

Instability & Conflict in Darfur, Sudan

4. Future Outlook

In April 2004, the government and the two rebel groups signed a ceasefire agreement to try and bring peace and stability to the region.

In recent months, there has been a dramatic rise in violence in the region, targeting not only the black Africans, but also the aid workers who are trying to help these displaced peoples.

The United Nations, European Union and African Union have declared that the Darfur conflict is not an act of genocide; however the United States Congress and various human rights groups have all labeled it as an act of genocide.

The UN Security Council has conducted numerous studies on the region and recently passed a proposal on March 29th, 2005 to bolster the existing arms embargo, ban military flights over the area, impose travel restrictions and freeze the assets of those responsible for the atrocities.



The UN, United States and the European Union have threatened the Sudanese government with sanctions if it does not disarm the militias. The Sudanese government has not stopped its support of the militias and no sanctions have been introduced.

The African Union is the only group who has sent troops to the area, but there are only a meager 2,700 soldiers monitoring an area the size of France. The UN estimates that 40,000 troops are needed to protect the civilians in Darfur.



Many nations of the world have responded to the conflict by donating large amounts of humanitarian aid in the form of money, food, and health supplies. The European Commission alone has donated 113 million euros since the conflict began in February 2003.

Conclusion:

The 2003 conflict in Darfur stems from hundreds of years of tribal clashes over land use **NOT** religion. The future of the region depends greatly on the involvement of the UN and the African Union according to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in order to prevent another situation like Rwanda. If no action is taken, the outlook of the region could consist of many years of war and peace cycles that will destroy the faith of the people that live in the region.



Since the conflict began in 2003, **more than 400,000 people have died**, **3.5 million have been driven into hunger** and **2.5 million have been displaced due to violence**, leaving scores of abandoned villages along the landscape, like in the above photo.

Hundreds of refugee camps now appear like a blemish on the region.



According to recent estimates by the United Nations and the World Food Program, **about 1.8 million people live in the refugee camps in Darfur**. About 200,000 more people have been able to escape over the border to the neighboring country of Chad and live in camps created there.



The militia has not only killed innocent civilians, it has also mutilated people, raped women, looted devastated villages and abducted both children and adults.

The government & militia attacks have bombed and burned 90% of Black villages in Darfur.



At the camps, residents complain of government harassment, and women venturing out to find food or firewood are often raped and assaulted.

Preventable diseases, such as diarrhea and pneumonia are the principle killers in Darfur.

The government refuses to provide any protection for the civilians in the region (against the rules of international law), so many of the refugees are afraid to return to their homes. There have also been reports of attacks on the refugee camps themselves, including the camps that exist in neighboring Chad.

2. Who is involved



A. Two main rebel groups:

- i. Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)
- ii. Justice and Equality Movement

They are fighting against the discrimination and oppression of the Arab dominated government in Khartoum. They also cite political marginalization and socio-economic neglect as additional human rights abuses perpetrated by the government.



B. Janjaweed Militia

The government of Sudan has mobilized and armed the Arab population to defend the principals of their Islamic nation. The members of the militia are drawn from the Arab nomadic tribes of the region who have a vested interest in the results of the conflict.



The government **denies** any involvement with the Janjaweed militant forces but, often the government is the one to strike first, by bombing the enemies in the areas in which the Janjaweed are about to invade.

3. Effects of the Conflict on the region



The government employs a unique strategy towards the insurgency, **it targets the civilian population** though indiscriminate and deliberate aerial bombardment, a "scorched earth" campaign, denial of humanitarian assistance, destruction of water sources, burning of crops and theft of livestock.

Sudan is a country that has been politically fragmented and in a state of war since its independence from Britain in 1956. Only in recent months has a stalemate between the warring North and South been declared as a result of the formation of a tentative peace treaty between the two sides. In 2003, conflict flared up once again in the country, this time between the residents of the Western region of Darfur and the government in Khartoum.

The purpose of this poster is to examine: the origin of the conflict, who is involved, effects of the conflict on the region, and the future outlook in order to fully understand what is occurring in this war-torn part of the country.

1. Origins of the Darfur Conflict

People here are Muslim and differ ethnically, linguistically and culturally



Two main groups of people inhabit this area:



A. Sedentary agriculturalists:

African descent—often referred to as "Zurga"

Ethnic groups: Fur, Masaalit, Tama, Tunjur, Bergid & Berti

Live & farm in the central zone

B. Nomadic pastoralists

Northern groups:

Camel herding tribes of Arab descent

Ethnic groups: Northern Rizeigat, Mahariya, Irayqat, Beni Hussein & African Zaghawa

Southern and Eastern groups:

Cattle herders of Arab descent

Ethnic groups: Southern Rizeigat, Habbaniya & Beni Halba

Historically, these two groups have fought over land use and the limited amount of water available in the area. Local conflicts would flare up when the Arab nomads moved their animals over the farmlands of the African farmers.

In the 1980's conflicts intensified with recurrent droughts, increased desertification and the introduction of automatic weapons.

There were also political reasons for conflict: the Arab nomads did not feel sufficiently represented in the local government and the Africans feared Arab domination.

