

AFRICAN FREEDOM COALITION

June 1, 2020

Dear Congressperson:

Today, the Sudanese people, after decades of racist genocide and oppression, and one year after the deposing of al-Bashir, are still suffering. Many languish in IDP camps (2.4 million) and in refugee camps (over 200,000) under the military transitional government, still hoping for peace, justice, and accountability. They regularly encounter violence perpetrated by a military that answers to no-one. The societal structure is controlled by members of the old al-Bashir regime, whose years of corruption and mismanagement have left the economy in shambles. Sudan is now experiencing the Covid-19 pandemic, for which its government is ill-prepared.

This past week, on May 26, a private meeting was hosted in Washington DC by the Atlantic Council, at which Sudanese Minister of Finance, El Badawi, and Minister of Justice, Abdul Bari, briefed some Congressional staff (*See Sudan Tribune link below). While a number of issues were discussed, including reparations for victims of the US embassy bombings of 1998, the main thrust of the meeting was made by Abdul-Bari who advocated that the US de-list Sudan from the State Sponsors of Terrorism (SST). Eric Sapp, a lawyer representing African victims of the embassy bombings, urged caution in accepting PM Hamdok's disclaimer of terrorist connections. Cameron Hudson, senior Fellow of the Atlantic Council, blasted Sapp's assertions as part of a "growing campaign of misinformation from PR consultants and lawyers who are themselves looking to profit off of any settlement".

Mr. Hudson, a former CIA intelligence analyst, added on Twitter: "Implying that Sudan will return to supporting international terrorism is in no way in evidence. I have written extensively on this subject and know that Sudan has been given a clean bill of health in ending support to terror and working with the US on CT [counterterrorism]".

Choosing CT interests over the concerns of oppressed people has long been a priority in US policy on Sudan. The action of de-listing of Sudan from the SST, however, is dangerous. It would a) financially reward the present transitional government, resulting in a financial windfall to the military and to the members of the old Regime, making them even more powerful and unrestrained; and b) would create a safe haven for terrorists to again flourish in Sudan, and threaten democracies throughout the world. Such an action would be unalterable, and would surely have devastating consequences for years to come.

The US Congress, to its credit, has enacted resolutions SR 188 and HR 432 (2019); and HR 6094 (2020). These, however, have not yet led to a policy on Sudan that will grant the people their rights. We ask Congress to double down on its support for the civilian-led democratic transition, and the survival and well-being of the threatened black African population in Sudan.

* <https://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article69391>



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