



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Sudan – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 15 January 2014.

Information required on the Student Union of Darfur. Any reports of a political demonstration held in September 2013?

A 2007 Sudan Tribune article states:

“A new rebel group said it is resolved to struggle for the independence of Sudan’s Darfur region as practical solution to end the suffering of Darfur people. In a statement signed by Commander Idrees Ibrahim Azrag, the Darfur Independence Front/Darfur Independence Army (DIF/DIA) said that ‘the exercise of the Right to Self-Determination is the only route to a comprehensive solution to our problems.’ The new rebel front expressed dissatisfaction with the current demands of the non signatory movements. It said they will not produce ‘substantial alterations to the current structural imbalance of the Sudanese state.’ The DIF said it is formed from the following groups: the Revolutionary Movements, the Revolutionary Organization of the People of Darfur in the Sudan Armed Forces, Darfur political organizations, the Student Union of Darfur, the Union of Darfur Women, the associations of Darfur people abroad, the Alliance of Tribal Administration Leaders and the Coalition of Internal Displaced Persons and Refugees from Darfur.” (Sudan Tribune (21 September 2007) *New rebel group says struggling for Darfur independence*)

A 2012 Sudan Tribune article refers to a group named the Darfur Students Union as follows:

“Groups of students from Sudan’s western region of Darfur ruined on Saturday the opening ceremony of a sport tournament held in the capital Khartoum after they burst into anti-government slogans. Eye witnesses told Sudan Tribune that the students had began to chant slogans calling for the government downfall and peace in Darfur shortly after the celebrations of inaugurating Sudan’s student sport tournament started in the Stadium of Khartoum. Darfur region is the scene of a low-intensity conflict between government forces and rebel groups that rejected to sign a peace deal with the government. Hundreds of people fled the stadium as the unrest unfolded while police forces surrounded the place for fears that the situation might escalate, the witnesses said. They added that the former governor of South Darfur State, Abdel Hamid Musa Kasha, who was present in the ceremony, attempted to calm the angry protesters but to no avail. The unrest resulted in cancelling the opening ceremony of the tournament in which 60 club from Darfur’s five states are participating. The media secretary of the government-backed Darfur Students Union, Ibrahim Zakaria, admitted that the protests had led to the cancellation of the event. He described the protesters as political activists.” (Sudan Tribune (18 March 2012) *Darfur students disrupt event in Sudan’s capital*)

A report from the Darfur-based Radio Dabanga, in a paragraph headed “Arrests in Omdurman”, states:

“On Monday, security forces arrested another five students from Darfur: Nour Mokhtar, head of the Darfur Student Union at Sudan University, Mohamed Idriss Jeddo, former head of the Darfur Student Union of the University of Khartoum, Taher

Abdullah head of Darfur Student Union at the Islamic University, Mohamed Haroun, head of the Darfur Student Union at Al Zaeim Al Azhari University and Abd al Razeq from Al Zaeim Al Azhari University, from the area of Shigla in Omdurman, sources informed Radio Dabanga.” (Radio Dabanga (12 December 2012) *Arrests, injuries and torture reported at Gezira University*)

A report from the liberal Sudanese newspaper Al-Ayyam states:

“Violent incidents and sharp differences occurred yesterday, in which traditional arms [knives, spears, etc] were used by members of the steering committee of Darfur Students Union during the media forum organized by SUNA [Sudan News Agency] to discuss the union's position regarding tuition fees and the latest incidents in Khartoum and Al-Jazira states.” (Al-Ayyam (15 December 2012) *Students involve in "violent incidents" at forum organized by Sudan news agency*)

A report published by the African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies refers to protests in September 2013 as follows:

“The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) has confirmed the deaths of 170 people since protests began in Sudan on 23 September. At least fifteen of these fatalities are children. Over 500 people have been injured and over 800 arrested in cities through the country by the authorities. ACJPS has strong evidence of the intentional use of lethal force by Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) and Central Reserve Forces (CRF) against demonstrators. Demonstrations ignited in Sudan's second largest city, Wad Medani, on 23 September, following the announcement made by the Government of Sudan (GoS) on 22 September that subsidies on fuel and other commodities would be lifted. The demonstrations spread throughout Sudan and continue to take place in Khartoum, Omdurman, Wad Medani, Port Sudan, Atbara, Gadarif, Kosti, Sinnar, and Nyala. The demonstrations quickly transformed from calls for the subsidies to be reinstated to calls for regime change. In Nyala, demonstrations have also focused on the deteriorating security situation in Darfur. The demonstrations continue to gain momentum and unlike protests staged in 2012 do not appear to have been organised by political or activist groups. Demonstrations held on Friday, 27 September, were referred to as 'Martyr's Friday' to commemorate those killed in the demonstrations.” (African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (4 October 2013) *Over 170 dead, including 15 children, and 800 detained as demonstrations spread throughout Sudan*)

A report from CNN.com states:

“Clashes in Sudan between protesters and police about rising gasoline prices have left dozens dead, according to protest groups and the Sudanese government. Demonstrators have been calling for President Omer Hassan Ahmed Albashir to step down. The violence has stretched for six days, triggered by anger over government economic policies that led to the gas price hikes, which went into effect on Monday. Learning details about the clashes has been difficult. Sky News and Al Arabiya have been shut down, the Internet has been slow and access to hospitals is limited. Protesters count the number of dead at more than 100, while the government puts the toll at 29.” (CNN.com (27 September 2013) *Dozens reported dead in Sudan protests*)

An Associated Press Online report states:

“The unrest began Sunday in the town of Wad Madani when the government cut subsidies on fuel and gas, causing prices to leap a decision activist Sara Kamal called ‘the straw that broke the camel's back.’ Protests quickly spread to the capital, Khartoum, and several other cities as opponents of al-Bashir's authoritarian rule worked to harness the anger over the economic woes into a wider movement. Angry protesters torched police and dozens of gas stations and government buildings, and students marched chanting for al-Bashir's ouster.” (Associated Press Online (27 September 2013) *Sudanese protesters demand the regime's ouster*)

An Associated Press Online report refers to events which occurred on Saturday 27 September 2013 as follows:

“Early Saturday, women at the funeral of 26-year-old pharmacist Salah al-Sanhouri marched into the street chanting ‘Rebel! Rebel!’ as his male relatives laid him to rest in a Khartoum cemetery. His relatives say he was shot in the street outside his pharmacy as a march went by Friday.” (Associated Press Online (28 September 2013) *Slain protesters buried in Sudan*)

See also Voice of America News report which states:

“Saturday's confrontation took place after a funeral procession for a man killed in an earlier protest grew into another mass anti-government demonstration. Sudanese have been staging protests and demonstrations since Monday. Originally targeting a cut in government subsidies that caused a sharp rise in fuel prices, the demonstrations have steadily broadened and grown in size. The unrest has become one of the most serious challenges to Mr. Bashir since he seized power in 1989. On Saturday, several thousand protesters swelled the crowd of mourners at funeral rites for a pharmacist killed earlier in the week. Some shouted ‘Freedom, freedom’ as they demanded an end to Bashir's rule.” (Voice of America News (28 September 2013) *Mass Protests in Sudan for 6th Day*)

An Agence France Presse report states:

“Sudanese demonstrators called President Omar al-Bashir a ‘killer’ on Saturday, the sixth day of protests sparked by fuel price hikes in a nation already burdened by economic pain and war. ‘Bashir, you are a killer,’ shouted about 2,000 men, women and youths after the burial of Salah Mudathir, a witness said. The 28-year-old Mudathir, whom they called a martyr, was shot dead during a protest on Friday. ‘Freedom! Freedom!’ they demanded, calling for the end of Bashir's regime, which describes itself as Islamist. The demonstration later dispersed when police fired tear gas, witnesses said. And an AFP reporter saw state security agents round up six people, who were put into pickup trucks.” (Agence France Presse (28 September 2013) *Sudan protesters call Bashir a 'killer'*)

An Associated Press Online report states:

“Sudanese security forces in pickup trucks cornered hundreds of mourners marching after burying a slain protester and opened fire on them on Saturday, participants said, the latest reported violence in a weeklong wave of demonstrations calling for the ouster of longtime President Omar al-Bashir. Three female protesters said that they were surrounded by dozens of pickup trucks and security forces in a main street in the capital Khartoum and hit with tear gas and gunfire. It was not possible to independently verify their account, but Sudanese activists say the government's poorly trained security forces have routinely used live fire against protesters, often

shooting at the head and body.” (Associated Press Online (28 September 2013)
Witnesses: Sudan police fire on funeral march)

A Human Rights Watch report states:

“In the lead up to, during, and after the protests, security forces arrested known political activists, opposition party members, and protesters – more than 800 people, according to Sudanese rights groups. Although most were released within days, the National Security and Intelligence Service (NISS) detained many for weeks, either in NISS detention centers or in regular prisons.” (Human Rights Watch (28 November 2013) *Sudan: Dozens Held Without Charge*)

This report also states:

“At least six Darfuri university students, presumed to have links to the pro-rebel student group United Popular Front, were arrested in September and October and are still detained at NISS offices in Bahri, Khartoum.” (ibid)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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