

Khartoum's Continuing Assault on Humanitarian Aid Workers:

A campaign of intimidation in the context of international acquiescence

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June 1, 2005

Khartoum's National Islamic Front regime has in the past two days arrested the two top officials working in Darfur and Sudan for the Nobel Peace Prize-winning humanitarian organization Doctors Without Borders/Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF, specifically MSF-Holland). For emphasis, the regime's security forces also arrested the translator for Kofi Annan following the UN Secretary-General's interview with rape victims in Darfur, including a pre-pubescent girl. If we are to understand the implications of these extraordinarily brazen actions, we must see not simply how they extend an official policy of harassing and intimidating aid organizations, as well as stifling their efforts to convey the full genocidal horror that continues in Darfur. The meaning of these arrests, ordered on purely contrived grounds, derives ultimately from Khartoum's profound contempt for the international community.

The regime is openly contemptuous of international humanitarian operations in Darfur, and has relentlessly obstructed them for over a year and a half. The regime is equally contemptuous of all international human rights organizations, as well as the international news media and their fitful efforts to reveal the truth about human suffering and destruction in Darfur. The regime is particularly contemptuous of the International Criminal Court, to which the UN Security Council has referred massive "crimes against humanity" following the report of a Commission of Inquiry (January 2005). These crimes certainly including acts by senior officials of this same brutal regime.

The regime is also contemptuous of the African Union and its all too limited efforts to provide a deterrent to ongoing genocide in Darfur: the regime has blocked investigations by the AU, has permitted hostile military actions against AU personnel, and has refused to grant a mandate for meaningful civilian protection.

And the regime is contemptuous of the UN, which has through various of its senior officials conveyed weakness and inconsistency. For its part, the UN Security Council has passed six resolutions, none of which has convinced the Khartoum regime that there are consequences for genocidal actions. The "demand" of Security Council Resolution 1556 (July 30, 2004)---that Khartoum disarm its vicious Janjaweed militia allies and bring their leaders to justice---has for almost a year been an object of especially conspicuous contempt.

Most broadly, the regime is contemptuous of the African peoples of Sudan, whether in Darfur, southern Sudan, or other marginalized regions of Africa's largest country (including the increasingly restive east). This is one context in which to understand the virtually simultaneous announcements by National Islamic Front foreign minister Mustafa Ismail and by the UN's World Food Program (WFP): Ismail announced that oil production would climb to 500,000 barrels/day in August of this year, ensuring a massive growth in revenues for the regime; WFP announced that funding for emergency humanitarian food aid for southern Sudan is woefully inadequate and that many thousands of lives are already at acute risk. This occurs at the

beginning of the "hunger gap" prior to fall harvest, with very little food in prospect (UN IRIN, May 27, 2005).

Moreover, the increasing number of returning internally displaced persons and refugees will place inordinate strains on humanitarian resources in southern Sudan. The UN's respected Food and Agriculture Organization has estimated that "580,000 displaced persons were expected to return to the south after the rainy season" (UN IRIN, May 27, 2005)---these in addition to the more than 200,000 who have already returned to the south.

Intensifying famine conditions in the south, particularly Bahr el-Ghazal Province---site of Khartoum's engineered famine of 1998, which may have claimed more than 100,000 lives---have been overshadowed by the crisis in Darfur. But this must not diminish Khartoum's conspicuous failure to respond, and the regime's gross mismanagement of national resources.

For despite a massive increase in oil revenues (Sudan already produces approximately 300,000 barrels/day, having exported none prior to August 1999), the most urgent food needs of the primarily Dinka people of Bahr el-Ghazal are essentially ignored. And yet the NIF regime last year completed purchase of 12 MiG-29's from Russia, and announced plans to purchase 12 more (see Christian Science Monitor, August 31, 2004 at: csmonitor.com/2004/0831/p01s02-wogi.html and www.airforce-technology.com/projects/mig29/). This profligate acquisition of one of the world's most advanced fighter aircraft comes in place of food purchases and investment in the agricultural sector of Sudan, which even a white-washing International Monetary Fund (IMF) has conceded is badly undercapitalized. Khartoum pleads poverty when it comes to feeding Sudan's people, even as it makes hugely and gratuitously expensive military purchases.

This, too, bespeaks the regime's contempt---for the IMF and for those international actors willing to overlook genocidal destruction in the interest of securing financial and commercial advantage in dealing with this newly oil-rich regime.

THE VIEW FROM KHARTOUM

Why is Khartoum so confident in its contempt? Why does it feel sufficiently emboldened to arrest senior officials of Doctors Without Borders/Medecins Sans Frontieres, an emergency medical relief organization which collectively has 3,300 personnel in Darfur, representing almost a third of the aid workers in the humanitarian theater? Why, despite specific promises of protection, does the regime promptly arrest a translator for the UN Secretary-General on his recent visit to Darfur? Most fundamentally, why does the regime continue, with an obvious sense of impunity, its current policy of genocide by attrition in Darfur?

The answers are painfully, disgracefully obvious. Khartoum continues its genocidal policies in Darfur---including the obstruction of humanitarian assistance---because these policies have for more than two years constituted a brutally successful counter-insurgency strategy, destroying or displacing as many as two-thirds of the non-Arab or African tribal populations perceived by the regime as supporting the insurgency movements. For its part, the international community has been content with what has been essentially moral exhortation and condemnation. No

meaningful sanctions have actually been imposed or are in prospect. The ICC referral has perversely succeeded only in providing Khartoum an incentive for greater violence and contempt. And NATO logistical assistance to the African Union will offer only incremental improvements in human security.

QUANTIFYING GENOCIDE

Assuming a pre-war population in Darfur of six million, and a non-Arab or African percentage of very roughly 60-65%, this suggests an ethnically-targeted population of 3.5 to 4 million. Over the past 28 months, approximately 400,000 people have been killed by violence, as well as by disease and malnutrition that are the direct results of violence (see April 30, 2005 mortality assessment by this writer at <http://www.sudanreeves.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=51&mode=thread&order=0&thold=0>).

Approximately 2 million Darfuris are now registered in camps for displaced persons in Darfur (UN Darfur Humanitarian Profile No. 13, April 1, 2005), and another 200,000 are refugees in Chad. The number of unregistered displaced persons in camps and surviving in inaccessible rural areas may only be estimated, but is likely in excess of 300,000 (see April 30, 2005 mortality assessment).

In short, almost 3 million people have destroyed or displaced. This is the primary reason for the diminishment in violence that is so often cited as evidence of an "improving" situation in Darfur. In fact, this "improvement" simply reflects the consolidation of the consequences of ethnic destruction and displacement.

And the dying is far from over, despite the diminishment of violence. The number of conflict-affected persons in Darfur and eastern Chad is now estimated by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs at 2.82 million (US Agency for International Development "fact sheet" for Darfur, May 27, 2005). Various UN officials have indicated that those in need of food aid will climb to over 3 million in the current rainy season (which is largely coincident with the traditional "hunger gap" between spring planting and fall harvest). Because the entire population of Darfur is now affected by the collapse of the agricultural economy, as well as the disruption of both trade and traditional camel and cattle migration routes, Arab tribal populations will also be affected (it is important to bear in mind that only some of the many Arab groups in Darfur have been recruited into the Janjaweed). The total of those in need of food assistance may exceed 4 million according to Jan Egeland, head of UN humanitarian operations.

Many of those who presently most need aid are either inaccessible in rural areas, or are denied humanitarian assistance by the regime. The New York Times' Nicholas Kristof reports from Nyala (having secured entry only by accompanying Kofi Annan):

"The Sudanese government is blocking new arrivals like [a displaced African woman named Magboula] from getting registered, which means they can't get food and tents. So Magboula is getting no rations and is living with her children under a straw mat on a few sticks." (New York Times [dateline: Nyala, South Darfur], May 31, 2005)

The rainy season will also certainly bring an increase in disease among camp populations that have more than doubled in size in the past year and have been seriously weakened by malnutrition. The stubborn Hepatitis E infection (with very high mortality among pregnant women) continues to be a significant health issue. Cholera and dysentery loom again as the greatest health threats in camps that have seriously deficient sanitary facilities, although outbreaks of meningitis, polio, and measles are cause for extremely serious concern. Malaria will also claim significant numbers of lives with the first hatch of mosquitoes.

Khartoum is well aware of all these sources of ongoing human destruction, and this is the context in which to assess the meaning of the arrests of senior MSF personnel for a March 8, 2005 MSF report on the extremely well-documented phenomenon of rape of women and girls by the Janjaweed and Khartoum's regular armed forces. Almost three months after publication, MSF has been singled out by Khartoum for harassment and intimidation; this is a direct assault on the largest and most important humanitarian presence in Darfur.

As Human Rights Watch observed prior to the arrests, in a May 24, 2005 release:

"The UN has estimated that as many as 3.5 to 4 million people in Darfur will not have enough to eat in the next few months. The Sudanese government has recently stepped up its bureaucratic war on the vast humanitarian relief effort that is attempting to help millions of Darfurians. Since December [2004], the Sudanese government has been trying to intimidate some humanitarian agencies in Darfur through arbitrary arrests, detentions and other more subtle forms of harassment." (Human Rights Watch press release, May 24, 2005)

But given high levels of insecurity, even unfettered humanitarian access ensures only that the camps for displaced persons will become more efficient "human warehouses"---and stronger magnets for starving people in rural areas, where there is no possibility of planting or food production. As the International Committee of the Red Cross grimly observes:

"During the last planting season [spring/summer 2004], less than 30% of arable land was cultivated. This proportion is set to decline further [during the current planting season]."

And the collapse of the agricultural economy is reflected in other dire developments:

"Like agriculture, trade in goods and cattle has dramatically declined in Darfur. Migration routes continue to be blocked owing to the hostilities. Accessibility to grazing areas must be restored to prevent further loss of livestock." (ICRC press release, May 28, 2005)

The success of Khartoum's genocidal counter-insurgency strategy is already assured.

THE FAILURES OF INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Nothing does more to convince the genocidaires in Khartoum of their impunity than the clear shift in US policy on Darfur, and Sudan more generally. The point-man within the Bush administration has been Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick. It was Zoellick who on April

15, 2005 (in Khartoum) pointedly declined to reaffirm the unambiguous genocide determination by former Secretary of State Colin Powell before the US Senate on September 9, 2004:

"Genocide has been committed in Darfur, and the government of Sudan and the Janjaweed bear responsibility."

[Under obvious political duress, President George Bush today (June 1, 2005) finally reiterated the US genocide determination of last September. It has been, according to Kristof in his New York Times column of yesterday, 142 days since Bush last mentioned Darfur, and then only in passing. We are fully justified in our skepticism about how seriously the President regards genocidal destruction of Darfuris, and US contractual obligations to halt this destruction under 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Recent statements by his two senior State Department officials only confirm such skepticism.]

It was also Zoellick who attempted to diminish mortality in Darfur by declassifying a scandalous State Department report that purported to demonstrate that deaths in Darfur were in the range of 63,000-146,000. But the report (still posted at <http://www.state.gov/s/inr/rls/fs/2005/45105.htm>) is a travesty, a disgrace to reason and ultimately to justice for those Darfuris who have died. It contains not a single reference or citation, and offers not a single statistical derivation; as the State Department offers it, and Zoellick invokes it, the report is nothing other than bald numerical assertion with tendentious and frequently erroneous characterizations of the crisis in Darfur.

[The State Department "report" has been incorporated into another highly tendentious document ("Darfur: Counting the Deaths," May 26, 2005, CRED, Brussels), which will be analyzed by this writer in a forthcoming mortality assessment.]

And most recently, Zoellick has effectively removed all pressure on Khartoum to engage in meaningful negotiations with the insurgents in Darfur by declaring that the very regime responsible for ongoing genocide "was now 'working hard' for a political solution to restore order in the troubled western region [of Darfur]" (Agence France-Presse, May 27, 2005).

AFP appropriately notes that Zoellick's comments "contrasted with the US position earlier this year, expressing 'grave concerns' over violence in Darfur, sticking by its description of genocide, and proposing new UN sanctions against Khartoum."

We may reasonably ask how a regime that continues to be guilty of what the President has today again declared to be genocide can also be "trying to work cooperatively," and "working hard for a political decision." What is the point of contact between "political cooperation" and ongoing responsibility for the deliberate, ethnically-targeted destruction of the African peoples of Darfur-- "as such"?

Khartoum has certainly banked this grotesque assessment, along with broader international willingness to support---at least diplomatically---the north/south Comprehensive Peace Agreement (signed in Nairobi on January 9, 2005) at the expense of speaking honestly about

genocide in Darfur. This expediency, in evidence since early 2004, has been fully discerned by the regime.

Khartoum has also carefully watched the recent summit in Addis Ababa (home to the African Union), chaired by Kofi Annan and AU Chair Alpha Oumar Konare. Khartoum saw the insistence, repeated both by Konare and other AU officials, as well as NATO officials, that the force on the ground in Darfur would not include any non-African troops. NATO's role would be confined to logistics, transport, and advising. Most significantly, there was no call for an expanded mandate for the current or deploying AU personnel: the AU's will remain a monitoring mission, tasked only with reporting on the observance of an increasingly irrelevant cease-fire agreement.

Why would the AU not demand of Khartoum a mandate that explicitly included civilian protection and the protection of humanitarian operations? The obvious answer is that there is no political will within the AU to make such a demand of Khartoum, which would certainly reject it. Rather than create a "non-permissive environment," the AU has taken the expedient path of least resistance, arguing that the mere presence of AU personnel will deter violence.

To a very limited extent this is true, as suggested by the effects of the presently deployed 2,400 AU personnel. Where these personnel are present, violence is less likely, though there have been a great many reported instances in which attacks by Khartoum and the Janjaweed (not a party to the cease-fire) have been completely undeterred by AU presence. For example, Reuters recently reported (May 29, 2005) on the observation of a returned resident of Labado (a significant town in South Darfur that was destroyed in January despite the presence of the AU):

"Just a week ago [the Janjaweed] burned a village not three kilometers (two miles) from here. The AU could see them coming,' said Juma'a Eissa, one of the residents [of Labado]. 'But they didn't stop it, they just made a report.'" (Reuters [dateline Labado, South Darfur], May 29, 2005)

But even the 7,500 troops planned for deployment by August are not remotely sufficient to address the multiple security tasks that Darfur presents. Nor indeed, is the total of 12,000 that the AU plans to deploy a year from now (spring 2006).

There are over 150 camps for displaced persons in Darfur: they and their environs must be secured against the ongoing predations of the Janjaweed; a large police force is also required to reduce the dramatically increasing tensions between deeply frustrated camp residents and Khartoum's security forces. Recent deadly clashes in Kalma camp (May 20, 2005) and Abu Shouk camps---two of the largest---highlight this critical need. So too does the brutal assault on the people at Soba camp outside Khartoum, in which over 30 people were killed in furtherance of the regime's policy of forcible expulsion and relocation. Such a policy of forcible relocation is being deployed with deadly consequences throughout Darfur as circumstances permit, and must be ended quickly and definitively or deaths (particularly starvation) will grow rapidly.

Humanitarian corridors must be secured. The UN Joint Logistical Committee for Darfur continues to report that the key road arteries from Nyala (the capital of South Darfur and a transport hub) continue to be "red no-go": these include the roads to al-Fasher (capital of North

Darfur), to al-Geneina (capital of West Darfur), and Ed Daen, the key juncture to the east of Nyala (UNJLC Darfur Bulletin #61, May 30, 2005). Many roads are so insecure that the UN's World Food Program finds it difficult or impossible to hire drivers for convoys.

Rural populations are still completely vulnerable to Janjaweed attacks, and the AU cannot deter these attacks or even report them all. Moreover, the involvement of Khartoum's regular forces, including helicopter gunships, continues, despite US State Department declarations that all such attacks have ceased. The Scotsman (UK)---which has been impressively authoritative in its dispatches on Darfur---yesterday reported on confidential AU documents, chronicling Khartoum's brazen defiance of UN resolutions and its commitment to the "cease-fire," and thoroughly belying claims by the US's Zoellick of "political cooperation" on the regime's part:

"Confidential AU reports have provided damning new evidence of the involvement of Sudanese government forces and their Janjaweed militia allies in the murder and rape of civilians in the Darfur region. AU monitors have collected photographic evidence of Sudanese helicopter gunships in action attacking villages, and their reports conclude that the Sudanese government has systematically breached the peace deals that it signed to placate the UN Security Council."

"Reports from Darfur indicate that air attacks on villages have continued amid defiance of UN resolutions calling on the Khartoum regime to disarm the Janjaweed, with the latest helicopter attack in South Darfur reported to have taken place on 13 May [2005] as the UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan, was preparing to visit the province. Pictures taken by AU monitors document attacks by a Sudanese helicopter gunship on the village of Labado in December, a month after the Sudanese government gave an assurance that there would be no more such attacks. The Sudanese government markings are clearly visible on the tailfin of the helicopter."

"The government in Khartoum has consistently denied using air attacks against villagers, insisting that they have only been used defensively against attacks by rebel forces. The US and British governments have accepted Sudanese assurances that there have been no air attacks since February, but the anti-genocide Aegis Trust---which is campaigning for an enlarged AU force to be sent to Darfur---claims it has received reports of a bombing raid involving an Antonov aircraft on 23 March [2005] and a helicopter attack in south Darfur on 13 May [2005] witnessed by AU monitors." (The Scotsman, May 31, 2005)

Again, it is important to bear in mind that Darfur is the size of France: the AU does not receive all reports of military attacks by the Janjaweed and Khartoum's regular forces, nor is it capable with its present deployment of investigating all reports it receives. It is extremely unlikely that the May 13, 2005 helicopter gunship attack actually witnessed by AU monitors is a singular event. On the contrary, we may be certain that Khartoum has devised means of tracking monitors and directing their attacks in places away from observing eyes.

There can be no denying that violence has diminished in Darfur, chiefly because such a high percentage of the potential targets have already been destroyed, and the victims displaced or killed. But this must not be mistaken for an end to genocide, both violent and in the form of attrition that has emerged as the greatest ongoing source of human destruction.

THE LARGEST SECURITY CHALLENGES

The largest security tasks in Darfur, impossible even with the deployment of AU forces projected for a year from now, are [1] disarming the Janjaweed, and [2] providing protection to those who wish to leave the camps and return to their villages or the burned-out remains. Khartoum has made clear over the past ten months that it has no intention of disarming the Janjaweed; its only response to the singular demand of UN Security Council Resolution 1556 (July 30, 2004) is to re-cycle some of the Janjaweed into the paramilitary Popular Defense Forces and "police" for the camps. Disarming the Janjaweed is far beyond the capability and mandate of the AU force.

So, too, is guaranteeing the security of those returning to their village sites in an effort to resume agriculturally productive. The difficulty of this task is highlighted by Janjaweed actions recently reported by the UN High Commission for Refugees:

"UNHCR is alarmed by the fact that abandoned villages in West Darfur are once again being burned to discourage the people who once lived there from returning home. [On Monday, April 18, 2005, villagers from Seraf, West Darfur] saw smoke and feared their village was being burned. All that remains now are broken grain storage jars and blackened mud-brick shells of houses, the thatching having turned to ashes."

"This gratuitous act is clearly a message to the former residents not to return home. [A]cts like this---on top of the displacement of some 2 million people from their homes---threaten to change the social and demographic structure of Darfur irrevocably." (Official statement by UN High Commissioner for Refugees Wendy Chamberlin, April 26, 2005)

Indeed, the consolidation of genocidal changes in demography, land ownership, and local political power gives us a clear glimpse of the purpose animating Khartoum's actions and its support for the Janjaweed.

HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

The case for international humanitarian intervention remains as clear as ever. Without such intervention, hundreds of thousands of Darfuris will die in the coming months and years, compounding the staggering catastrophe and moral failure to date. At least one distinguished nongovernmental organization that has followed the Darfur crisis from the beginning has now spoken out forcefully on the requirements of such intervention. In a letter to world leaders, Gareth Evans, President of the International Crisis Group (ICG), highlights "two areas in particular that immediately demand a bold new approach: the mandate of the international troop presence, and its size and capacity":

"The current mandate of AMIS [African Union Mission in Sudan], as authorised by the AU Peace and Security Council, focuses on monitoring and verification, leaving to the Sudanese government the basic responsibility to protect civilians and humanitarian workers. 'Khartoum has utterly failed in its responsibility to protect its own citizens,' says Evans. 'And AMIS's own [civilian] protection role is so highly qualified as to be almost meaningless.'"

Crucially, ICG anticipates Khartoum's threat to create a non-permissive environment for this force, and offers the only appropriate recommendations:

"The force's mandate must be strengthened both to enable and to encourage it to undertake all necessary measures, including proactive action, to protect civilians in Darfur. Khartoum's reluctance to accept an expanded mandate must be met with a decision to commence planning for the deployment, should this become necessary, of a fully-mandated protection force in a non-permissive environment."

"On the force's size and capacity, it is clear the current security and humanitarian situation in Darfur demands a much greater presence than is currently in train. Crisis Group's own estimate is that a minimum presence of 12,000-15,000 personnel is needed within the next 60 days. 'It has become apparent that the AU, with the best will in the world, will be unable, without substantial further international support, to deploy an effective force of anything like this size in anything like this time-frame,' says Evans."

And ICG is also realistic about the role of non-African personnel:

"Ideally, the gap would be filled by more African personnel with strong international support; but if this proves unworkable in the short time available, a multinational bridging force will be the only solution to tackle Darfur's most urgent protection needs. NATO would appear to be the best equipped organisation to provide, and lead, the additional troops required in the necessary numbers and within the necessary time-frame." (International Crisis Group media release, May 25, 2005)

Though the "minimum" for which ICG argues is still inadequate to the security needs of Darfur, it represents a critically important willingness to think in terms not of AU capacity, or the lowest common political denominator at the UN, but realistically about the essential features of true civilian protection in Darfur.

Here the ICG is joined by the Aegis Trust (UK), which has coordinated the Protect Darfur Campaign (see <http://www.protectdarfur.co.uk/>). In a letter to all members of the UN Security Council, James Smith, Chief Executive of the Aegis Trust, writes that "Darfur requires a peace support operation of at least 25,000 troops." Citing both a "ratio of troops to population" and a "ratio of peacekeeping troops to hostile forces," the letter finds that "on both ratios the current (c. 3,000) and future (c. 7,000) sizes of the peacekeeping force are extremely inadequate" (http://www.protectdarfur.org/Download_Docs/Letter_To_UNSC_Members.pdf).

We may hope that such realistic assessments of security and human protection needs in Darfur guide future deliberations about peacekeeping in the region. Tragically, the recently concluded summit in Addis Ababa gives no sign that the African Union will accept such guidance.

WHAT KHARTOUM IS, CONTEMPTUOUSLY, SAYING

Whether or not Khartoum backs down from its outrageous arrests of senior officials of Doctors Without Borders/Medecins Sans Frontieres, the significance of these arrests---and that of Kofi

Annan's translator in South Darfur---will be lost on no one who honestly assesses the behavior of this regime since the outbreak of major hostilities in February 2003. We could not have a more brazen and threatening statement of Khartoum's intention to keep international relief as fully under its vicious control as possible. Such control will take the form of intimidating arrests, serious ongoing harassment through the domestic press and on the ground in Darfur, the denial or delay of visas and travel permits, and most seriously (according to both UN intelligence and other sources assessing security in Darfur), the sanctioning of Janjaweed and other violence against humanitarian workers.

Khartoum's pretext for the arrests of MSF officials is preposterous in all respects. MSF's fine report of March 8, 2005 ("The Crushing Burden of Rape: Sexual Violence in Darfur," at http://www.msf.ca/press/images/070305_darfur_sexualviolence.pdf) offers unprecedented clinical evidence that allows us to infer that many thousands of African Darfuri women and girls have been raped as a weapon of war. But in fact the MSF report was not groundbreaking and is important chiefly because it consolidates some important data and provides detailed clinical evidence in support of what was already known of rape as a weapon of war. Rape, including numerous specific instances, has been widely reported by human rights organizations, the UN, and international journalists. (See especially "The Use of Rape as a Weapon of War in the Conflict in Darfur, Sudan," October 2004; Jennifer Leaning, MD and Tara Gingerich, JD [Harvard School of Public Health], with Physicians for Human Rights).

The real meaning of Khartoum's arrests is that the regime clearly sees no reason to change its genocidal ways. It has been evident for almost a year that, going forward, most genocidal deaths would be primarily the result of disease and malnutrition. To see in this "less violent" genocide some form of "political cooperation" is unsurpassable expediency. The only goal of such expediency is to ensure that Darfur remains an "Africa only" problem, and that the obligations of a Western response are limited to logistics, transport, and other "stand-off" forms of assistance.

Confident that the AU has neither the manpower, the training, the resources, nor the mandate for civilian and humanitarian protection in Darfur, Khartoum need only control humanitarian access and operations to sustain the genocide. It is to this end that the regime has arrested senior MSF personnel and the translator for the most senior UN official.

There can be no excuse for misunderstanding this blunt statement.

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