



Children in a camp in Chad ©Philip Cox

## **Sudan: Act now to end the human rights crisis in Darfur**

The latest evidence from Darfur, western Sudan, reveals a population in crisis. An estimated one million people have been forced to flee their homes. More than 10,000 have been killed. Human rights violations are being carried out on a massive scale by the Janjawid, a government-backed militia, which often operates alongside government troops.

The testimonies collected by Amnesty International all bear witness to what appears to be a systematic campaign of abuse. Men have been killed inside mosques, women raped in front of their husbands and old women killed when their homes have been set alight – all acts designed to humiliate and destroy the fabric of community life, over and beyond the individual atrocity.

Civilians in Darfur and those who have fled into the neighbouring country of Chad live in fear of further attacks and face a daily struggle to survive due to insufficient humanitarian assistance.

Although governments around the world, together with organizations such as the African Union, the European Union and the Arab League have lined up to condemn human rights violations in Darfur, their fine words have failed to translate into decisive action.

The international community should have the courage of its convictions and apply the strongest pressure on the government of Sudan to rein in the Janjawid and end human rights violations in Darfur.

"I was at home when the military came along with the Janjawid on horse back and on camels. They surrounded the village, set fire to a number of houses and shot at people, my brother was killed in front of me.", a refugee interviewed by AI delegates, May 2004.

### **Take action**

If you live in one of the countries below, please take action with your local Amnesty International office.

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Alternatively, you can write to Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir, President of Sudan.

### **Sample letter**

Your Excellency,

I am writing to urge you to take strong action to put an end to human rights violations being committed by the Janjawid in Darfur.

I have read testimony of civilians being killed, raped and abducted, their homes burnt and possessions looted, and hundreds of thousands having to flee their homes.

Your government has the responsibility to protect all of its citizens from human rights violations. I would urge you to ensure that Janjawid militia members are disarmed and that those individuals responsible for human rights violations are brought to justice. As an immediate step, I urge you to stand by your promise to facilitate rapid access to Darfur for humanitarian agencies trying to judge and respond to the needs of the displaced. Human rights monitors should also be allowed into Darfur as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

### **Appeals to**

Send appeals to

Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir

President's Palace

PO Box 281

Khartoum

Sudan

Fax : + 24911 771651/783223/779977

Communications to Sudan can be erratic, if you fail to get through, please try again.

## Slideshow



Map of Sudan, showing the Darfur states in the west of the country. ©Philip Cox  
Sedentary and nomadic farming communities in the region of Darfur, western Sudan, have traditionally struggled for control of the region's scarce resources. In the past two years, however, political and military groups have escalated occasional fighting into a human rights crisis.



Sudanese Liberation Army fighters in action in Darfur. ©AFP  
In early 2003, two groups – the Sudanese Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement – took up arms against what they perceived to be a lack of government protection for their people – the sedentary farming communities – and the supposed underdevelopment of Darfur.



A Sudanese Jiinjaweed fighter rides on a horse near the Chadian border, 25 April 2004.  
©Espen Rasmussen/AFP/Getty  
The Sudanese government decided to fight fire with fire, bombing villages and supporting an Arab militia – the *Janjawid* ('armed men on horses') – in its attacks on civilians.



Darfur village attacked and burned by the *Janjawid*. ©WFP/Marcus Prior  
Today, in the whole of Darfur, an area the size of France, nearly every village of the sedentary farming groups has been attacked, looted, burnt and abandoned.



A refugee caravan on the move towards Chad. © Philip Cox  
More than one million people are internally displaced in Darfur. Over 120,000 have fled over the border into Chad.



Refugee women visited by Amnesty International delegates in a camp in Chad. ©AI  
Many of the refugees are injured or exhausted by the flight from Darfur. Refugees in camps in Chad are at risk of armed incursions by the *Janjawid* and camps for the displaced within Darfur itself are regularly attacked.



Refugee, 19 yrs old, MSF hospital, Tine, Chad. © Philip Cox

“The military came with the Arabs when the airplane dropped the bomb. I don’t know where my mother and father are.. I don’t know if the military killed them.. or what happened to them.... All of our village is burnt.”



Woman and child in a refugee camp in Chad. © Philip Cox

Humanitarian organisations operating in Darfur are warning of ‘dangerously high levels of malnutrition and mortality with a rapidly deteriorating food security situation’



Children in a camp in Chad. © Philip Cox

We cannot turn a blind eye to the desperate situation in Darfur. The international community must act decisively to ensure access for humanitarian agencies and the swift deployment of ceasefire observers and human rights monitors.

Take action!