs] (Reuters, March 7, 2005)

This substitution of humanitarian relief for humanitarian intervention ultimately reflects an unwillingness to address the Darfur crisis honestly, to confront Khartoum directly over its genocidal ambitions. It reflects as well an international inability to speak honestly about the massive shortcomings of the African Union as a source of civilian protection. This in turn reflects a dishonest accommodation of the views of such African leaders as Nigerian President and AU Chair Obasanjo, Libyan President Ghaddafi, and Egyptian President Mubarak---views that would substitute the slogan “African solutions for African problems” for a meaningful response to genocide in Darfur.

Meanwhile, the humanitarian crisis continues to deepen. The UN World Food Program’s disingenuous claim of a 33% increase in food deliveries in February 2005 (over January 2005) masks a greater truth: the average monthly food delivery for January and February 2005 (1.4 million recipients) is actually 100,000 fewer than the December 2004 total of 1.5 million recipients. Moreover, there is little chance for the significant increases that are necessary to help the 2.4 million people described by the UN as “conflict-affected” (UN Darfur Humanitarian Profile No. 10, January 1, 2005---the most recently available, even as this number has surely increased significantly in the past two and a half months). As the World Food Program (WFP) acknowledged recently:

“WFP is reaching the limits of its Cooperating Partners’ capacity on the ground in the three [Darfur] States, an issue that requires attention in the course of this month.” (WFP Situation Report on Darfur, March 2-8, 2005)

In other words, the capacity of those humanitarian organizations that enable the WFP to reach intended beneficiaries has reached its limits---at a level more than 1 million human beings below what is currently required. This statistical/logistical reality is clear if we consider the food-distressed populations in rural areas that are presently inaccessible and not likely to reach camps, either for security reasons or because they are waiting until all coping mechanisms and food-stocks are exhausted. A recent report from the US Agency for International Development notes:

“Some nongovernmental organizations have voiced concerns that potential [food] beneficiaries may not seek food assistance until their coping mechanisms are exhausted and no food-stocks remain. Relief agencies report that registrations are increasing in supplementary and therapeutic feeding centers, confirming the fact that additional communities are beginning to lack sufficient food.” (US Agency for International Development, “Darfur Fact Sheet,” March 4, 2005)

The chief AU envoy for Darfur, Baba Gana Kingibe, reports just today on an even more ominous development: “There was a two-month food security gap before. Our estimates now are giving us a four-month food security gap,” [Kingibe] said” (Reuters, March 17, 2005).

Additionally, WFP is reporting a serious current break in the food pipeline for “pulses” (leguminous food) essential for any healthy human diet. Other non-cereal shortcomings are also in evidence. The current curtailment of humanitarian operations in West Darfur also poses an extremely serious risk to belated efforts by WFP to pre-position food in West Darfur prior to the rainy season (which affects West Darfur



most consequentially).

This is the context in which to assess Khartoum's use of the Janjaweed to threaten and obstruct humanitarian relief efforts in West Darfur. There is precious little evidence that sufficient honesty will obtain in that assessment.

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