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## **China must arrest Sudanese President**

The Chinese government should immediately withdraw its invitation to Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir, and arrest him if he travels to Beijing, Amnesty International said today.

Omar Al-Bashir is due to meet Chinese President Hu Jintao and other high-ranking officials as part of a visit from 27-30 June.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued two arrest warrants for Omar Al-Bashir for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur. The warrants, issued in 2009 and 2010, charge him with criminal responsibility on 10 counts, including murder, extermination, forcible transfer of population, torture and rape.

“If China welcomes Omar Al-Bashir it will become a safe haven for alleged perpetrators of genocide”, said Catherine Baber, Deputy Asia Pacific Director at Amnesty International. “China should not allow Omar Al-Bashir to enter its territory, and must arrest him if he turns up.”

Although China is not a party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, it is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, which decided in 2005 to refer the situation in Darfur – since 1 July 2002 – to the ICC Prosecutor.

The resulting resolution –which China had the power to veto but did not – urges all states to cooperate fully with the ICC.

All states have a shared responsibility to ensure that persons suspected of genocide and crimes against humanity are investigated. Where there is sufficient admissible evidence, suspects must be prosecuted in fair trials without recourse to the death penalty.

“If China provides a safe haven for Al-Bashir thousands of victims in Africa will perceive China as an accomplice to crimes under international law”, Catherine Baber said.

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