

AFRICAN FREEDOM COALITION

July 31, 2020

Dear Congressperson,

Yesterday, July 30, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced that he wants to delist Sudan as a state sponsor of terrorism. He urged lawmakers to accept a paltry and flawed compensation offer by Sudan for families of victims of Embassy bombings in North Africa in 1998, to remove a hurdle to de-listing. Given the ongoing violence, largely attributed to Sudan's military regime (see NYTimes attachment above), such an action is tantamount to giving it license to kill Sudanese citizens.

Sudan has been lobbying for the US to de-list it from the State Sponsors of Terrorism (SST), standing to gain great financial reward, and to become eligible for debt forgiveness of \$48 billion. The US State Department and the CIA support de-listing, giving priority to counterterrorism intel over any other considerations.

The reason for the US to resist the delisting is to assure that the transitional military government of Sudan does not receive the benefits of a financial windfall, entrenching their power before the Sudanese people achieve a democratic civilian government that leads to freedom, peace and justice.

The current situation in Sudan is dire, with over two million languishing in IDP camps. This past week alone, more than 80 people were killed in the Darfur region, according to the UN and local sources. Most of the fatalities were inflicted on 25 July, when 500 armed men attacked and looted Masteri town (West Darfur state). The attack primarily targeted members of the ethnic Masalit community. On the previous day, 20 civilians, including children, were killed by gunmen in Aboudos (South Darfur state). According to local reports, at least seven other violent incidents occurred in West Darfur on 19-26 July. At least 12 people were killed and homes destroyed. Protesters have called for the resignation of Darfuri officials, including members of the RSF.

The Congress has already spoken on the need for democracy in Sudan. On July 9, 2019, the Senate had unanimously passed S.Res.188, expressing that, "until Sudan transitions to a civilian-led government, it will remain on the State Sponsors of Terrorism List and sanctions against the country will continue. The House also passed H. Res. 432 in 2019, and H. Res. 6094 was introduced in 2020; both support a civilian-led democratic transition.

Congress must stand firm to its resolutions, and resist the pressure to de-list, giving the Sudanese people the chance for democratic civilian-led government, freedom, peace, and justice.



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