

**The Sudanese Tsunami: The Only Way Forward is for Bashir to Step Down and a New Interim Democratic Arrangement Put in Place**

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- On Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> of January, Sudan has witnessed one of the biggest demonstrations during Bashir's regime, especially in the capital of Khartoum, Madani and Atbura. The demonstrations have now entered the third week. In terms of strength, size and duration, these demonstrations are unprecedented in the last 63 years since the independence of Sudan in 1956 and longer in duration than the revolutions of 1964 and 1985 against the totalitarian regimes.
- These demonstrations are different in nature than the so called Arab Spring. The Arab Spring was lead among many forces by the political Islam groups. In Sudan, this revolution is anti-political Islam fascism and its deep state. It has been marked by the demands for bread, peace, freedom and equal citizenship.
- This revolution in Sudan, which is a huge ongoing process, is a tsunami against all odds and it has brought into the political scene a new generation of women and men who have shown impressive courage against the fascism of political Islam, and they have marked a qualitative change in the struggle of the urban and rural areas of Sudan. It constitutes the foundation of a new civil rights movement.
- The regime is denying access to accurate information of the peaceful demonstrators who were killed by live bullets from the regime forces and those who were wounded and detained. Reliable sources within the medical community from different Sudanese hospitals and clinics gave an estimation that at least more than 70 were killed, especially in Gadarif city, where more than 20 were killed. Some of them were buried by security without their family's notification and agreement. Hundreds are being injured. More than 2,000 activists and political leaders were arrested. Some of them were released. In Sunday's demonstration in Khartoum, the regime had no space in its prison facilities to detain more, and they were thinking of moving detainees to their facilities outside of Khartoum. The regime targeted, in particular, youth and women. Some were beaten and tortured. Despite the regime denying access to the internet, activists managed to record and send a huge amount of material documenting the events of the last three weeks.
- As of now, the brain of the system is totally confused and sharply divided as the majority of the Islamists see Bashir as a liability. They themselves want to get rid of him and to re-produce their system.
- As of now, there is a joint opposition center from the professionals, the Sudan Call, the National Consensus Forces, and many other opposition forums who are working together. They have signed a joint declaration for "Freedom and Change." This united opposition center is planning for more demonstrations on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January, demanding Bashir to step down and a new democratic interim arrangement established in his place.

- The more peaceful protests grow in size; it will lead to a civil strike and civil disobedience and will eventually force the army to take the side of the people. Despite the complexity within the army and that Bashir has restructured the Rapid Support Forces into four divisions, trying to use them to threaten the army, and he has systematically marginalized the commander of the Rapid Support Forces, General Mohammed Hemati, Bashir is losing, systematically, his grip and many in the army and security communities are against him. He is being seen as a liability for his own system and for Sudan.
- Some Islamist prominent leaders and young activists have supported the uprising. We are of the opinion that they should be welcomed since they are supporting the change. What we need to remove is the political Islam system, but the Islamic movement, in particular those who are pro-democracy, they will continue within the new parameters of democratization. It is worth mentioning too that many of the political parties of the National Dialogue have decided to quit the regime.
- Sudan is entering a totally new phase with a new environment; therefore, it requires a new policy from Africa and the international community. Business as usual, partial solutions and repackaging of the old system will never work. Those who are dealing with Sudan need seriously to update themselves and to look for a new way forward.
- Sudan needs a formula that will bring peace and democracy hand in hand. It is clear that peace will not sustain without democracy, and democracy will also not sustain in a war environment; therefore we need democracy and to end wars as one package. That is the only way forward to address the cardinal issues of peace and democratization, equal citizenship and sustainable development.
- The only way forward is for Bashir to step down and to open the way for a new democratic interim arrangement that can bring accountability and justice, the end of corruption, national consensus, end the wars, gear the resources of the country (clean water, health, etc.) towards the needs of ordinary citizens, and open the way for a national constitutional conference that will answer the key question, "How Sudan is going to be governed" before "Who is going to govern Sudan." By the end of the interim period, the Sudanese people shall exercise their right for a free and democratic election that will usher Sudan into democracy and a peaceful exchange of power and end 30 years of one-man and one-party rule. It will mark the end of violence in Sudan. What is happening in Sudan right now is a great opportunity for the renewal of the country.

7 January 2019

This material is distributed by Esther Sprague on behalf of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement North. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.