

## Arabizing Black Africa

By **David G. Littman**  
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*The following statement, delivered on the floor of the UN Human Rights Commission on Wednesday, August 11, 2004, concerns the abominable atrocities taking place in Sudan. This situation does not make headlines in part because their un-PC perpetrators are Arab Muslims, persecuting black Africans (non-Muslim and Muslim alike). This situation deserves widespread publicity. FrontPage Magazine is happy to call these injustices to the forefront of the civilized world's consciousness. -- The Editors.*

Sir, the humanitarian disaster unfolding in Darfour - over 50,000 people killed and 2.2 million displaced from their homes, and in urgent need of relief aid - includes the systematic rape of African Muslim women and girls, as well as their enslavement. In her scathing Report to the Commission on the situation in the Sudan, released last Friday, the Special Rapporteur on extra-judicial killings could not have been clearer on the motives. This is arousing an international solidarity, a subject addressed by Mr. Dos Santos Alves in his working paper.

Ms. Asma Jahangir states: "A large number of people whom I met had a strong perception that the Government was pursuing a policy of "Arabization" of the Sudan, and, in particular, the Darfur region. Allegedly, those of Arab descent seek to portray themselves as "pure" Muslims, as opposed to Muslims of African ethnicity. "She also reported that many people she interviewed recalled the cries for help from Darfur had gone out for several years, and that clashes between Arab nomads and sedentary African farmers since the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s had been noted by a previous UN Rapporteur in 1997. It is enough to reread his Reports from 1993 to 1998 to understand, then and now, the present situation - and in Southern Sudan. Based on his full documentation, we published a documentary article in the September 1996 *Middle East Quarterly*, entitled "The UN Finds Slavery in the Sudan."

On this question, for over a decade here, we have insisted on calling a slave a slave and have refused to accept the absurd taboo of those appeasers who willingly accepted the term “abductions” imposed by the Government of Sudan (GOS), which otherwise threatened to refuse the regular flights bringing in international humanitarian relief. The NIF regime now carrying out this genocidal ethnic cleansing, mass killings and slavery continues as a Member State of the Commission on Human Rights - and will inevitably deny everything said here. (The Sudanese representative did exactly that in a pathetic laconic “right of reply.”)

In 1999, the Sudanese government denied irrefutable facts in a major report on slavery by Human Rights Watch (updated in March 2002), and even succeeded in ousting a Zurich-based NGO from the UN - Christian Solidarity International (CSI). CSI had constantly denounced slavery in the Sudan since 1993, and had redeemed tens of thousands of slaves.

Sir, Darfur is at the centre of the revival of government-sponsored chattel slavery in Sudan. In the mid-1980s, GOS armed bands of Baggara (nomadic) Arabs in Darfur and adjacent Kordofan and incited them to raid Black African communities of northern Bahr El Ghazal (Southern Sudan). In the early 1990s, these Arab militias were formally drawn into the government’s armed forces as units of the *jihadi* Popular Defence Forces (PDF). In spring of 1998, the Sudanese government’s Commissioner of Ed Daien, Abdelrahman Kidder, accompanied the Baggara slave raiders into the South and temporarily occupied the Southern town of Nyamlel.

The GOS sponsored slave raids in the context of a genocidal *jihad*, resulting in the loss of more than two million black African lives and the displacement of over five million people. Tens of thousands of black women and children, possibly more, were enslaved during two decades of such raiding. Most of the black slaves were marched to the North and were forced to work for Arab masters in the towns, villages and cattle camps of Darfur - Ed Daein, Abu

**Matarik, Abu Gabara and Nyala are all towns in Darfur around which there is a heavy concentration of Arab-owned black slaves. The number of slaves in these areas has multiplied as a result of the rape of slave girls and women, as is constantly reported these past months.**

**Slave raiding in Southern Sudan has been suspended on account of the current cease-fire between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army. In the meantime, however, Sudan's Islamist (NIF) rulers have shifted the focus of their *jihad* to the Black African tribes of Darfur, in particular the Fur, Massalit and Zagawa. In December 2003, Sudan's President Omer Bashir openly declared a *jihad* against these tribes and ordered the mujahadeen to eliminate resistance in Darfur. We are now seeing the results.**

**The current pattern of raiding in Darfur appears to be virtually identical to what took place in northern Bahr El Ghazal. The enslavement of black Africans is one of its common characteristics. NGOs and UN officials have reported the wide spread "abduction" of women and children. The term "abduction" is the agreed code language between UN agencies and the Government of Sudan to denote slavery in Sudan.**

**[One of these black "abductees" from Darfur is 12-year-old Adam Erenga Tribe. Last April, he was on his way home from school to find his village under attack by government-sponsored Arab militias. Unlike his murdered mother, father and two brothers, Adam was enslaved and forced to look after his master's cattle. (Daily Telegraph, May 16, 2004). Last month, Sennah Abdelhamid Hamad, a displaced black African mother from Darfur reported to Christian Solidarity International the capture of her four children by Arab militias. She expects that they have been enslaved, noting that she had previously seen children from her tribe working as slaves in Arab cattle camps. (CSI Press Release, 14/07/04.)]**

**We call on this Sub-Commission - and all UN bodies - to act urgently, not only to end the genocidal ethnic cleansing of the NIF regime in Khartoum, but also to free the tens of thousands of slaves still held in bondage in the North and in the Darfur region.**

**Sir, in conclusion, what better illustration of the continuity of this terrible plague of slavery, ethnic cleansing and genocide than the description of the Sudan by the young Winston Churchill in his first book, *The River War* , published in 1899, 105 years ago:**

**The stronger race soon began to prey upon the simple aboriginals; some of the Arab tribes were camel-breeders; some were goat-herds; some were Baggaras or cow-herds. But all, without exception, were hunters of men. To the great slave markets of Jeddah a continual stream of Negro captives has flowed for hundreds of years. The invention of gunpowder and the adoption by the Arabs of firearms facilitated the traffic by placing the ignorant Negroes at a further disadvantage. Thus the situation in the Sudan for several centuries may be summed up as follows: The dominant race of Arab invaders was increasingly spreading its blood, religion, customs, and language among the black aboriginal population, and at the same time it harried and enslaved them. The state of society that arose out of this may be easily imagined. The warlike Arab tribes fought and brawled among themselves in ceaseless feud and strife. The Negroes trembled in apprehension of capture, or rose locally against their oppressors. <sup>1</sup>**

**Thank you, Mr. Chairman.**

**ENDNOTES:**

**<sup>1</sup> Winston Churchill, *The River War*, (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1899). 1st edition, Vol. I, pp.16-17.**