

September 14, 2017

Dear Members of Congress,

We, Sudanese American citizens, write to request your urgent help in opposing the lifting of U.S. sanctions on Sudan. The lives of our family and friends depend on it. We implore the U.S. to instead impose additional sanctions on the Sudan regime and to specifically target those who support terrorist ideology and networks; commit genocide, mass atrocities and crimes against the people of Sudan; violate human rights and basic freedoms; and undermine genuine peace processes.

We know this regime. For 28 years, we have watched it destroy our country and harm our family and friends for the sole purpose of staying in power and personally profiting from Sudan's rich resources at the expense of the Sudanese people. Time and time again, the regime has made promises and signed agreements in order to ease international pressure, but in all that time, nothing has improved, in fact the crises in the country have worsened and multiplied, simply because the regime's motivation is survival not a genuine interest in serving the people of Sudan and developing the country for the benefit of the people.

This time is no different. We know this because it is not necessary for U.S. sanctions to be lifted for the regime to allow international humanitarian aid to reach Sudanese in the Nuba Mountains who are literally starving to death. U.S. sanctions do not have to be lifted for students from the Darfur region to feel safe and supported in their efforts to secure a college education, instead of being harassed, detained, tortured and killed. Lifting U.S. sanctions is not needed for the regime to allocate its budget for improving sanitation and healthcare to prevent the deadly spread of cholera rather than purchasing fighter jets to attack the Sudanese people, which it did after U.S. sanctions were lifted temporarily in January. U.S. sanctions have nothing to do with the decision of the regime to marginalize the Beja of Eastern Sudan to almost near extinction or with the decision to build dams that will wipe out the ancient Nubian civilization in northern Sudan. The regime demonstrates repeatedly that it has not fundamentally changed, and its recent release of falsely accused and tortured human rights defenders is just its latest attempt to manipulate the international community. Lifting sanctions on the Sudan regime is unconscionable and it will only free up resources for a regime that uses resources to harm the people of Sudan and to line its own pockets.

Instead, we strongly encourage the U.S. to strategically approach its engagement in Sudan by first appointing a Special Envoy and secondly developing a comprehensive policy on Sudan that appropriately addresses a regime responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the spread of terrorism worldwide. Lifting sanctions without these pieces in place eliminates critical points of leverage while emboldening the regime to carry out its crimes with impunity. Please help us convey this urgent message to President Trump. The lives of our families and friends depend on it.

Sincerely,

Concerned Sudanese American Citizens

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