

# Genocide in Sudan

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Darfur is a region about the size of France located in Western Sudan. A little over half of the six million people who live there are black Africans while the rest are Arab. It is a region that has faced severe underdevelopment and neglect from the central government.

In early 2003, two loosely allied rebel groups began a rebellion in Darfur, Sudan calling for the redress of social and economic grievances and demanding greater political power. Sudanese authorities saw the rebellion as a threat to the viability of the entire country, fearing other neglected regions would similarly rise up and demand larger degrees of autonomy. Thus, the government decided to respond by carrying out a deliberate policy of extermination against the African tribal peoples of Darfur, Sudan from which the rebels are drawn.

A large Arab militia known as the Janjaweed has been the main group employed by the government to implement this policy of genocide in Sudan. They are armed by the government and sent into various African villages where they proceed to kill civilians of all ages, burn down houses, destroy crops and livestock, carry out mass executions, target vital infrastructure, and commit wide-scale rape. Reports coming out of the region speak regularly of such brutal acts as men being chained together and thrown into burning huts, women being raped in front of their loved ones, and children being kidnapped from their families. To date, over 400,000 people have died as a result of the Sudan genocide campaign and 2.5 million have been internally displaced.

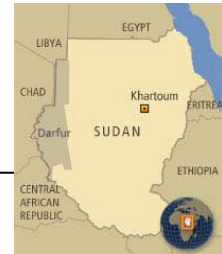
Despite the denial of involvement with such crimes by the Sudanese government, the facts show that high ranking officials are coordinating the Sudan genocide. Sudanese intelligence forces are known to be in close communication with the militias and air force planes regularly conduct bombing raids on villages and fleeing civilians prior to Janjaweed invasions. In July of 2004, Human Rights Watch released a report revealing internal government documents showing that the central government both armed and coordinated the Janjaweed to carry out the Sudan genocide. In addition, the government has gone to great lengths to make sure that no news reporters or humanitarian personnel are allowed into the villages being targeted in Darfur.

The United States has already officially labeled the crisis in Darfur, Sudan “genocide” and the United Nations has called it “the worst humanitarian crisis in the world today.”

Canada is part of the peacekeeping mission in the Darfur region. The Canadian government sent over many vehicles (no longer in use – too old) to aid in the peacekeeping along with 150 peacekeeping soldiers. Lieutenant-General The Honourable Romeo Dallaire, Canadian Senator, author of *Shake Hands with the Devil*, and former commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda, believes in order to restore the Darfur region at least 40 000 troops are required. A far cry from the number currently there.



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1. Read the following articles about the genocide in Sudan.
  - a) “The Tragedy of Sudan” – Times Magazine, October 4, 2004
  - b) “Darfur Misery has Complex Roots” – BBC, October 2004
2. As you read both articles, underline the **facts** in one colour and the **opinions** in another colour. Evaluate the author’s choice of facts and support given for opinions. (Do you believe the articles to be biased or factual?)
3. Rewrite the message of each article using only the FACTS.
4. How informative is each article on the issue? Please comment.

