

August 22, 2018

Honorable Michael R. Pompeo  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary,

We, the undersigned 85 Sudanese, friends of the Sudanese people, and long time observers of the Sudan regime, write to warn you regarding U.S. engagement in Sudan. The leaders of Sudan have outlasted and outsmarted several U.S. Administrations because they and their counterparts in the Muslim Brotherhood are committed to a long-term vision. They succeed at advancing their agenda because they can count on the U.S. and the international community to focus on short-term gains at the expense of long-term transformational objectives that yield real and sustainable international peace and security.

The U.S. government seems to believe it has found a reliable source of intelligence in the Sudan regime. The Sudan regime knows what the U.S. wants and it is willing to temporarily and partially cooperate to gain access to financial markets. Once Sudan has what it wants, what will be the incentive for it to continue to cooperate with the United States? The Sudan regime is loyal to no one as evidenced by its opportunistic relationships with Russia, China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, North Korea, Egypt, and a variety of terrorist groups in Libya, in Mali, Hamas, the LRA, al-Shabab and al-Qaeda, and others in the region. If the U.S. removes Sudan from the list of states that sponsor terrorism, a designation that accurately defines the regime, the financial fortunes of the regime (not the people of Sudan) will improve and the U.S. will have empowered a regime guilty of supporting terrorism, committing genocide and destroying the lives of millions of people, including American citizens.

For an Administration that is committed to keeping terrorists out of the United States, it is difficult to fathom why the State Department would issue a visa to Mohammed Atta al-Moula, the recent former head of Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS), the arm of the Sudan regime that carries out the crimes of the regime and controls the country through violent oppression. Atta is now the Chargé d'Affaires for the Sudan Embassy in Washington, DC. While U.S. agencies may think they will have more direct access to the intelligence they seek, the U.S. is also giving a leader of worldwide intelligence networks, including terrorist networks, direct access to the United States of America. Atta is a serious national security threat.

As the Head of NISS from 2009-2018 and the Deputy Head of NISS from 2002-2009, Atta is responsible for a long list of crimes committed by NISS. A partial list of those crimes includes the following:

- NISS is the mechanism used by Bashir to control the country through fear. NISS ghost houses are infamous for torture. Those arrested by NISS for protesting the crimes of the regime, including the mismanagement of the economy and sham elections that re-elect Bashir year after year, are first severely beaten, then taken to detention and beaten again, sometimes for an entire day. Prisoners are kept in solitary confinement, given small rations, and some are not allowed to sleep for days, while others are raped and abused. Many are referred to as slaves. One victim of NISS shared, “The security in Khartoum tortured us badly,” says Abdel Rachide, tears rolling down his face. “They put us in ice, in cold water, and they beat us very badly in Khartoum. I can’t tell you all the torture they did to me,” he says.<sup>1</sup>
- NISS controls terrorist organizations based in Sudan, and it opposes the detention of clerics who espouse terrorist ideology in the mosques and in the markets.
- NISS prevents religious freedom. It harasses, arrests, and falsely accuses moderate Muslims and Christian leaders. On behalf of the state, NISS seizes and destroys property of Christian organizations and does not allow new structures to be built. Atta directly managed this process as he assigned the NISS officer, Mohammed Abdalla, to head the Christian department within the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Endowment.
- NISS controls arms dealers in Sudan and it provides support to armed opposition in the region, including Central African Republic and South Sudan.
- NISS controlled the Janjaweed and it now controls the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which are guilty of attacking and burning villages and crops, killing unarmed citizens, throwing babies into roaring fires, raping men, women and children, contaminating water wells, looting cattle, markets and other property. These crimes have harmed millions of people and are daily events in the Jebel Marra region of Darfur.
- While the SPLM-N provides some protection for the people in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile, NISS operates in government-controlled areas and arbitrarily arrests, rapes and terrorizes Sudanese citizens.
- In Eastern Sudan, large numbers of NISS controlled Rapid Support Forces are in place to supposedly “stop” human trafficking, yet it has been widely reported that RSF forces are deeply involved in the trafficking themselves. RSF forces are profiting from this trafficking and have been accused of torturing migrants and extorting them for money.

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<sup>1</sup> “Tales of slavery and torture for Darfuri refugees in Chad who have nowhere to go,” Laura Angela Bagnetto, August 10, 2018, <http://en.rfi.fr/africa/20180721-Tales-slavery-torture-Darfuri-refugees-Chad-who-have-nowhere-go>

- A special project of NISS has been to facilitate the seizure by foreigners of land owned by Sudanese who have been violently displaced by NISS forces, making repatriation nearly impossible for people too afraid to return to their homes.
- NISS arbitrarily arrests, beats and kills university students who may speak out about the crimes of the regime or who come from marginalized areas of Sudan such as Darfur. For example, in 2011 when Atta led NISS, four students were drowned by NISS in a ditch.
- NISS owns gold mines and controls others, requiring payment by Sudanese citizens for “protection.”

According to the U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act, Atta’s involvement in these serious crimes would make him ineligible for a U.S. visa. Under Atta’s direction, NISS has committed severe violations of religious freedom, endorsed and supported terrorist activity, commissioned acts of torture and extrajudicial killings, recruited child soldiers, and committed genocide.

Atta and his counterparts in the Sudan regime are as charming as they are ruthless. They are experts at appearing to be the victim of the U.S., as though the actions of the U.S. forced them to torture, deprive and kill Sudanese citizens. The regime is an expert at creating a problem, solving it (at least partially) and then demanding credit from the international community, which repeatedly falls for this deadly game. The regime is an expert at controlling the United Nations by constantly threatening expulsion if it doesn’t play by the regime’s rules. The regime is an expert at manipulating the international community by helping it fight battles in Yemen or by curbing immigration to Europe. The regime can count on the international community to avoid looking too closely at its methods because it knows the international community is tired, distracted and does not want to deal with the crimes of the regime. The regime is confident that it will be excused because it has already gotten and continues to get away with genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur, the Nuba Mountains and in Blue Nile. The African Union is willing to look the other way, and the international community refuses to arrest criminals wanted by the International Criminal Court.

While the world may be willing to forget the crimes of the regime, we will not, and the U.S. government must not. We do not forget because the people of Sudan and South Sudan who have been hunted and killed or forcibly displaced by the Sudan regime deserve to be remembered and they deserve justice. We do not forget because if we allow genocide, mass atrocities and war crimes to go unpunished it puts all of us at risk. Impunity puts the world in grave danger and we are seeing that play out before our eyes around the world. “Winning” the war on terror at the expense of justice is a short-term if not illusive victory. Real security is achieved through accountability. Stability is a byproduct of freedom and equal citizenship. There are no short cuts or substitutes.

Make no mistake, the Sudan regime is determined to survive. It will sell-out anyone and everyone, it will make short-term concessions, it will say what you want to hear, but fundamentally it has not and it will not

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change. The Sudan regime and its security and intelligence arm in Sudan and Washington are dangerous. Don't be fooled.

Sincerely,

**Act for Sudan**, Eric Cohen, Co-Founder, USA

**Abdel Monim El Jak**, Researcher

**African Freedom Coalition**, Al Sutton M.D., President, New York, NY

**African United Democratic Party (AUDP)**, Sibusiso Bbusibheki Dlamini, Secretary General, Swaziland

**Ahmed H. Adam**, Research Associate, School of Law, SOAS University of London, UK

**Akulia Foundation**, Lita Muki, Chairperson, Juba, Jubek, South Sudan

**American-MidEast Coalition for Democracy**, Tom Harb, Co-Chair, Nashville, TN

**Blue Nile Community Association**, Philip Nima, Community Organizer, Salt Lake City, Utah

**Brooklyn Coalition for Darfur & Marginalized Sudan**, Laura Limuli, Coordinator, Brooklyn, NY

**Catalyst Schools Projects**, Ngor Kur Mayol, Unity State, South Sudan

**Coalition of Advocates for South Sudan**, Peter Magai Bul, Chicago, IL

**Collectif Urgence Darfour**, Dr. Jacky Mamou, President, Paris, France

**Concerned Citizens for Change**, Gene Binder, Member Steering Committee, Bronx, NY

**DAAM-UK (Pro-Democracy Activists Abroad)**, Ali Abdelatif M. Hussein, Co-ordinator, London, UK

**Damanga Coalition for Freedom and Democracy**, Daowd Salih, Co-Founder & Board President, Peapack, NJ

**Darfur Action Group of South Carolina**, Richard Sribnick, MD, President, Columbia, SC

**Darfur Community Association**, Mohammed Esmail, General Secretary, Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa

**Darfur Community Org**, Bakheit Shata, Executive Director, Omaha, NE

**Darfur Human Rights Organization of the USA**, Abdelgabar Adam, Founder and President, Philadelphia, PA

**Darfur Interfaith Network**, Martha Boshnick, Co-Chair, Washington, DC

**Darfur People's Association of New York**, Motasim Adam, Secretary General, Brooklyn, NY

**David Alton**, Professor the Lord Alton, Independent Crossbench Peer, London, UK

**Doctors to the World, Nuba Mountains, Sudan**, C. Louis Perrinjaquet, MD, MPH, , Breckenridge, CO

**Dr. Deborah Mayersen**, Research Fellow, University of Wollongong, Wollongong, NSW Australia

**Dr. Samuel Totten**, Presidential Scholar, Chapman University, Orange, CA

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**Golda Abbe**, London

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**Institute on Religion and Democracy**, Faith J.H. McDonnell, Director, International Religious Liberty Program & Church Alliance for a New Sudan, Washington, DC

**Investors Against Genocide**, Susan Morgan, Co-founder, San Francisco, CA

**Jan Theisen**, Arvada, CO

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**Joining Our Voices**, Slater Armstrong, Founder/Director, Baton Rouge, LA

**Kentuckiana Taskforce Against Genocide**, Robert Brousseau, Founder and Co-Chair, Louisville, KY

**Magdi Elgzouli**, Human Rights Activist, Sweden

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**Mohamed Y. Khalifa**, Instructor, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

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**Nuba Christian Family Mission**, James Flournoy, Director, Englewood, CO

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**Omer G. Ismail**, Sudan Policy Advisor, Washington, DC

**Rabbi Azriel**, On behalf Darfuri and Sudanese at large

**Rev. Dr. Austin Watson**, Retired, United Methodist Church, Hendersonville, NC

**Rev. John Calhoun**, Director, Center For Pastoral Leadership, Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego, CA

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**South Sudan Victims and Survivors Organization**, Amute Francis Lobalu, Executive Director, Juba, South Sudan

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**Sudan Rowan, Inc.**, Ngor Kur Mayol, President, Atlanta, GA

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**Sudanese Community Church, The Episcopal Church in Colorado**, The Rev. Oja B. Gafour, PhD., Vicar, Denver, CO

**Sudanese Community of Kentucky Inc**, Abdulrahim Adam, President, Louisville, KY

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**The Reverend Ronald D. Culmer**, , St. Clare's Episcopal Church, Pleasanton, CA

**The Right Reverend Alan Scarfe**, Bishop, The Episcopal Diocese of Iowa, Des Moines, IA

**The Rt. Reverend Julian Dobbs**, Bishop, Convocation of Anglicans in North America, McLean, VA

**The Rt. Reverend William L. Murdoch**, Bishop, The Anglican Diocese in New England, Amesbury

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