



Home Office

Report of a fact-finding mission to Khartoum, Sudan

Conducted between 10 and 17 August 2018

Published: November 2018

This project is part funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. Making management of migration flows more efficient across the European Union.



Contents

Background	5
Purpose of the mission	5
Methodology	5
Research standards.....	5
Identification of sources	5
Arranging and conducting interviews	6
Notes of interviews/meetings.....	6
FFM team observations	6
Terminology	6
Structure of this report	7
List of abbreviations	8
Executive summary	9
Demography and ethnicity	9
Darfur.....	9
Treatment of non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum	10
Freedom of movement.....	11
Government monitoring	12
Returns	12
Synthesis of notes	13
1. Demography and migration	13
1.1 Size of the population	13
1.2 Non-Arab Darfuri groups in Darfur.....	13
1.3 Non-Arab Darfuri population in Khartoum.....	14
1.4 Darfuri community groups in Khartoum	18
1.5 Darfuri employment profiles and representation across society	20
1.6 Drivers of migration and routes out of Sudan	23
1.7 Ethnicity and identification of non-Arab Darfuris.....	26
Notion of identity and perceptions of the Darfur conflict.....	26
Identifying non-Arab Dafuris	27
2. Darfur	31

2.1	Background to the conflict	31
2.2	Security and political situation	32
2.3	Human rights and humanitarian situation	37
3.	Non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum.....	38
3.1	Human rights - generally	38
3.2	Discrimination.....	38
3.3	Arrest and detention - general.....	44
	Treatment in detention.....	46
	Treatment of family members	46
	'Ghost houses'	47
	Arrest warrants and the death penalty	47
	Demonstrations and arrests: January 2018	48
3.4	Profiles and specific groups.....	49
	Students	51
3.5	Socio-economic rights - general	57
	Employment.....	60
	Healthcare	61
3.6	Access to ID numbers and cards.....	62
3.7	National service	66
4.	Freedom of movement	69
4.1	Exit process.....	69
	Penalties for leaving without an exit visa	72
4.2	Entry process	73
4.3	Obtaining passports, ID numbers and cards	74
	Forged and fraudulently obtained documents.....	75
4.4	Checkpoints and travel within Sudan	75
	Movement in Sudan generally	75
	Travel between Darfur and Khartoum.....	76
	Travel in Darfur	77
5.	Government monitoring.....	78
5.1	Monitoring and tracking	78
5.2	Overseas - monitoring the diaspora	80
6.	Returns	80
6.1	Statistics.....	80
6.2	Returnees ethnic profile / place of origin	83
6.3	Treatment of returnees.....	83
6.4	Monitoring of returnees (and of human rights generally)	92

Annex A: Terms of reference (ToRs)	96
Annex B: Questions based on the ToRs	97
Annex C: List of sources	100
Annex D: FFM background explained to sources	101
Annex E: Notes of meetings with sources	102
Amjed Farid El Tayeb.....	102
A Sudanese political scientist and former DFID policy adviser.....	105
A university professor from Darfur.....	111
Salih Mahmoud M Osman, Darfur Bar Association.....	117
A UK official, Department for International Development (DFID).....	122
Dr Enrico Ille.....	124
Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European & African Centre (EAC).....	130
A UK FCO official.....	134
Second Secretary Political, British Embassy.....	135
An official of Western Embassy A.....	139
International Organization for Migration (IOM) official.....	143
A civil society activist.....	148
An official of Western Embassy B.....	151
A Norwegian official.....	155
Siddig Yousef.....	157
A human rights defender.....	161
A Swiss official.....	165
Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya.....	167
King of the Berti.....	169
An activist.....	171
Annex F: Fact finding team’s observations	176
Arrival.....	176
Departure.....	177
Annex G: Maps	179
Map of Greater Khartoum.....	179
Map of Darfur.....	180
Map of Sudan.....	181

Introduction

This document provides information obtained from the Home Office's fact-finding mission (FFM) to Khartoum, Sudan. It does **not** provide advice on handling particular types of protection and human rights claims. For this, see the Sudan country policy and information notes on the [Gov.uk website](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

Background

The FFM was conducted between 10 and 17 August 2018 by 3 officials from the Country Policy and Information Team (CPIT), with support from the British Embassy in Khartoum. The team visited Khartoum only.

[Back to Contents](#)

Purpose of the mission

The FFM was undertaken to gather information about **the circumstances of non-Arab Darfuris in Sudan, with a focus on Khartoum, and the treatment of returnees generally**.

A full terms of reference (ToR) is available at [Annex A](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

Methodology

Research standards

The FFM was undertaken with reference to the [EU \[European Union\] common guidelines on \(Joint\) Fact Finding Missions: a practical tool to assist member states in organizing \(joint\) Fact Finding Missions](#), November 2010 (EU Guidelines 2010), and the Home Office's internal guidelines for conducting FFMs.

Identification of sources

The FFM team (FFT) sought to interview a wide range of informed sources, including members of Sudanese civil society, academics, western Embassy officials (including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Sudanese government officials.

That a particular source was interviewed and the notes of that interview have been included should not be considered as endorsement of that source or the information provided. Rather, all sources and information provided needs to be critically assessed and considered against other publicly available material.

Sources were identified by a review of existing documentary material on Sudan, principally the [Danish Immigration Service – Home Office fact finding mission report of 2016](#), and consultations with the British Embassy, Khartoum; Landinfo, Oslo; Danish Immigration Service, Copenhagen; Cedoca, Office for the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons, Brussels; and an academic attached to the School of Oriental and African Studies, London. Additionally, one source, Dr Enrico Ille, was recommended to the FFT by an interlocutor interviewed in Khartoum.

The sources contacted and interviewed are those that the FFT were able to identify as relevant to the mission. But, as with any FFM, factors including time constraints

and availability of sources mean that the list of sources consulted and information provided are not exhaustive.

A list of sources interviewed is at [Annex C](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

Arranging and conducting interviews

The FFM team met / corresponded with a total of 20 discrete sources.

All interviews / correspondence with sources were conducted in English with the exception of that with the King of the Berti, who was interviewed in Arabic.

The team met, in total, 24 people during 18 face-to-face interviews. Additionally, one source - the official at Western Embassy B – was interviewed by telephone after the delegation had returned to the UK. All contact with Dr Ille was by email – he provided a written answers in response to questions emailed to him by the FFT. The questions sent to Dr Ille are attached at [Annex B](#).

At the start of each interview the FFT explained the purpose of the mission, including that the notes of the interview may be published in a report and that the sources would be able to review the notes before publication.

Both the official at Western Embassy B and Dr Ille were sent the background to the mission in advance of the telephone interview / providing written information.

A copy of the FFT's introductory note can be found at [Annex D](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

Notes of interviews/meetings

The FFT took notes at all the meetings with sources. These were subsequently sent by email and, in 1 case, by WhatsApp, for review and approval.

Of the 20 sources, 18 approved the notes with a number making amendments to the original drafts. 2 sources, Lieutenant-General Dahiya and the King of the Berti, were emailed the notes of the interviews, provided a deadline to respond, but did not.

All sources were asked how they would prefer to be referenced. A number of sources requested varying degrees of anonymity to protect their professional privacy and / or to protect their safety. In these cases, the FFT asked sources to provide a description of how they preferred to be referenced. All sources are described according to their own request where this was specifically made.

The notes of all interviews with sources are available at [Annex E](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

FFM team observations

The FFT documented their collective observations and experience of the entry and exit process as foreign nationals via Khartoum International Airport.

The FFT's observations are available in [Annex F](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

Terminology

The FFT were explicit in all of the interviews that their focus was on the treatment of non-Arab Darfuris. In some notes 'Darfuri' is sometimes used, this should usually be

taken as reference to non-Arab Darfuris unless specific reference is made to Arab Darfuris.

[Back to Contents](#)

Structure of this report

The report is split into:

- An introduction explaining the purpose of the mission and how it was planned and undertaken
- An executive summary
- A thematically arranged narrative, including some direct quotes from the sources interviewed
- Annexes

[Back to Contents](#)

List of abbreviations

DBA	Darfur Bar Association
ETD	Emergency Travel Document
FFM	Fact-finding mission
FFT	Fact-finding team
GoS	Government of Sudan
IDP	Internally displaced person
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement
NAD	Non-Arab Darfuri
NISS	National Intelligence and Security Service
SDG	Sudanese pound
SLM/A-AW	Sudan Liberation Movement/Army – Abdel Wahid
SLM/A-MM	Sudan Liberation Movement/Army – Minni Minnawi
SPLM	Sudan People’s Liberation Movement

[Back to Contents](#)

Executive summary

This report of a fact-finding mission to Sudan covers the situation of non-Arab Darfuris, primarily in Khartoum, and the treatment of returnees generally.

Demography and ethnicity

There are a lack of credible population data for Sudan. However, the country's population is estimated to be around 40 million of whom around 10 million live in Darfur and the same number in the capital, Khartoum (made up of the 'Three Towns': Khartoum, Khartoum North and Omdurman). Khartoum is experiencing increasing inward migration, driven by the poor economic situation, the centralisation of state and services in the capital, and continuing insecurity in outlying regions.

Non-Arab Darfuris comprise approximately 70% of the Darfur population; the largest groups are the Fur, Zaghawa, Maaslit and Berti. Darfuris comprise a significant proportion of Khartoum's population, numbering up to 1 million. There are also large numbers living in the agricultural area of Gezira to the south of Khartoum.

The Darfuri community in Khartoum is ethnically, socially and economically diverse, and includes (wealthy) individuals who hold positions in government, business, law, academia, the security forces and in medicine, as well as several thousand students. Some Darfuris have inter-married with other groups, including Arabs. Darfuris have also established community and ethnic associations in areas where they have settled in Khartoum. However, most Darfuris live in the shanty towns that surround the capital with other non-Arab groups, such as the Nuba and South Sudanese, and are mostly employed in menial jobs. The government has not permitted the establishment of internally displaced person (IDP) camps in and around Khartoum.

Darfuris are increasingly seeking to leave Sudan - particularly young, educated people - primarily because of the difficult economic, political and security situations in Darfur and Khartoum.

Ethnic identity is multifaceted and mutable, and comprised of a number of elements – such as social history, language, religion, physical traits - which combine with individual characteristics - age, marriage, education, profession, economic status and political affiliation - to create a social identity. While there are some outward markers that may identify someone as Darfuri, such as language (although some Darfuris only speak Arabic), others, such as physical appearance / skin colour, may not consistently distinguish non-Arab from Arab Darfuris, or other Sudanese groups.

Darfur

The causes of the conflict in Darfur (between 2003 and 2008) were a result of a conflict of livelihoods – broadly between pastoralists (mostly Arabs) and farmers (almost entirely non-Arabs) – and land tenure; a scarcity of resources and environmental degradation; lack of good governance; and a conflict between ethnic groups, exacerbated by the government siding with Arab groups.

The overall security situation - measured in terms of military engagements and clashes between the government and its proxies, and the rebel groups - has improved in recent years, largely because the rebels are no longer capable of challenging government forces. The 2 remaining rebel groups in Darfur, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM; predominantly composed of Zaghawa) and the Sudan Liberation Movement-Abdul Wahid (predominantly Fur), are confined to Kutum,

North Darfur, and the Jebel Marra, at the intersection of Western and Northern Darfurs, respectively.

Levels of inter-tribal fighting and bandity / crime have also reduced, particularly in the main towns of Al Fasher, Geneina and Nyala.

However, Darfur remains in a state of emergency with community-level clashes between Arabs and non-Arabs continuing. Despite efforts at disarmament there remains a proliferation of small arms. Additionally, displacement of people continues with many of the displaced unable to access support; the number of international agencies providing assistance has declined in the last 10 years.

Many non-Arab Darfuris remain in IDP camps where unemployment is high but are unable to return to their home areas because of a lack of adequate security, and as their villages have been destroyed and land occupied. Areas outside of camps and the main towns are largely under the control of 20+ Arab militias, the largest being the Rapid Support Forces, which includes former Janjaweed, and Border Guards. The militias are reported to be violent, lack accountability and can act with impunity. Persons in the IDP camps remain vulnerable to attack outside of the camps.

Both the Arab militias and rebels may be profiteering from the current situation, including being involved in smuggling of people out of Sudan.

The government and its proxies perceive young non-Arab Darfuri people in the IDP camps as likely to be in opposition to it and potential rebels.

As a result of the ongoing economic and security situation, many Darfuris are seeking to leave the region: first to a main town in Darfur, then to Khartoum or to Libya and onto Europe.

Treatment of non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum

People from the 'periphery' of Sudan – Darfur, South Kordofan, Blue Nile, etc – generally experience discrimination from riverine Arab groups. Darfuris do not appear to experience a greater degree of discrimination than other groups. However, Darfuris who are affiliated with the ruling National Congress Party are likely to face less discrimination and difficulties, and have better opportunities.

The degree and nature of discrimination an individual may face is likely to depend on a combination of factors based on their background, experiences and activities. Darfuris who have an actual or perceived association with or involvement in an activist or rebel group are likely to attract the interest of the security forces. The government is particularly suspicious of members of the Zaghawa, Fur and Maasalit, given that these tribes are most closely linked with the rebel groups in Darfur.

Darfuris do not generally face direct societal discrimination from other Sudanese or are treated differently from other groups, although tribes appear to generally favour their own group.

While arrests of individual Darfuris occur and larger numbers may be arrested during demonstrations, there are not wide-scale arrests of Darfuris based on ethnicity alone as was the case in 2008 following the JEM attack on Omdurman. However, if arrested, Darfuris may face racial abuse and ill-treatment by the police and the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS), and are likely to be treated worse than other Sudanese groups once in detention.

Generally family members of a person of interest would not face arrest, but may be harassed.

The government does not generally tolerate opposition activism, particularly when manifest in protests. Darfuri students are the most politically restive Darfuri group and may be perceived to support rebel groups by the government: 10s-100s have been arrested in recent years.

While there is no single profile of Darfuri who is at risk from the state, Darfuris, particularly students, who participate in some form of activism, especially if linked to rebel groups, are likely to come to the interest of the security forces. Not all Darfuris, however, oppose or are perceived to oppose the government.

While Darfuri students face discrimination, harassment, intimidation and, in some circumstances, arrest and ill-treatment, significant numbers continue to attend universities in Khartoum and elsewhere in Sudan.

Darfuris face obstacles in accessing services, including healthcare, accommodation, education and work in the government sector. Although many of the difficulties are also experienced by other groups because of the prevailing poor economic situation, under-resourced public services and the government favouring its supporters. Many, but not all, Darfuris are poor, have menial jobs and live in the shanty towns surrounding Khartoum, which lack basic services and where forced eviction may occur. Darfuris who are able to obtain or have government positions, may face discrimination in obtaining promotion; those in business must pay 'extra' levies; while those in the security forces are likely to remain in the lower ranks.

The government introduced a biometric civil registration database in 2011 and claims to have captured the personal data of 80% of the Sudanese population. Individuals must be registered on the database to obtain an ID number and card, which enables access to various government and public services such as schooling and bank accounts, and is necessary to vote. Not all Darfuris have an ID number (and therefore access to an ID card). Some Darfuris, including those who have migrated to Khartoum, may face difficulties in obtaining an ID number as 2 male witnesses (relatives or tribal elders) are usually required to demonstrate identity and in some cases, where nationality is in dispute or there are no close relatives, 4 witnesses.

All Sudanese are required to undertake national service which is usually for 1 or 2 years, depending on whether the individual is a graduate or not. It may be possible to defer national service in some circumstances. Darfuris may not obtain such good placements as other Sudanese; are more likely to remain in the lower ranks; and are unlikely to be deployed to 'sensitive' areas. Failure to complete national service may result in restrictions on access to education, jobs and travel out of Sudan, but is unlikely to lead to more severe punishments, such as imprisonment.

Freedom of movement

In general, all Sudanese require exit visas to visit another country (there are some exceptions). To obtain an exit visa, individuals must provide their (biometric) passport, evidence of completing national service and reason for travel. Persons who are banned from travelling, for example those with a pending criminal case, are not permitted to leave Sudan. The government has an electronic watchlist containing the names of individuals not allowed to travel; this may include some members of the political opposition. Individuals leaving the country will be checked by immigration and NISS.

However, Sudan has 6-7,000km of land borders and an estimated 22 border crossing points. It is likely that many Sudanese are able to leave without obtaining an exit visa, if travelling by land.

While leaving without an exit is not permitted, there is not clear evidence that a person who does so and returns to Sudan is penalised.

Sudanese returning to Sudan require a passport or a Sudan government-issued laissez passe. On arrival at Khartoum International Airport returnees will first be checked by immigration and then have a security check by NISS.

In general, movement within Sudan is unfettered outside of the conflict areas. Travel between Darfur and Khartoum is possible by road, rail and air. There are checkpoints along the road routes, operated by different arms of the security forces. There are also checkpoints in Darfur, though fewer than in previous years. In areas outside of the main towns in Darfur, these are operated by Arab militias.

In general, there are no checkpoints in Khartoum.

Government monitoring

The government is believed to spend a significant proportion of its budget on security, including the routine monitoring of the population. Darfuris who are suspected of links with rebel groups may experience greater monitoring than other groups; it is unclear, however, if Darfuris generally are subject to greater monitoring than other groups.

The government monitors social media and may be able to tap mobile phones, and track people via their phones. However, the evidence about its exact capabilities is limited.

The government is likely to monitor the Sudanese diaspora in the UK for rebel activities, including obtaining information from informers.

Returns

At least 4 western European states, plus the UK, have enforced returns of unsuccessful asylum seekers to Sudan since 2017.

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has facilitated the voluntary return of over 150 individuals to Sudan from a number of European Union states plus Switzerland since 2016; most are likely to have been unsuccessful asylum seekers. The IOM has also facilitated the voluntary return of Sudanese from other countries in the region, most of whom are not likely to have been unsuccessful asylum seekers. A number of the returnees from Libya are known to have been from Darfur.

All the western states, including the UK, consulted plus the IOM were not aware of verified evidence of ill-treatment of returnees to Sudan. A number of the civil society sources interviewed considered that returnees would have problems on arrival, including arrest and detention. However, only one source claimed to have had direct contact with 2 individuals returned from Jordan and Belgium respectively who alleged ill-treatment on return.

[Back to Contents](#)

Synthesis of notes

1. Demography and migration

1.1 Size of the population

- 1.1.1 A number of sources noted that there is limited reliable official data on the numbers of areas, including size of the Sudanese and Darfuri population¹.
- 1.1.2 Three sources provided different figures for the size of the total population of Sudan, ranging from 28 million (based on the 2008 census)² to 40 million³. One source estimated the population of Darfur was 10 million⁴.
- 1.1.3 The population of Khartoum⁵ was estimated by one source to be around 10million⁶. Migration of different groups to Khartoum, including Darfuris, appears to be increasing driven by a number of factors including the poor economic situation^{7 8 9 10}; the 'centralisation' of the Sudanese state in the capital^{11 12}; the availability of services¹³; and, in the case of Darfuris, the ongoing political and security situation in Darfur^{14 15}. The growth in population can be seen in the expansion of the shanty towns surrounding Khartoum, where South Sudanese and people from the Nuba mountains can also be found¹⁶ along with Darfuris^{17 18}.

[Back to Contents](#)

1.2 Non-Arab Darfuri groups in Darfur

- 1.2.1 The political scientist observed that '... the Fur are the biggest group, then Zaghawa and Massalit (the Fur, Zaghawa and Massalit make up about 70% of the population of Darfur). Also, Tunjur and Djaju are big groups; the Tunjur are a large group in North Darfur. The Midob had a separate "entity" but

¹ For example, see [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#), [An official of Western Embassy A](#), [A university professor from Darfur](#) and [A civil society activist](#). The latter estimating that 'there are about 1 million Darfuris in Khartoum. This figure was from the 2008 census, but is not accurate. The census was conducted around election time, but the figures were inflated in areas where the NCP had strong support and the opposite in opposition supporting areas.'

² [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

³ [UK DfID official](#)

⁴ [UK DfID official](#)

⁵ Greater Khartoum consists of the 'Three Towns': Khartoum, Khartoum North and Omdurman, separated by the Blue and White Niles. All reference to Khartoum below is to Greater Khartoum unless otherwise stated.

⁶ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

⁷ [UK DfID official](#)

⁸ [UK FCO official](#)

⁹ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁰ See [UK FCO official](#) for more information about Sudan's economic situation as of August 2018.

¹¹ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

¹² [A university professor from Darfur](#)

¹³ [An activist](#)

¹⁴ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁵ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

¹⁶ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

¹⁷ [An activist](#)

¹⁸ [A civil society activist](#)

have since been absorbed into the Fur. However... if you tried to list all the tribes in Darfur, you would have a list 3 pages long.¹⁹

1.2.2 The political scientist added that he had

'... spoken to Berti elders, some of whom thought they were Arabs, linked with Yemen or the Nile peoples, near Dongola. The Tunjur have a similar claim of having their origin in the old Nubian Sudan along the Nile. However, they are generally classified as non-Arabs. Historically the Berti kingdom preceded the Fur's. Most of the Berti live in north North Darfur, around Omkaddada and Millit – they are a large group. Since 2004 they have been at the "frontline" [of the conflict].²⁰

1.2.3 The King of the Berti, however, claimed that the Berti are the second largest non-Arab Darfuri group in Darfur, with a population of 2-3 million lead by 24 'umda' (mayors') in North and South Darfur²¹.

[Back to Contents](#)

1.3 Non-Arab Darfuri population in Khartoum

1.3.1 Sources were not aware of reliable data of the size of the non-Arab Darfuri population in Khartoum²² but it was thought to be 'substantial'²³ with one source believing they are the majority of the city's population²⁴. Estimates ranged from 100,000s^{25 26} to 1 million^{27 28}. The King of the Berti estimated, based on a 'rough' census undertaken by community members splitting Khartoum into 6 districts, that the population of the Berti in Khartoum was 200,000²⁹. Many Darfuris came to Khartoum during the conflict in Darfur (2003 to 2008)³⁰, but migration from Darfur continues³¹.

1.3.2 As a way of illustrating the size of the population of Darfuris in Khartoum in the absence of credible statistics, based on personal experience and contacts, the university professor from Darfur, a non-Arab Darfuri by background, observed that: 'During social celebrations, for example, deaths or weddings, Darfuris invite hundreds or thousands of people from the areas they originate... citing his daughter's wedding due to take place in December, where he had booked a hall to accommodate 1,500 people, which would be predominately be people from his area of and (non-Arab) tribe in Darfur.'³²

¹⁹ [A political scientist](#)

²⁰ [A political scientist](#)

²¹ [King of the Berti](#)

²² For example, see [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#), [An official of Western Embassy A](#), [A university professor from Darfur](#) and [A civil society activist](#).

²³ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

²⁴ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

²⁵ [Sailh Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

²⁶ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

²⁷ [A civil society activist](#)

²⁸ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

²⁹ [King of the Berti](#)

³⁰ [An activist](#)

³¹ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

³² [A university professor from Darfur](#)

- 1.3.3 The activist noted that many from different Darfuri groups have come to work in Khartoum³³, an observation echoed by the university professor from Darfur who commented that the mix of Darfuris included Arab and non-Arab, from all tribes³⁴. The activist also noted that people like to stay together, sometimes with those from the same geographical area, while those who have moved to Khartoum contact their families who come and join them³⁵.
- 1.3.4 The Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy considered it ‘... [mu]ch harder to get a sense of the [Darfuri] population than other groups because they are so well integrated... Nuba, Christian or South Sudanese who live in “ghettos”, and [are] poorer, are easy to identify, but cannot say this of Darfuris as they are so spread across society.’ He also observed that he had been to shanty towns ‘where people from the Nuba mountains live; but wouldn’t know where to go to find the Darfuris. Darfuris are spread amongst various groups.’ And added that he ‘... had met the Darfuri Bar Association (DBA) as well as other Darfuri groups. However, Darfuris less likely to “hang out” with other Darfuris (than other groups), they are more likely to integrate with people from Khartoum. Many claim that there is a Darfuri “consciousness” but none existed prior to 2003 (when the conflict started in Darfur). Only since 2004/05 has there been something to be gained from identifying as Darfuri.’³⁶
- 1.3.5 Salih Osman thought the number of non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum was increasing ‘due to those leaving Darfur and being forcibly displaced following the eruption of the conflict in 2003. Those who have enough means in Darfur travel to other parts of Sudan, mostly to Khartoum.’³⁷ He further explained: ‘The people leaving Darfur and travelling to Khartoum are always NADs such as those from the Fur, Zaghawa, Massalit, Berti and other smaller ethnic tribes and indigenous peoples. ‘In 2003, IDPs planned to establish a camp south of Khartoum but this was dispersed by the security forces. Since then, displaced persons from Darfur do not live together. The government has banned the formation of IDP camps for NADs in Khartoum – it does not want the international community to see NADs living in camps like the South Sudanese.’³⁸
- 1.3.6 A couple of sources noted Darfuris often end up in poor areas³⁹ (shanty towns⁴⁰) of Khartoum, selling tea, sugar,⁴¹ water, air time for mobiles and in petty and informal jobs⁴². The civil society activist estimated that around 65% of Darfuris lived in the shanty towns that surround Khartoum (around 20

³³ [An activist](#)

³⁴ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

³⁵ [An activist](#)

³⁶ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

³⁷ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

³⁸ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

³⁹ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

⁴⁰ [An activist](#)

⁴¹ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

⁴² [An activist](#)

miles from the centre)⁴³, therefore 35% live elsewhere in the city. The activist noted that '[t]here are no IDP camps for Darfuris or those from South Kordofan in Khartoum but many live in shanty towns.'⁴⁴

1.3.7 The political scientist acknowledged that there is an established Darfuri community in Khartoum and that 'it was not a small community, primarily composed of Zaghawa, known for their trading skills. [Also noting] Arabs and non-Arabs live in different areas so there is no friction.'⁴⁵ While Siddig Yousef divided Darfuris into 2 groups, defined by their economic circumstance, which in turn affected where they resided:

'1) the financially able people, for example, in Libya Market, who have lived and traded in Khartoum for a long-time. Trade with Libya: mostly traders in clothes and electronic equipment in the west part of Omdurman.

'2) The other people are affected by war, live in bad conditions around the Three Towns⁴⁶, lack services – water, electricity, etc. Usually work in menial jobs, building industry; children polish shoes, wash cars, etc.'⁴⁷

1.3.8 Amjed Farid El Tayeb made a similar observation, noting 'There is a large displaced Darfuri community in Khartoum, which lives in the outskirts of the city. There are some wealthy Darfuris but few are in this bracket. They used to trade in a market – Libya market. Libya market was built on importing goods from Libya, which [is] now decreasing. However, there is a notion of ethnic class migration. Many rich Darfuris tend to claim an Arab identity and cut their ties with Darfuri community.'⁴⁸

1.3.9 Sources identified a number of areas of Khartoum where Darfuris tend to congregate:

- Fatah (Omdurman)^{49 50 51}
- Dar es Salaam (Omdurman)^{52 53}
- Haj Yusuf (Khartoum North)^{54 55}
- Ingaz (south Khartoum)⁵⁶⁵⁷
- Mayo^{58 59}

⁴³ [A civil society activist](#)

⁴⁴ [An activist](#)

⁴⁵ [A political scientist](#)

⁴⁶ Greater Khartoum is comprised of the 'Three Towns', Khartoum, Khartoum North and Omdurman

⁴⁷ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

⁴⁸ [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

⁴⁹ [A political scientist](#)

⁵⁰ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

⁵¹ [An activist](#)

⁵² [A political scientist](#)

⁵³ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

⁵⁴ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

⁵⁵ [Sailh Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

⁵⁶ [A political scientist](#)

⁵⁷ [Sailh Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

⁵⁸ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

⁵⁹ [Sailh Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

- Umbadda (Omdurman)^{60 61 62}

1.3.10 The King of Berti explained with regard to the Berti specifically that they ‘... live in the districts of Hadj Yusuf (Bari), Umbada, which is quite poor and where there are also lot of Nuba (Omdurman), Kalakala (Khartoum), Thawar (Omdurman) and Mayo (Khartoum). Also live in the shanty towns outside of the city.’⁶³

1.3.11 There are also others, mostly women and children, who live in farms on the outskirts of Khartoum⁶⁴. A couple of sources identified Darfuris in Gezira^{65 66} where they work as farm labourers⁶⁷. Dr Ahmed Eltoum explained that Gezira is

‘... an agricultural area around 20km from Khartoum with a population of over 4 million, 25% of whom originally came from Darfur. Ethnically, many people are from marginalised non-Arab Darfuri (NAD) tribes such as the Tama, Bergo, Gimir, Tongor, Salamat, Fur and Zaghawa, and some smaller marginalised tribes as well as a number of Arab tribes. EAC interviewed 30 individuals and held focus groups - 200 people in total - between February and April 2018.’⁶⁸

1.3.12 A number of sources commented that inter-marriage between Darfuris and other groups took place. The Second Political Secretary at the British Embassy observed: ‘A lot of Darfuris are married to non-Darfuris, helps with upward mobility, looking for a family, a job. For example, the former head of the Darfur Regional Authority, Tigani Sisi, is married to a non-Darfuri... the marital status of some other Darfuri politicians was similar.’⁶⁹ The civil activist also noted increasing mixing, noting ‘Inter-tribal marriages are common these days, it is not unusual to find a family where the grandmother belongs to one tribe and the grandfather to another. It was not the usual practice before the 1980s, but now it happens quite often.’⁷⁰ The activist observed that inter-tribal marriage is frequent: ‘Inter-tribal marriage did cause a problem in the past except a few tribes, but not now. Mixed marriages are common. Many Darfuris marry Arabs from the centre – mostly men marrying Arab women, especially those Darfuris with money including tribes such as Zagawa and Fur.’⁷¹ The King of the Berti concurred that inter-marriage between tribes was common, noting the Berti often inter-marry with other groups, making it hard to distinguish Berti from other Sudanese groups, which made it difficult to estimate the size of the population⁷².

⁶⁰ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

⁶¹ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

⁶² [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

⁶³ [King of the Berti](#)

⁶⁴ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

⁶⁵ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

⁶⁶ [Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

⁶⁷ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

⁶⁸ [Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

⁶⁹ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

⁷⁰ [A civil society activist](#)

⁷¹ [An activist](#)

⁷² [King of the Berti](#)

- 1.3.13 The political scientist (PS) provided a detailed description of the zoning of areas in Khartoum and the informal settlements - shanty towns – where many Darfuris live:

‘According to official zoning, some areas that are shanty towns are recorded as “normal” areas even though they are a slum. Locals view these areas as IDP areas. There are social problems, poor access to services. There is no formal IDP classification in Khartoum as the government does not recognise them as IDPs or fully recognise them as residents of the area. This is a source of misery as they are not recognised as residents, nor given support.

‘Darfuris share the area with the Nuba, but the majority are Darfuri... Some sections of the areas referred to above in Khartoum are formally zoned, land sold by the government. Find slum areas between recognised areas and hear about tensions between these communities (the formal and informal). The recognised communities want to expand; it is a daily phenomenon that informal communities are bull-dozed by the police.’⁷³

- 1.3.14 The human rights defender provided an explanation of the allocation of land around Khartoum after the National Islamic Front (now the NCP) took power in 1989:

‘... the government encouraged people to stay in Khartoum by allocating plots of land to them, and hence others were therefore encouraged to come and find work (as labourers, factory workers, etc.) and acquire a plot of land for housing. The HRD believed this was because the government wanted to “dilute” the demography of the city – the educated, middle classes and wealthy elite who could potentially cause problems for the government.

‘... migrants living in shanty towns were given land, which they sold to property developers, and thus the city expanded. Those migrants then instead of being destitute acquired plots of land which they sold and got money. And then moved and settled in other shanty areas to be given another plot of land by the government and it became a way of making money. Many people come from rural areas, mostly from west of the Nile, including Kordofan and Darfur, which were the most populated areas.’⁷⁴

- 1.3.15 For more discussion of the fluidity of tribal identify, see [Ethnicity and identification of Darfuris](#) below.

[Back to Contents](#)

1.4 Darfuri community groups in Khartoum

- 1.4.1 A number of sources were aware of Darfuri community groups in Khartoum. The unviserity professor from Darfur observed:

‘Leadership and support structures have grown in these Darfuri areas in Khartoum, including ethnic associations, which may be a mix of tribes, or just one tribe, depending on the size of the area and tribal mix in Darfur. For example, Zaghawas have one association as in the territory with same name in Darfur it is the only tribe. But there are also “area” associations, comprised of different tribes from a particular area in Darfur.

⁷³ [A political scientist](#)

⁷⁴ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

'Arabs and NADs Darfuris mix but after the conflict it is a cautious mix; they try to maintain diplomatic relationships. For example, those who knew each other at school or as colleagues, will greet one another cautiously, there is restraint – as there is between Arabs and NADs who interact in the markets in Darfur itself. There is still interaction and not a complete barrier.'⁷⁵

1.4.2 Salih Osman noted:

'Based on tradition and customs, there are Tribal Associations – “Councils of Elders” for all Arabs and NADs representing each tribe (shura councils). All NAD groups have shura councils, including Darfuris in Khartoum. People feel more protected by the shura councils than by the government security services.

'There are tribal associations for northern tribes, eastern tribes, the Nuba, Fur, Massalit and the Zaghawa. The associations protect the interests of the tribes and serve a role in social life. They may be involved in personal conflict management – for example, even a killing may be resolved without the need to refer the issue to a Court. The tribal associations did raise money to help IDPs fleeing Darfur to Khartoum during the height of the armed conflict (2003-2008) but do not provide support now, because the government prohibited the establishment of camps specifically for NADs in Khartoum. Tribal associations are unable to help with employment, nor do they offer financial assistance.

'Asked if these associations monitor the human rights of the Darfuris, SO said that this was the work of the DBA. The shura councils may approach the DBA about issues of law and for pro bono legal aid, and they will ask for representation of defendants facing charges, including capital punishment.'⁷⁶

1.4.3 The activist was aware of

'... the Darfur Bar Association (DBA) (observed that the translation from Arabic is actually Darfur Lawyers' Association, the “bar” is inclusive for all lawyers in Sudan). The DBA is less active now than in the past but if big clashes occur, e.g. at a university, they would become involved. The source also knows of Safaa Elagip, a Darfurian women's activist, who provides support for and development of women, travels between Khartoum and Darfur.'⁷⁷

1.4.4 The King of the Berti explained that his is '[r]esponsible for looking after the Berti community – their rights and demands and requests for support and resolving problems - in Darfur, Khartoum, elsewhere in Sudan and overseas.' He also noted that the 'Berti have “mayors” – “umda” – who lead communities. There... “umda” in Greater Khartoum in Hadj Yusuf and Umbada.' He added that he helps Berti access healthcare and education⁷⁸.

[Back to Contents](#)

⁷⁵ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

⁷⁶ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

⁷⁷ [An activist](#)

⁷⁸ [King of the Berti](#)

1.5 Darfuri employment profiles and representation across society

1.5.1 A number of sources identified that many non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum live in poor parts of the city and in the shanty towns that surround it, doing 'menial' jobs such as selling tea, sugar cane, water, construction and farm labouring in areas just outside of the city^{79 80 81 82}.

1.5.2 However, sources also acknowledged that there are non-Arab Darfuris spread across Sudanese and Khartoum society. The Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy likened the situation of Darfuris to that of British Muslims, who are 'spread across society, there are poor Muslims but also doctors, lawyers, etc.' The source observed there are wealthy Darfuris and poorer Darfuri working on farms. Darfuris are in:

- Government
- Business
- Medicine
- Law, noting there is a Darfuri Bar Association⁸³ (which, according to Salih Osman, includes 500 Darfuri lawyers, the majority of whom are in Khartoum⁸⁴)

1.5.3 The Second Secretary Political also noted

'... traditionally "African" Darfuris were sedentary farmers with better access to services such as health and education and there was little distinction between the groups. Arabs are more nomadic and it is less likely to find Arab [Darfuris] doctors, lawyers or engineers, for example...

'Darfuris are imbedded in government, law, medicine and business. They are traditionally prominent in certain fields: religious teachers; teachers in schools; over represented in the army's lower ranks, but also included officers (he confirmed that he had met Darfuri officers in the army) including Zaghawa and Fur. Darfuris also in the security services... "part and parcel" of Sudan, involved in the war against the south.'⁸⁵

1.5.4 The Second Secretary Political added that 'Darfuris in the army when conflict in Darfur started may have divided loyalties. Some may have defected to the rebel groups. Even today, many police and soldiers are Darfuri – Darfuris are in the security apparatus.'⁸⁶

1.5.5 Similarly, the professor from Darfur acknowledged that there are some non-Arab Darfuris in position of authority, such as in the security forces (albeit their allegiance is to their 'political masters', the ruling National Congress Party). The professor also agreed that there are 'Darfuris throughout

⁷⁹ [An activist](#)

⁸⁰ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

⁸¹ [A civil society activist](#)

⁸² [Siddiq Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

⁸³ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

⁸⁴ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

⁸⁵ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

⁸⁶ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

Khartoum – in law, academia, government, business. There are some Darfuris in positions outside of Khartoum, for example some are doctors or lawyers, but their numbers are small as Darfuris access to education is less than other groups.⁸⁷

1.5.6 Amjed Farid El Tayeb noted that '[t]here are many officials in government who are Darfuris (proclaiming both Arab and Non-Arab Identities), including the vice president.'⁸⁸ Other sources identified other Darfuris holding positions in the government:

- 'The minister of youth and sport, Dr Abulbashar Abdelrahman Yousif who worked for many years as the director of the Peace Research Centre at El Fasher University'⁸⁹
- Some non-Arab Darfuris 'side with the government, are high ranking politicians and Ministers. Most of the information the government has is from NAD government supporters, while some is from informers. Information is also provided by NAD politicians.'⁹⁰
- 'There are also Darfuris from the Zaghawa, Massalit and Fur tribes involved in politics. The Minister for Health is a member of the Zaghawa tribe and there are other Darfuri Ministers.'⁹¹
- 'There are more ministers from Darfur than from other parts of the country. From the Fur and Zaghawa; the minister of health is Zaghawa.'⁹²

1.5.7 The King of the Berti described his own position. Although he has no official role in government he 'is a member of the national assembly for Darfur, having been elected in 2010 and 2015. He is also a member of the National Congress Party which he joined on the advice of his family.'⁹³

1.5.8 The university professor from Darfur, however, qualified his observations by noting:

'... a Darfuri Minister or any other non-NCP Minister would have expected to be in charge of his Ministry, but there is another unknown, more powerful man, a strong man who can veto his decisions. This Minister and others were appointed for public perception, a political move, but they are puppets with privileges. They have no effective power and cannot transform the situation in Darfur or any other place... There is no transparent system of electing people to office, they are just appointed and the appointment may not be related to any achievement the person has done.'⁹⁴

1.5.9 The political scientist noted that there 'are well established, wealthy Darfuri traders but most Darfuris look at them as not quite real Darfuris due to their (perceived) affiliation with the government. The government tries to use

⁸⁷ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

⁸⁸ [Amid Farid El Tayeb](#)

⁸⁹ [A political scientist](#)

⁹⁰ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

⁹¹ [Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

⁹² [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

⁹³ [King of the Berti](#)

⁹⁴ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

these people to influence other Darfuris.⁹⁵ Salih Osman made a similar observation, noting: ‘In Khartoum in some places NADs and Arabs live together (those that were not directly involved in the conflict). Some NADs run businesses and live “normally” – not all are poor or victims of conflict. However, if a person is not a member of the ruling party, it is difficult to do business (this is the case for everyone, not just NADs) - the government won’t allow it.’⁹⁶

- 1.5.10 The university professor from Darfur (UP) noted, based on his own experience, that there are ‘only a small number of Darfuri staff at the University of Khartoum; in UP’s department 4 out of 16 are Darfuris.’⁹⁷ A couple of sources estimated that the non-Arab Darfuri student population in Khartoum was in the 1,000s^{98 99}, with Amjed Farid El Tayeb estimating that around 15-20% of the 300,000 students in Sudan are Darfuri or have Darfuri origins (circa 45-60,000)¹⁰⁰.
- 1.5.11 The official of Western Embassy B when asked if Darfuris were represented in different segments of society, including the armed forces, agreed that ‘Darfuris are still in the armed forces’¹⁰¹. While the activist considered that there are many Darfuris in the army and police, including officers though caveated this by noting ‘[e]nrolment in the military and police forces may be a problem, unless the individual supports the (ruling) National Congress Party (NCP).’¹⁰² The King of the Berti, when asked if there are Berti working in different professions and sectors such as government, civil service, medicine, academia, business, police, army, agreed ‘... but noted that there are very few officers in the police and army, but many are successful in business. He doesn’t see the situation changing soon, e.g. the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Darfur are hiring people from the same tribes as themselves, as fear situation might flare up.’¹⁰³ Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim stated that Darfuris work in the police and NISS¹⁰⁴, while Lieutenant-General Dahiya, a Nuba, observed that there are non-Arabs in the police but did not specify whether from Darfur or elsewhere in Sudan¹⁰⁵.
- 1.5.12 Two of the western officials interviewed mentioned that their Embassies employ non-Arab Darfuri staff, especially in support functions such as drivers and guards^{106 107 108}.
- 1.5.13 The human rights defender commented that, at least in the past, ‘[w]hen the current regime took power in 1989, Darfuris were in privileged positions.

⁹⁵ [A political scientist](#)

⁹⁶ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

⁹⁷ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

⁹⁸ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

⁹⁹ [Amid Farid El Tayeb](#)

¹⁰⁰ [Amid Farid El Tayeb](#)

¹⁰¹ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

¹⁰² [An activist](#)

¹⁰³ [King of the Berti](#)

¹⁰⁴ [Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

¹⁰⁵ [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

¹⁰⁶ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

¹⁰⁷ [A Swiss official](#)

¹⁰⁸ The FFM team also met and spoke to 2 Darfuris – one Arab and one non-Arab – employed as drivers by the British Embassy in Khartoum during the mission.

Today, if any Sudanese person is not aligned to, or agreeing with, the government, the National Congress Party, then the state is against you, treated differently.’ The source also considered that:

‘Rapid Support Force [in Darfur] personnel were from specific tribes when the group was first inaugurated, but now it included NADs and many from other non-Darfuri tribes... in the first ten years when this [NCP] regime came to power Darfuris were the militant members of NISS who performed the torture and ill-treatment of detainees and other people. Darfuris were known to be the majority of foot soldiers in the army in the past and were the ones who were seen by South Sudanese as the “strong fist” in battling the South Sudanese.

‘A recognized number of the rebel leaders were part of the NISS and the PDF (Popular Defence Force) which was used to fight the SPLA before 2005. Some of those leaders assumed the command of the Mujahideen battalions in South Sudan and the “Two Areas” [South Kordofan and Blue Nile states].’¹⁰⁹

[Back to Contents](#)

1.6 Drivers of migration and routes out of Sudan

1.6.1 Sources offered a number of reasons of why people, including non-Arab Darfuris, migrate within Sudan and out of the country. Salih Osman observed that:

‘Some people flee Sudan as they are frightened of being accused of being opponents of the government. They were also deprived from their means of livelihoods by the war and kept in the camps, so people also leave for security and lack of access to their lands and livelihoods. People haven’t received any compensation for the loss of relatives, land, cattle, and IDPs in the camps receive much less assistance than before.’¹¹⁰

1.6.2 The university professor from Darfur observed that:

‘Darfuris talk more about migration than anything else. Young people (at least amongst the educated) want to get out of Sudan because of the extremely difficult economic and political situations. IDPs in Darfur face harassment from the security forces, they have no rights to express themselves. Research has been undertaken in west, north, south and central Darfur [which the professor was involved]. Youths from IDP camps were interviewed, as well as students in Khartoum and other areas. The youth are discontented.’¹¹¹

1.6.3 The university professor from Darfur also considered that ‘[e]ducation and healthcare are reasons for net migration. People from rural areas migrate to Khartoum – whatever resources they have, they bring their families to Khartoum. Poorer people migrate too.’¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

¹¹⁰ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

¹¹¹ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

¹¹² [A university professor from Darfur](#)

- 1.6.4 Dr Ahmed Eltoum, however, was of the view that migration largely driven by the economic situation:

‘Young people likely to leave because of the economic situation in Sudan... there are a lot of young people from wealthy Sudanese families, who have made their money in corruption who are taking the safe route to Europe, by travelling to Turkey (it is very easy to obtain a visa to travel to Turkey) and then paying a smuggler to facilitate the journey to the UK. Others travel from Gezira to Libya, then onto Europe.

‘Next wave of asylum seekers will be the elderly. There are many Sudanese in the Middle East, who may look to go to Europe due to the new Saudi policies making it difficult for Sudanese to remain in Saudi Arabia.’¹¹³

- 1.6.5 Similarly, the political scientist noted that ‘[i]t’s mostly graduates, who received free university education, who are looking to leave Sudan. Many graduates are unemployed – leaving is not down to ethnicity.’¹¹⁴

- 1.6.6 The political scientist described the migration process from Darfur:

‘...most people do not go straight to Khartoum from rural areas. They move in groups from villages to [IDP] camps, to a town within the greater Darfur region then Khartoum via western Omdurman (most people from Darfur are in west Omdurman) or Libya. People from the urban areas, such as Al Fasher do travel straight to Khartoum.

‘The older generation of Darfuris say, yes go back. But younger people don’t see a future in Darfur. Young leave because, first, the economic situation and, second, the political and security situation. But there is no guarantee of security in Khartoum.’¹¹⁵

- 1.6.7 The political scientist also described the migration routes out of Darfur and Sudan into Libya:

‘... from Al Fasher to Libya, the approximate cost is US\$200 per person. From the Libya border to Tripoli or Benghazi, US\$300 per person (but many people get stuck in Libya) and up to US\$500 across to Italy. Asked how long the journey would take, the PS considered that from Al Fasher to Kufra (Libyan town over the border from Sudan) it would take around 3 days (in a convoy). Then people stay in Kufra for a while as part of the arrangement, where it’s likely they are handed over to a different group of traffickers.

‘Asked how people afford the cost of travel, the PS said he had asked people. Most mention a relative somewhere, who made it to US, Canada. Some say they have relatives in the Gulf. Very few are in a position to save enough. They are forced to leave the camps to find work, usually in construction, peddling or menial work. However, the rate that people can save has declined as there has been a reduction in food assistance as provided by the Red Cross working in the camps, so people have a greater expenditure on daily living.’¹¹⁶

¹¹³ [Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

¹¹⁴ [A political scientist](#)

¹¹⁵ [A political scientist](#)

¹¹⁶ [A political scientist](#)

1.6.8 The political scientist further noted:

‘... when he had talked to people in the IDP camps, in individual and structured interviews or group contexts – the issue of migration is no longer a “confidential” subject, they talk openly about it and it is becoming a “legitimate dream”. Young people (from 13/14 to 30 years old) ultimately dream to leave Sudan. There are two stages:

i) ‘Leave camp, go to Al Fasher

ii) ‘Then either go to Khartoum, or from Al Fasher go to Libya and beyond

‘What determines the option taken are resources. It doesn’t take much to get to Khartoum – can get there by truck. There are checkpoints en route but there is not very much questioning. They just say that they are fleeing the violence and coming to the safety of Khartoum. It is generally smooth unless there are weapons or someone is already suspected of affiliation with a rebel group.

‘But to go to Libya is not straightforward. Need an agent, someone to protect them. Some, mostly, Arab militias provide paid protection to convoys of trucks to take migrants to Libya. It’s not unusual to see 4-5 trucks and 2 militia armed trucks protecting them (the same militia who may attack people. There are lots of contradictions, ironies.) The money made from this smuggling is used to buy arms.’¹¹⁷

1.6.9 The IOM official noted that ‘many Sudanese leave through Niger, pay smugglers to leave – does not cost much.’¹¹⁸

1.6.10 Dr Eltoum, based on his fieldwork in Gezira in early 2018, provided an alternative to the narrative of Darfuris migrating from the Darfur:

‘After the war in Darfur young people (Darfuris) living in Gezira compared their lives with those around them and became dissatisfied with their living conditions (temporary mud and grass huts which had to be replaced yearly) and the “campos” in which they lived. Campos are illegal villages built on land which is part of farms or the road at the side water channels, where Darfuri IDPs had lived from some 20-30 years, before and following the outbreak of war.

‘Some of the young Darfuris were educated graduates, but still forced by circumstance to live under these primitive conditions. They became angry and tensions grew at the injustice of their situation. There were tensions between young and old, and between the Darfuris and the people of Gezira. Extreme violence broke out at the Gezira and White Nile Universities. The authorities did not recognise the plight of the Darfuris and did nothing to ease the tensions in the area. AES learnt about these issues during meetings with 14 villages and campos.

‘On the back of this dissatisfaction, traffickers have been recruiting young people in Gezira to fight with the Libyan armed factions, including Islamist groups and Da’esh.’¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ [A political scientist](#)

¹¹⁸ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

¹¹⁹ [Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

1.6.11 Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim also noted:

‘Young men from the marginalised Darfuri tribes [in Gezira] are wealthy after the harvest with time on their hands and are easily encouraged to travel to Europe with traffickers. Those that reach Europe are assisted, although made to pay, for help with asylum claims. Pressure is put upon the UK and other European countries by what appears to be asylum seekers from Darfur and a situation that is still bad there, when in fact these young men are from Gezira. There is more interest for the traffickers in men from Gezira as they have money, where as those in Darfur are poor and not such a good investment.

‘People who reach the UK have to pay to join a political party; they have to pay for accommodation (usually in Birmingham or London) before getting support from the UK government; they have to go to a demonstration in the UK and have photos taken to support their asylum claim; they have to pay for help with their asylum claim (often with money from family or friends); they may have to pay for a medical report to back up their claim - this is all part of the trafficking. Once a person has made a successful claim their letter / details of the claim can be sold to someone going through the process.

‘According to AES this migration can be seen in the UK’s published asylum statistics: in the last 4 years, asylum applications from Iran and Iraq have decreased, but those from Sudan have increased; the number of Sudanese asylum grants is increasing; the ending of the harvest in Sudan correlates to an increase in asylum intake in the following quarter.’¹²⁰

[Back to Contents](#)

1.7 Ethnicity and identification of non-Arab Darfuris

Notion of identity and perceptions of the Darfur conflict

1.7.1 Dr Enrico Ille explained the complexities of ethnicity, which is multifaceted and mutable:

‘... ethnic identity emerges out of a number of elements – social history, language, religion, physical traits, etc – and combines with other, more individual elements – age, education, profession, economic status, political affiliation, life course – to a social identity. Different social groupings play a role in an individual’s life, and each in a different way.¹²¹ It makes therefore sense to take the “categorical” question of who is non-Arab Darfuri and who is not, and change it towards a “processual” question: what makes somebody identify and be identified as non-Arab Darfuri, and what are potential consequences of such an identification?’

‘The presumption of permanent social identity contradicts the situational or at least compositional character it has long been established to have. Rather

¹²⁰ [Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

¹²¹ Dr Ille qualified: “Tribe”, for instance, is a term for socio-political entities that are relatively closed-up and tend to keep social reproduction inside its boundaries; the term is mostly deprecated in academic discourses, since it has been widely used by colonial administrators to denote uniform social groups (one chief and his subjects) they imagined to exist in their colonies. However, through the so-called Native Administration, tribal representation has continuing political importance, especially in Darfur.’

than being fixed in one social status, an individual has always – but to vastly varying extent – different options of behaviour, and circumstances can change dramatically over the course of one's life. Furthermore, there are several roles and social circles overlapping or even contradicting in this life. While this may be less the case for one person than another, somebody's situation has, from his point of view, always to be approached with such considerations in mind.

'... [the] frequent assessment of social and political studies of conflicts in Darfur... as ethnic conflict, and even more its assessment through a dichotomy (Arab / non-Arab) is highly problematic and inaccurate. Conflict dynamics always existed on different levels: from localized quarrels (e.g. family feuds) to supra-regional politics (e.g. aftermath of Libyan pan-Arab military mobilization); from small-scale natural resource scarcity (e.g. co-used water wells) to geopolitically relevant natural wealth (e.g. oil fields in southern Darfur). How individuals are positioning and are seen positioned towards these different aspects of different conflicts cannot be read off one marker of identification. Accordingly, how someone is involved and affected cannot be put down to one factor, for example race or ethnic identity.'¹²²

1.7.2 Dr Ille also opined:

'The ideological recruitment phase in the war in Darfur (about 2004-2006) coincided with a surge of international attention and, following a general post-9/11 anti-Arab (as equated to anti-Muslim) mood, the Arab vs non-Arab interpretation took a strong foothold in global media and beyond as the main interpretative frame for understanding the conflict. Not unusual for social conflicts, the interpretation fed back into behaviour, and the inadequate representation of the causes and dynamics of conflicts in Darfur became an important element of these same conflicts. In other words, the claim that the war was a genocide of Arabs against non-Arabs – and nothing else or nothing more – influenced how those involved in the war perceived and behaved towards each other. This does not mean that racist brutality and systematic targeting based on ethnic identification did **not** take place. It means that this aspect became so dominant, especially in global discourses on the war, that all other aspects and specific conflict dynamics between specific conflict actors were overshadowed. In consequence, even these actors themselves may start to adopt this simplification and act, or at least talk based on it. Even more, this obscures the existence of interlinkages and cooperative relationships between "Arabs" and "non-Arabs": intermarriage, peace agreements, trade relations, etc.'¹²³

[Back to Contents](#)

Identifying non-Arab Dafuris

- 1.7.3 Sources generally agreed that there were some outward markers that might identify a person as originating from Darfur, such as language (where relevant), but did not consistently agree on whether there are other facets,

¹²² [Dr Enrico Ille, anthropologist](#)

¹²³ [Dr Enrico Ille, anthropologist](#)

such as physical appearance, which are distinctive to non-Arab Darfuris. Dr Ille considered:

'... outward markers [of ethnicity] are mostly insubstantial, although they may be treated otherwise by applicants, or in superficial social interactions. Appearance, such as skin colour and scarring, provide locally only rough orientation to which group somebody belongs. This means a darker colour may indicate for people in Khartoum a provenance from a more southern area, sometimes summarized as "Westerner" (**gharāba**), which can cover all of Darfur and all of Kordofan combined. Inside these areas, especially because of centuries of intermarriage, almost any brownish skin colour can be found in any group. Scarring is even less reliable, as it has been mostly discontinued in Darfur. A general orientation towards Darfur is sometimes established through names, such as Adam, Khatir, etc.'¹²⁴

1.7.4 The university professor from Darfur (UP) thought:

'There is a cultural distinction between Arab and non-Arab Darfuris (NADs). Identification is a universal problem (from an anthropological perspective).

'From a social/political view, identities are socially constructed. People distinguish themselves as NADs of differing types or as Arabs of differing types. Classification may be overt or covert; it has nothing to do with biology: Darfuris look the same. UP said if there were 10 Darfuris round a table you could not tell who was Arab, who was non-Arab. The differences lie in the language they talk or the way they claim their history and genealogy.

'A non-Arab can become an Arab. People can disappear across a border and join a new group and be dealt with according to the newly acquired identification. In this way, after 20 years, an African could be treated as an Arab. A NAD who becomes Arab will be treated as an Arab. Culture and language is the only distinction.

'The rest of Sudanese society is ethnically mixed. But Sudanese are clear about labels – this is all cultural and due to the history of migration, from north to south (Sudan), from West Africa and the Arabian peninsula. Before air travel, people travelled through Sudan for the Hajj. As a result, ethnic groups have mixed over the centuries. UP cited an American professor who, in the 1980s, wrote that up to 1/3 of present-day Sudanese were of West African origin. However, northern Sudanese would dispute this. So identities are social constructs. The disappearance of people into other groups has been happening for years.'¹²⁵

1.7.5 Amjed Farid El Tayeb observed it 'was hard to differentiate between non-Arab Darfuris (NADs) and Arab Darfuris... Even for [him]... who grew up in Sudan, it is hard to distinguish NADs and Arabs; there is no real difference – only in the minds of non-Sudanese'¹²⁶. Similarly, the Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy considered that '[t]he non-Arab / Arab division amongst Darfuris does not really mean anything in the minds of

¹²⁴ [Dr Enrico Ille, anthropologist](#)

¹²⁵ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

¹²⁶ [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

other Sudanese. It may be possible for other Sudanese to identify a Darfuri by language but not by other factors, e.g., by name or facial features.¹²⁷

1.7.6 The official of Western Embassy A observed, '[t]he Sudanese are very mixed, mixed marriages; people change ethnicity. The official could not personally tell different tribes apart, even in the 3 areas of Darfur the official visited, although the official suggested some could be distinguished by their language. It is not clear either if Sudanese recognise other groups.'¹²⁸ While the IOM official similarly noted '... the Sudanese are very ethnically and physically diverse [and]... did not think there is a distinct African/non-African division, although Sudanese may be able to tell – not clear to him.'¹²⁹

1.7.7 Siddig Yousef (SY) considered it '... possible to identify some Darfuris as Darfuris, but not everyone. Non-Arabs and Arab Darfuris look the same, as lots of inter-marriage. When asked if there are other ways to identify a Darfuri, SY noted that many Darfuris are illiterate and by their Arabic, they speak other languages.'¹³⁰ While the human rights defender observed:

'... that the perception of non-Arab Darfuri (NAD) and Arab Darfuri was a misnomer and "nonsense", and these terms were being used to create differences between tribes... all Sudanese were African; there were no Arabs per se, and referred to them as Nomads (who are traditionally called Arab tribes).

'The HRD did not believe that the state or general society could identify a so-called NAD purely on their appearance. Different tribes (not just NADs) speak with different accents and/or use different Arabic dialects.'¹³¹

1.7.8 The King of the Berti considered it

'[h]ard to distinguish Berti from other Sudanese / Darfuris, which is why it is hard to give an estimate of the size of the tribe. They don't have their own language, often inter-marry with other groups and are prone to integrate with other groups. Their features are less markedly "African" [the 2nd pol sec noted that the Berti are from North Darfur, tend to be less "African" – having similar features to the Zaghawa, both being the most Northern tribes]. Inter-marriage with Arabs less common than it is with other Darfuri tribes.'¹³²

1.7.9 However, other sources considered that non-Arab Darfuris are distinguishable by appearance. Salih Osman (SO) thought:

'It is possible to identify a NAD by their skin colour and their language. They do not speak Arabic fluently.

'Asked about Darfuris who speak Arabic and had been brought up in Khartoum, SO observed that even Darfuris who had lived in Khartoum since 1970s / 1980s are made to feel inferior.

¹²⁷ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

¹²⁸ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

¹²⁹ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

¹³⁰ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

¹³¹ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

¹³² [King of the Berti](#)

'Even those who have lived in the city a long time can easily be differentiated from other groups.'¹³³

1.7.10 Salih Osman added that '... Non-Arab Darfuris are called by the local Darfuri Arabs "Zurga" – which means "black people". This refers to their dark skin colour and is a derogatory and racist term, used to devalue people.'¹³⁴

1.7.11 The civil society activist thought

'[i]t is possible to recognise Darfuris by their facial features. For example, in May 2008 during JEM attack on Khartoum the security forces used to stop buses and ask certain people (Darfuris) to get off because they had been recognised and could be identified from others. The features of NADs, Nuba and Arab Darfuris are different.

'It is also possible to identify a Darfuri by the way they speak – anyone who speaks a local language most likely speak Arabic with an accent. This is the same for other groups too, such as Nuba. People from the Berti tribe can be recognised by their features too, even though they have lost their language.'¹³⁵

1.7.12 An official of Western Embassy B, on the question of identifying a non-Arab Darfuri, noted that '... he had asked local staff who thought if someone is an "expert", it is easy – by skin colour, scarring. But to those Sudanese not familiar with Darfuris, they could say they were 'non-Arab'. Some Darfuris have tribal scars.'¹³⁶ While the activist observed 'Darfuris (Arabs and non-Arabs) are easily identifiable by skin colour, language; but mainly by their accent. People who have grown up in Khartoum, have an accent they have picked up from their parents. However, features are the same as other Sudanese.'¹³⁷

1.7.13 Dr Ille suggested that in order to determine a person's identity and background, 2 key areas to consider are 'centre of life' and language:

'The centre of life is a complex description of where life experiences come from, especially what kind of dependencies (those limiting or defining (im)mobility) have been experienced. The primary ways to assess the centre(s) is through geographical knowledge and details of everyday life. Dr Ille had an asylum case from West Darfur... where somebody was asked about major towns in Sudan and he answered with Zalingei and Saraf Omra, settlements not far from his alleged place of origin in El Geneina, which indicates limited exposure to the rest of Sudan. Dates of events were given exclusively with the moon calendar, which indicates lack of exposure to modern schooling and official administrative processes. Number of owned livestock and other questions placed him under a lower-income semi-nomadic group with subsistence horticulture. Basic mistakes in identification of places in Khartoum confirmed short stays there; prices of goods in the market could be used to check on the timeline. A respectful titling of Khalil

¹³³ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

¹³⁴ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

¹³⁵ [A civil society activist](#)

¹³⁶ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

¹³⁷ [An activist](#)

Ibrahim (JEM founder) and overwrought positive statements on oppositional movements made his claim to have been forcibly recruited by Janjaweed questionable (since they recruited among “their own”); etc.

‘Since the local representation structure called Native Administration is still quite influential, names of sheikhs and omdas,¹³⁸ i.e. local leaders, can be helpful to relate the given ethnic group and can be checked (and dated, if leadership has changed in the meantime). Main food and its names, especially the stews (**mulāḥ**) eaten with sorghum porridge or bread, are sometimes locally specific (Dirar 1993).

‘Language is another complex marker since small differences in vocabulary show accumulated influences, a circumstance made use of in Language Analysis for the Determination of Origin (LADO) assessments. The problem is here temporality, as changes in language practices can occur over time (even while waiting for years in Europe for procedures); the result is thus only tentative and complementary to the other pieces of information.

‘In both cases, a community of practice (e.g. expert group on call) or other forms of crowd knowledge may be useful to post (anonymised) information from difficult cases to get feedback on this level of detail.’¹³⁹

[Back to Contents](#)

2. Darfur

2.1 Background to the conflict

2.1.1 The political scientist provided an explanation to the causes of the conflict in Darfur between 2004 and 2008:

‘When conflict erupted in 2004 everyone thought it was because of environmental / resources issues, a conflict between pastoralists (nomads) and sedentary farmers. But what made it more complicated was the ethnic dimension: 90-95% of pastoralists are Arab (at least they claim to be Arab), some combine this with farming; almost 100% sedentary farmers are non-Arab. Small groups of non-Arab Darfuris are pastoralists, but not significant numbers, mixed with sedentary farmers.

‘The conflict was a multi-dimensional issue: a livelihood conflict, i.e. a conflict between two modes of livelihood – pastoralism and farming – scarcity of resources and environmental degradation also an ethnic conflict. A unique combination. There are tensions between pastoralists and sedentary farmers all over Sudan but not necessarily between different ethnic groups. For example, there are tensions in North Kordofan but this is between Arabs.

‘A further issue was the position taken by the state. From day 1 the state was not neutral but took the side of the Arabs who had already been

¹³⁸ Dr Ille added in a footnote to his comments, ‘The Native Administration system was introduced under British colonial rule and continues to exist, after temporary abolishment under President Nimeiri in the 1970s. Its role and power is strongly fluctuating over time and place: in 1986, it was reinstated, partly reduced but also politically much stronger instrumentalized under the present government, and since constantly under discussion. The main ‘levels‘ (up-down) are amīr (among nomadic groups also nāzīr), °umda and shaykh.’

¹³⁹ [Dr Enrico Ille, anthropologist](#)

supporting the Khartoum government in it fights against the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in the south.¹⁴⁰

- 2.1.2 The university professor from Darfur observed that '[i]ssues over the farmer/pastoral relationships and land tenure is where much of the conflict lies. The conflict is an expression of extreme competition of land and resources, and a lack of good governance.' The university professor from Darfur also noted that in Sudan, '[t]here is now a coalition government. The NCP and a few other smaller parties, including Darfuri parties which have signed the Peace Agreement.'¹⁴¹

[Back to Contents](#)

2.2 Security and political situation

- 2.2.1 Sources that commented on the situation in Darfur generally agreed that security situation has improved in recent years^{142 143 144 145 146}.

- 2.2.2 The human rights defender briefly summed up that '[t]he situation in Darfur is not as it was, but not good. 2 or 3 years ago it was very bad, now some people are going back to farms but nomads will still attack.'¹⁴⁷ The Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy provided his analysis of the situation in Darfur

'... which has fed into the UN's decision to draw down its peace-keeping soldiers from 16,000 to 4,000 because of the improved security situation. UNAMID will pull out its peace-keepers in June 2020.

'Three security issues in Darfur

- 'Darfur has come a long way since the height of the war in the period 2003-2007. The rebel groups Sudan Liberation Movement – Mini Menawi (SLM-MM) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) have been pushed out of Darfur, while SLM-Abdul Wahid are still in the region but confined to the Jebel Marra area. They continue to be involved in some skirmishes with the government.
- 'Until recently inter-tribal fighting between Arab tribes – Rizegeit and Ma'aliya - used to lead to 100s of fatalities every year. However, the government has effectively clamped down on this violence by imprisoning many of the tribal leaders. The Government has also taken a hard line for some other recurring inter-Arab conflicts, while it has pushed inter-tribal conciliation in other cases e.g. the Shattaya agreement in South Darfur in 2017 brought 7 tribes into a peace agreement.
- 'Banditry / crime – there has been a reduction since 2015. Governors have been appointed, purely on security credentials, by the president to

¹⁴⁰ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁴¹ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

¹⁴² [A political scientist](#)

¹⁴³ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

¹⁴⁴ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

¹⁴⁵ [UK FCO official](#)

¹⁴⁶ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

¹⁴⁷ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

sort [out] the crime levels. As a result, conditions in urban areas have improved significantly. For example, UN are now able to drive around El Fasher without the risk of carjacking; previously a problem.

'As a result, the FCO's view is that it is time for UNAMID to adapt its mission to the changing situation. It is currently capacity-building with the local police to allow this to happen.'¹⁴⁸

2.2.3 However, the political scientist thought that how the security situation was assessed depended, in part, on how it was defined and measured, identifying 3 indicators that affected the conclusions reached:

- i) the number of military engagements between government forces and the rebels;
- ii) proliferation of small arms; and
- iii) displacement¹⁴⁹

2.2.4 The political scientist went on to explain that the number of military engagements had declined as the rebels are not in a position to challenge the government. However, he added

'... clashes at a micro-level (community level clashes between non-Arab Darfuris (NADs) and Arabs and the numbers of IDPs), which are not reported extensively in the media, continue. Large scale violence has declined (the government says the rebel movement is over, only acknowledging 2 clashes last year) but factional violence and the humanitarian situation is getting worse. Can't consider the main conflict separately from the current inter-tribal conflict.'¹⁵⁰

2.2.5 The political scientist also noted that '[t]he government now admits that it has failed to collect arms as part of a disarmament campaign, there is an absence of peace and rule of law, so no community, small or big (including NADs), will give up arms.' Thus there continues to be a proliferation of small arms¹⁵¹.

2.2.6 On the third measure, the political scientist noted that displacement continues and is increasing: 'The government says this is a result of internal conflict. The newly displaced are in a worse position as they not recognised as IDPs, not supported / provided with services.'¹⁵²

2.2.7 Salih Osman observed:

'The situation in Darfur is not as bad as it was 10 years ago, when villages were burnt. Now a partial peace agreement has been made between the government and some rebel groups, but it has not brought peace. Most NADs were attacked all over Darfur in the past, but now in some places some local agreements have been made between tribes that have brought some kind of stability. However, there is conflict within the IDP camps. People are kept in the camps like prisoners, they cannot go to El Fasher or

¹⁴⁸ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

¹⁴⁹ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁵⁰ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁵¹ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁵² [A political scientist](#)

other big cities – they do not have their liberty. Only Darfuris with contacts within the government are treated better.

‘The government does not allow people to return to their original lands, it is working on other options. It has established certain designated areas for the people (Darfuris) to go to. This has led to ethnic cleansing, while their lands are being populated by those from outside Sudan, for example from Chad, Niger and Mali.

‘When the JEM “invasion” of Khartoum in 2008 happened there were repercussions for the tribes, but that is not the case now. However, Darfuris always fear that if a similar incident takes place, they will be punished again.’¹⁵³

2.2.8 The UK DfID official noted:

‘According to UN and media reporting IDP returnees have been systematically targeted by people who occupy their lands who may have had historical allegiance to ruling elites. Returnees rarely have protection from formal security and justice institutions; perpetrators often act with impunity.

‘Al Fashir is populated by a large spectrum of people (different tribal groups) and life goes on despite high levels of criminality. Many people who had fled remain in Chad as they are well looked after there. Non -Arab IDPs are currently under the protection of UNAMID – this is only likely to be for the next year however – provision of adequate security and protection after that point remains undefined.’¹⁵⁴

2.2.9 Amjed Farid El Tayeb made observations about which government and government affiliated groups operated in Darfur:

‘The state-run army, i.e. the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), have very weak control over what happens in Darfur. It is the [Rapid Support Forces] RSF and [National Congress Party] NCP militia groups who run the show. RSF was initially formed as part of NISS but recently it was restructured under SAF, but without any control of the army over its operations. Some people have no choice but to join the militia due to the poor economic situation. Forced recruitment also exists.

‘As the [Janjaweed was making “bad press” it was dissolved and restructured with the same “fighters” as the RSF](#) ¹⁵⁵... the Sudanese Army did not want the untrained militia fighters under its ranks. The Sudanese Army was also reluctant to commit the degree of human rights abuses as the RSF and Janjaweed who care only to achieve decisive victories at all costs. Despite having no formal military training or any other sort of academic qualification, the leader of the RSF is just below the President in rank and is now responsible with his forces for protecting the borders and stemming migration to Europe through Sudan.’¹⁵⁶

2.2.10 Salih Osman noted:

¹⁵³ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

¹⁵⁴ [UK DfID official](#)

¹⁵⁵ Amjed Tayeb provided a link to his own blog to illustrate the point, [url](#)

¹⁵⁶ [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

‘Darfuri people cannot return to their regions in Darfur as the villages have been destroyed and the absence of security– several areas are in the control of the Janjaweed, including some of the larger cities in Darfur. People returning to the region are either killed on the way or when they get there. There is no efficient regular army, no efficient police, only NISS, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which includes many former Janjaweed members, and the remaining Janjaweed. The Courts don’t have the power to bring these perpetrators to justice – they have impunity provided by laws including the NISS Act. The state of emergency allows for the government to violate rights, including prevention of freedom of movement.’¹⁵⁷

2.2.11 The political scientist observed that

‘The Arab militias control areas outside of camps and towns. No regular army presence outside the main towns – Al Fasher, Geneina and Nyala – the militia control other areas. The militias are well armed. They have political groups (RSF and others) - there are 20 significant militia groups: the RSF are the largest, then the Border Guards are the next biggest. They are violent, brutal – no accountability. It is dangerous for non-Arab Darfuris (and UNAMID) outside camps and towns.’¹⁵⁸

2.2.12 Both the political scientist and Salih Osman commented that some Arab Darfuris had become frustrated with the government. Salih Osman noted ‘that some Arabs feel used by the government, gave the example of one of the Janjaweed leaders who is in prison.’¹⁵⁹ While the political scientist observed: ‘In 2004, almost all Arabs were with the government, but now large sections of the Arabs tribes are disillusioned and feel betrayed by the government. This is because the government promised to give the Arabs land as an incentive to fight. But under international pressure, the government stopped giving land to the Arab tribes.’¹⁶⁰

2.2.13 The political scientist also noted that ‘... the Arab militias continue to take land, forcing populations out and seizing land. This is still going on, but less than 10 years ago. A further problem is that the UN is talking about returning people to Darfur but the issue is where these people can go – their land is occupied by someone else.’¹⁶¹

2.2.14 The DfID official observed:

‘The UK is working with [the government of Sudan] GoS and the international community to consider how to ensure a smooth transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding and development. The UK is already supporting informal conflict resolution mechanisms as the government / police are not widely trusted by some communities. In the longer term, we need to consider how we can support reform within security institutions to rebuild trust and ensure better outcomes for citizens of Darfur.’¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

¹⁵⁸ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁵⁹ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

¹⁶⁰ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁶¹ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁶² [UK DfID official](#)

2.2.15 In assessing the prospects of resolving the conflict in Darfur, the political scientist thought that '[t]he issue in Darfur cannot be resolved by talking: lots of groups, some 20+ militia, have an interest in the conflict and are making a business of the current situation. Same for "freedom fighters" (the non-Arab) rebels: also making a living out of the conflict.'¹⁶³

2.2.16 The political scientist also provided some background to the 2 main rebel groups, noting:

- Sudan Liberation Army – Abdul Wahid (SLA-AW), predominately Fur, based in the middle of the Jebel Marra
- Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), predominately Zaghawa, near Kutum (North Darfur¹⁶⁴), as well as in Chad and Libya¹⁶⁵

2.2.17 However, the human rights defender observed:

'In Darfur itself, the rebel groups SLM-MM and JEM are no longer there; the SLM-AW are still active... some nomads in Darfur are working with the Fur against the government. Some members of the rebel groups who have signed the peace agreement are now passing on intelligence information to the state about people who assisted the rebels in 2004-2008. These people were arrested for their involvement at that time.'¹⁶⁶

2.2.18 However, the King of the Berti observed, with regard to the Berti that they:

'... are noted by their neutrality in the civil conflict in Darfur. They were not with the janjaweed nor with the government or the rebels; they stayed out of fighting. But that doesn't mean they are not affected by the situation. There was an inter-tribal conflict with the Ziadiya (Arab tribe) between 2012 and 2015. Calmed down now as government is stricter, law and order generally better. The government has had a weapons collection campaign for the last 1.5years. To demonstrate their commitment [to peace] the Berti gave up their weapons.'¹⁶⁷

2.2.19 The political scientist noted in regard to the Berti:

'There is an Arab group, the Mahameed (part of the government militias), who have given the Berti a hard time. However, the Mahameed have split. One militia, led by Musa Hilal, opposes the government. Musa Hilal is now in prison, waiting to go to a military court in Khartoum. But the other half of the Mahameed militias have been absorbed into the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) led by Musa Hilal's cousin. So still militia but now part of the formal security apparatus – the army is not happy. However, the militias still conduct themselves as if they are still militias. They make up 90% of the Sudanese forces in Yemen.

'The militias / RSF are also being used in the campaign to control migration out of Sudan.'¹⁶⁸

¹⁶³ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁶⁴ For location of Kutum, see UN, Darfur Planning Map, 2006, [url](#)

¹⁶⁵ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁶⁶ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

¹⁶⁷ [King of the Berti](#)

¹⁶⁸ [A political scientist](#)

2.3 Human rights and humanitarian situation

2.3.1 The political scientist observed, with regard to the human rights and humanitarian situation: 'The government sees every young person as a threat in the area, as a potential rebel since they are the main rebel recruitment constituency. 20 years of displacement has contributed to a high level of political awareness and activism which is seen as a threat by the state so young people are closely monitored and harassed in Darfur.'¹⁶⁹ Siddeg Yousef made a similar comment:

'... the fighting groups – the rebels – had lost capacity and most incidents were now in the Jebel Marra, which they are able to defend as they had the protection of the mountains. Asked if this influenced the government's attitude to Darfuris in Khartoum, SY said he did not think it was a matter of the level of threat. All people in IDP camps are perceived to be against the government as they think the government is the cause of their misery. Grievances remain due to the atrocities in the conflict. While this government remains, reconciliation with Darfuris is not possible.'¹⁷⁰

2.3.2 The political scientist noted

'Support from World Food Programme in IDP camps is basic. Ten years ago there was plenty of assistance as Darfur was much more of a concern to the international community. Most international NGOs are no longer in Darfur due to a lack of resources and the security situation. Now only WFP which relies on DfID support. At least 5 International NGOs (INGOs) used to support a lot but their presence has reduced (10 INGOs were expelled from Darfur by the Sudan Government in 2009); they faced harassment from the security forces.'¹⁷¹

2.3.3 Salih Osman observed that: 'It is usually safer for NADs to live in [IDP] camps around the big cities in Darfur as compared to rural areas where they are at more at risk of attacks. Although IDP camps are also insecure.'¹⁷² On IDP camps and employment, the political scientist noted: 'In any IDP camp [in Darfur] youth unemployment is near 90%. People can go out of the camps during the day for menial jobs, e.g. construction, selling things on the roadside. Everyone knows the risk of leaving but are prepared to do so.'¹⁷³

2.3.4 The civil society activist observed that

'NISS are also responsible for the ill-treatment of activists in South Kordofan and Darfur, where people are burned and suffer bad torture. This abuse is also carried out by the military Intelligence and the Sudanese Army Forces (SAF), which are very active in conflict areas – Darfur and the Two Areas (there has been a state of emergency in operation since the beginning of the war in 2011 in South Kordofan).'¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁷⁰ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

¹⁷¹ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁷² [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

¹⁷³ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁷⁴ [A civil society activist](#)

3. Non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum

3.1 Human rights - generally

3.1.1 The UK FCO official noted, generally, that ‘the human rights situation in Khartoum has not changed [in recent years]. Some of the human rights issues in Khartoum include freedom of the press and arrests of political activists during times of protests.’¹⁷⁵ Also on human rights generally, the activist considered that

‘Generally, freedom of movement and expression are restricted, and this has got worse in the last 5 to 6 years. Anyone who speaks “loudly” will be arrested. The source said they had been arrested after petitioning the Ministry of Interior. Because the source is well known, the NISS were not as aggressive with them as they used to be in the past. Last arrested 2 years ago. However, some people are beaten.’¹⁷⁶

3.1.2 Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, however, thought the human rights environment was more benign, at least compared to the past:

‘Permission is not always given for demonstrations to be held; there are no rights for the LGBT community and freedom of speech is restricted. It’s the culture itself and a lack of understanding of the Sudanese people. Some members of political parties want to claim asylum in the UK and yet do not want to accept and recognise refugees in Sudan.

‘However, these human rights issues are not enough for people to leave Sudan and seek asylum elsewhere. Even those who want rid of the regime do not have a good human rights record themselves – at least on paper; they condemn LGBT persons and degrade politicians whose family migrated to Sudan more than 100 years ago. Everyone is talking now about corruption and this is being reported in the press; people are involved in demonstrations; people are voicing their opinions on a third term for the President. There are also more than 100 political parties – people can talk openly about politics. However, it is not so bad that someone should seek asylum in Europe compared to the situation in 1990s when there were presidential decrees denying political parties and freedom of gathering.’¹⁷⁷

[Back to Contents](#)

3.2 Discrimination

3.2.1 Sources generally agreed that non-Arab Darfuris face discrimination from the state. However there was not consensus on the nature and severity of the discrimination and whether non-Arab Darfuris experienced this to a greater degree than other non-Arab groups or those not affiliated with the government / certain riverine Arab tribes. Two of the sources observed that discrimination is subjective – it may be a matter of perception and has not

¹⁷⁵ [UK FCO official](#)

¹⁷⁶ [An activist](#)

¹⁷⁷ [Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

been quantified^{178 179}. Dr Ille commented on the factors affecting discrimination in Sudan:

‘... the main issue seems to be how others perceive and treat the individual, rather than how the individual can be described based on information he or she gives about him- or herself. But stereotypes are notoriously difficult to trace because of the fine line between different levels of latent and open prejudices, and discrimination; patterns of obvious targeting are rare, since discrimination is often cross-sectional (e.g. ethnic **and** socio-economic **and** gender). This is relevant to note because the socio-economic position is not only an expression but also a cause of discrimination, which always necessitates somebody to be in a weak-enough position to be excluded from the general rules of competition.’¹⁸⁰

3.2.2 Dr Ille went on to further note with regard to non-Arab Darfuris specifically:

‘Concerning people from Darfur, similar to people of Kordofan, many appear as manual labourers, especially in rural areas across Sudan, due to a combination of high population numbers and a strong pattern of labour mobility (at least since the Sahel drought of the mid-1980s). The early development of vegetables and fruits as cash crops in Darfur made Fur, for instance, an important force in the small-scale horticultural sector; the wide, family-based trade networks of Zaghawa make them a perceptible part of the small-shop and petty trade landscape all over Sudan, including Khartoum.

‘There is, however, a strong variety of socio-economic status, which is difficult to compare to people from other regions since no statistics comparing income differences or wealth distribution based on provenance exist. “Wealth” is also relative; Darfur has, together with Kordofan, the highest production of livestock in Sudan, and meat is partly much cheaper there than elsewhere, while other basic foodstuff can be rare.

‘Land property was long a basic characteristic to differentiate between but also inside groups – one of the long-term grievances of pastoralist groups against long-established land owners, such as the Fur (based on the historical Darfur kingdom). A chain of wars shifted many of the tenure systems, not just by widespread population displacement, but by disconnecting a growing generation from livelihood strategies as basic skills and thus life orientation. Much of the re-orientation towards low-skill labour – especially in artisanal mining and different forms of military groups – became much more attractive with less livelihood sources based on one’s place of origin, and family. The displacement to an urban setting itself can also become a ground on which a worse socio-economic situation grows, as rural options for self-reliance disappear.

‘There is thus a potential cross-sectional chain of elements that lead to discrimination (and only an individual case assessment can tell, whether it applies): a provenance from Darfur increases the probability of being seen as potential rebel and of having been cut off from previous sources of wealth; without existing networks, displacement to urban areas, especially

¹⁷⁸ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

¹⁷⁹ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

¹⁸⁰ [Dr Enrico Ille, anthropologist](#)

with the current strongly increasing prices, enhances this precarious situation and pushes people towards living in areas with others in a structurally similar situation, mostly with weak public services or even physical threats by governmental organs; the combination of the previous and the present provenance increases the difficulty to be perceived as reliable, for instance in accessing financial services, and limits the ability to concentrate on self-development, for instance through education. This is the general nature of structural inequality and is experienced by people from all of the so-called marginalized areas in Sudan – although, apart from the Nuba Mountains, they have not experienced the same level of violence in their home areas as people from war areas in Darfur.

‘In addition, the continued stronger reaction by the governmental organs to any Darfur-related political action may enhance how people from there are perceived as potentially disruptive force; this seems, however, rather to be true for those going to educational institutions (especially universities) than in the areas people live [in Khartoum].’¹⁸¹

3.2.3 Amjed Farid El Tayeb observed that non-Arab Darfuris

‘... suffer racial discrimination. And whilst there is no doubt of the 2003-2008 crisis in Darfur, the media has made this into more of an ethnic problem rather than a political one. Darfuris in general suffer because of racism and discrimination but so do the other Sudanese who are opposed to the regime. So while there is a racial factor, it is more of a political issue – not being affiliated to the regime. If a person is not affiliated, Arabs / non-Arabs receive discriminatory treatment. It is political targeting, not tribal.’¹⁸²

3.2.4 Amjed Farid El Tayeb also observed that ‘The things that happen to Darfuri students [see section below on [students](#)] also happen to Darfuris in general.’¹⁸³

3.2.5 The university professor from Darfur considered the treatment of non-Arab Darfuris generally:

‘This is subjective and related to perception. A Darfuri may feel discriminated against as generally they do not feel they are treated equally, compared to, for example, someone from the Nile. Feelings of inequality are based on poor job opportunities, promotion, etc. If a person feels discriminated against, even if the perpetrator denies it, the discrimination still exists as that is what the person feels. Darfuris talk in public about people of the Nile getting better treatment than them – in promotion, in jobs, in healthcare. There are lots of stories, they cannot all be exceptional.

‘Security targeting depends on the nature of the issue, even historically. During the 1976 coup d’etat supported by Gaddafi many Darfuris were rounded up and even executed. It was the same 10 years ago following the JEM attack [in 2008], people were rounded up based on their appearance, detained for several days and released (although at this time there were no summary executions). There have been no recent arbitrary arrests of Darfuris – the government needs a good reason, e.g. during protests. Even a

¹⁸¹ [Dr Enrico Ille, anthropologist](#)

¹⁸² [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

¹⁸³ [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

bystander at a protest might face arrest, in which case an investigation would take place and if it was established you are not an activist you would be released. But a Darfuri person arrested at the same event would have a worse time than other Sudanese.¹⁸⁴

- 3.2.6 The university professor added that ‘... it doesn’t really make a difference what tribe a person belongs to as to whether or not they will be targeted, although Arab Darfuris receive less attention than NADs. It depends more on the membership of which activist group or rebel movement, and how active the person is.’¹⁸⁵ And further observed

‘... the 3 groups that government has most suspicions are the Zaghawa, Massalit and Fur – most security sensitive as linked with rebel groups. People from South Kordofan face same problem, as do peoples from Blue Nile and east Sudan. Darfuris face the same problems as all groups from periphery - it is only the Riverine Arabs who have all the power, who are free from these difficulties. This is why people in the margins wanted to create a Marginalised Association, “the Crescent”.’¹⁸⁶

- 3.2.7 The political scientist (PS) acknowledged that the ‘levels of security presence and monitoring are much less in Khartoum compared to Darfur’ but also noted

‘The government sees [the shanty town areas where many Darfuris live]... as a security threat and treats the people as suspects. The government media and security agencies (NISS) describe these areas as sleeping cells for rebels. There is an increased security presence, large NISS presence in these areas. The PS and others have found it difficult to collect information about these communities as they are followed or don’t get permits.’¹⁸⁷

- 3.2.8 The political scientist added ‘NADs may be affected more by NISS as they live in known areas [of Khartoum].’ The source also agreed individual factors - such as age, how recently a person left Darfur, income, gender and education - might affect the government’s attitude to individual Darfuris, adding ‘[e]ducation works both ways, may allow for more opportunity but may also raise suspicion.’¹⁸⁸

- 3.2.9 The university professor from Darfur commented, with regard to societal discrimination, that ‘... in day-to-day life there is no open discrimination. If [non-Arab Darfuris] do, it’s silent discrimination. They may face discrimination in particular places.’¹⁸⁹

- 3.2.10 A number of sources, however, were not aware of direct discrimination against Darfuris, did not consider that they faced discrimination or that such discrimination as there was no more than other groups. The human rights defender thought ‘Darfuris face discrimination but not more so than other poor people in Khartoum.’¹⁹⁰ Siddig Yousef also considered that Darfuris are

¹⁸⁴ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

¹⁸⁵ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

¹⁸⁶ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

¹⁸⁷ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁸⁸ [A political scientist](#)

¹⁸⁹ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

¹⁹⁰ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

treated like ‘everyone else’ and did not receive ‘special treatment, day-to-day life goes on’, adding that Darfuris would not face a problem from the government if there was no link with rebel groups. However, he added

‘... the Nuba are treated badly, but face less societal discrimination than the Darfuris... society generally does not treat the Darfuris and people from South Kordofan differently from other groups. But the government and NISS treat them badly, considering them supporters of the armed groups... the Fur and Zaghawa are accused of links with the rebel groups. However... Darfuris are also in the political opposition: Salih Mahmoud of the Communist Party is a Darfuri and activist, while the vice-chair of the Umma Party is Darfuri. The government also has Darfuri members.’¹⁹¹

- 3.2.11 Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim claimed he was ‘in daily contact with Darfuris in Khartoum, all the time in his normal life – in the market, the community, his neighbours. Darfuris mixed with other populations’ but was not aware that they faced problems from the government. Adding that he ‘had not witnessed any discrimination in Khartoum due to a person’s ethnicity. There are human rights abuses, but Darfuris are not targeted.’ He also thought that ‘[t]he situation for Darfuris in Khartoum is not the same as it is in Gezira. In Khartoum people are helped with employment – it doesn’t matter where they are from.’¹⁹² Similarly, the Second secretary Political at the British Embassy did not consider that there is marginalisation of Darfuris in Khartoum, observing

‘Darfur is a recent war, most Sudanese have not had a problem with Darfuris until recently. Most Khartoum Arabs talk badly of the rebel groups but not of Darfuri people. There is no overriding racism or discrimination against Darfuris. However, Arabs do look down upon other groups such as the Nuba and people from South Sudan. Nuba and South Sudanese face problems but the Darfuris are not a group apart from other Sudanese groups. The kind of person who looks down upon Darfuris, looks down upon other groups too.’¹⁹³

- 3.2.12 An official of Western Embassy A identified some of the difficulties in determining whether individuals experience discrimination, noting that it is:

‘... extremely difficult to determine what people actually experience.

‘From experience of seeing details of asylum claims [made in the official’s country], or from Sudanese nationals coming to the official’s Embassy, it appears a person’s perception of how they are treated may be worse than the reality, although officials can be harsh.

‘The official has spent time researching the Sudanese laws (such as the Sudanese Nationality Act 1994 with the amendment made 2011, Passport and Immigration Act 2015 and its previous version of 1994, the Sudan Civil Registry Act of 2011 and the Penal Code 1991) which do not distinguish between different groups of people based on ethnicity or origin and as such are not a legal base for discrimination against Darfuris. For example, some claim they have been treated unfairly but what has occurred to them is within

¹⁹¹ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

¹⁹² [Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

¹⁹³ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

the law. For example, they believe they have been overcharged for a service but the fee is the legal norm.

‘The official has heard that some people are stopped and questioned, and is aware that Darfuri tea ladies are at times frequently harassed and fined, this seems to happen periodically. It was particularly pronounced from February 2017 to October 2017. The western official read in the Sudanese press that a Darfuri Tea Ladies Union now exists [subsequent to the interview the official provided a link to a [blog post of August 2016](#) and a summary from Al Intibaha, online newspaper, dated 14 March 18 “The Ministry of Human Development signed an agreement with the Union of Tea Ladies to train and improve the well being of tea ladies. The ministry said there are 22,000 tea ladies in Khartoum State only. The Ministry confirmed that they will continue to work with the union of tea ladies to ensure their protection and improvement of well being.”]

‘The official considered that the law – in theory – does not discriminate by ethnicity or tribe. Although the official also commented that the Embassy was aware there were some people who are being ill-treated and those who aren’t... the official did not have impression that in general Darfuris are targeted although it may depend on their other characteristics. It is not one factor that puts someone at risk, but several factors. For example, being a Darfuri, a Christian and a student increases the risk that the person would receive greater attention from NISS.

‘Some people may be easy targets but whether that is due to ethnicity or social economic status was not clear, e.g. a rickshaw driver would be an easy target to harass and demand a bribe from. The police and other authorities may target any vulnerable group for money.’¹⁹⁴

3.2.13 The IOM official observed that the organisation did not have any information about the treatment of non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum¹⁹⁵. Similarly, the Norwegian official conceded he did not have specific information about the situation of non-Arab Darfuris

‘... his general impression of Darfuris in Khartoum, which he caveated that he suspected he did not have any more information than the FFM team had obtained from colleagues, media, etc.

‘... he had not noticed anything different about the treatment of Darfuris. Khartoum is a huge city and many people have migrated to it over the last 100 years.

‘Before the separation of Sudan and South Sudan there were conflicts in the West, South and East, more or less the same as those that exist between Arabs and non-Arabs, although the Darfur conflict was different from that with the South as all Darfuris are Muslim (so there was no religious dimension to the conflict).

‘He had no information on the situation of Darfuris in Khartoum in relation to other immigrant groups living in the city.’¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

¹⁹⁵ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

¹⁹⁶ [A Norwegian official](#)

3.2.14 The Swiss official noted had

'... no specific knowledge of Darfuris but has met some Darfuris and is aware of the Darfur Bar Association that lobbies foreign embassies.

'From a general point of view, based on information from other sources, the Swiss Official is aware of some discrimination of non-Arab Darfuris (NADs) but does not know how this manifests itself in day-to-day life.

'A NAD is employed at the Swiss Embassy and has indicated they have no problems securing work but has faced some discrimination, for example, being pushed out of a queue for fuel during the recent fuel crisis.'¹⁹⁷

3.2.15 The King of the Berti (KB) observed:

'Darfuri Arabs experience less discrimination: they speak Arabic (as compared to other languages spoken by non-Arab Darfuri groups [although Berti also only speak Arabic]). The experience of Berti is not particularly different from other Darfuri tribes... KB would not say that there is discrimination compared to other Darfuri tribes but difficulties in accessing health and education (which are problems for all tribes). One area where there is discrimination is that the Berti are not incorporated into the regular security forces – police, army, RSF – across Sudan. Representation in these groups may help improve relationships with them.

'When asked if the Berti had problems with the police / security services, KB said no – Berti are generally considered a peaceful tribe.'¹⁹⁸

3.2.16 The activist, who stated that they had contact with Darfuris and had been to Darfur earlier in 2018, commented that they were '.... surprised by interest in non-Arab Darfuris (NAD). Sudan does not have pure "Arab" tribes. Arab vs African was not an issue until the last 10 years, but not before that – the terminology (Arab, non-Arab) is quite new in the sense it is now is being used. Tribe only matters in marriage – a girl's family will ask what the husband-to-be's tribe is.' The activist also observed '... in their experience [non-Arab Darfuris]... were not discriminated before the courts. If a defendant in a civil or criminal case, treated the same as other groups. Source did not have the impression that Darfuris are discriminated generally. They observed that they had many Darfuri friends – not their experience.'¹⁹⁹

[Back to Contents](#)

3.3 Arrest and detention - general

3.3.1 Salih Osman observed that

'.... there are still arrests on a daily basis but not happening as it did in 2008 [during the round-ups of Darfuris following a JEM attack on Omdurman]. There is targeting of students mainly – SO has a lot of cases in the courts... thought that in the past NAD had been arrested based on ethnicity – now they live in the camps, kept like prisoners and can't get to the cities. In Khartoum, it is more or less the same as the past – mentioned students... In the past, people protesting against government policies would have been

¹⁹⁷ [A Swiss official](#)

¹⁹⁸ [King of the Berti](#)

¹⁹⁹ [An activist](#)

detained, tortured and killed, but now there is change in policy. People are arrested and charged with criminal offences that often carry the death penalty, in the absence of sufficient evidence, and kept in prolonged pre-trial detention – up to 2-3 years. SO gave the example of an incident at the White Nile University, in which 1,000s of Darfuri students marched to Khartoum. A number of Darfuri students were accused of killing a police officer, but the DBA got 4 released and the charges dropped. 10 other cases are pending.

‘[Regarding how many cases he had in Khartoum]... had a case on Karima. A death of a Darfuri student and which resulted in the conviction of 4 people, 2 of whom have been sentenced to death. Those convicted were from other tribes and the crime was deemed a racial Darfuri killing... The DBA is not always popular with the government and there have often been severe battles between it and the government. Members of the DBA fear for their lives. SO has been detained 4 times. The last time he was detained was for 2 months and 10 days from February to April 2018 in Kober prison following the January 2018 demonstrations against the rise in prices. He was accused of agitating the people and acting against the government. [Treatment]... was bad. While there was no physical torture he was forced to witness the beatings of other young detainees, which was very difficult for him as a human rights defender. NISS beat demonstrators from all backgrounds. He was later released without charge.’²⁰⁰

3.3.2 The Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy noted:

‘... that [2008 Omdurman round-up of Darfuris] was when the war in Darfur was still “hot”, there was a fear of militants/rebels and the government reacted by arresting people. Now the conflict has reduced in intensity, the civil war is increasingly distant and there is no need to lock up Darfuris. Darfuris do face issues with poverty, marginalisation but they are not affected any more than other groups... [the source] had not seen any “round ups” of Darfuris in Khartoum [had been in Khartoum for 4 years].’²⁰¹

3.3.3 While the official of Western Embassy B was ‘[n]ot aware of large scale arrests of Darfuris but there may be individual arrests that go unreported.’²⁰² Similarly, Siddig Yousef was not aware of wide-scale arrests of Darfuris²⁰³ and the Swiss official was also unaware of particular difficulties faced by Darfuris, including arrest and detention²⁰⁴.

3.3.4 While not specifically a matter of arrest and detention, the human rights defender described a form of harassment committed by the state of activists who challenge the government:

‘Opposition politicians, human rights defenders, activists and journalists have sometimes been told to report to a NISS office or the police, sometimes on a daily basis. For example, they would attend at 8am and then be forced to stay until 11pm – this is a form of detention, intimidation, and a way of

²⁰⁰ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

²⁰¹ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

²⁰² [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

²⁰³ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²⁰⁴ [A Swiss official](#)

curbing people's activities. But the HRD had not heard of this occurring in the last 2-3 months.'²⁰⁵

- 3.3.5 The human rights defender also noted that 'NISS can detain people for lengthy periods. If NISS wish to charge a person, they are sent to the police. NISS do not have authority to "stand in the Court" – to bring charges... If NISS believe you have information they want and you are not providing it you will be detained for a long time.'²⁰⁶
- 3.3.6 For treatment of [students](#), see that corresponding subsection below.

[Back to Contents](#)

Treatment in detention

- 3.3.7 The civil society activist noted that '[h]aving interviewed former detainees, the organisation said they were racially abused by the police and faced physical mistreatment in detention. If a person is arrested by NISS they are "likely to be beaten", regardless of ethnicity. But if you are young and Darfuri, the risks of being beaten are higher.'²⁰⁷
- 3.3.8 Siddig Yousef similarly observed that 'if arrested, Darfuris are treated worse than other Sudanese prisoners, their hands are chained and they are blindfolded.'²⁰⁸ While Amjed Farid El Tayeb also considered that 'the treatment faced by Darfuris is worse [than other groups]. Some are tortured or racially abused, and women face sexual assault.'²⁰⁹
- 3.3.9 The human rights defender thought that Darfuris would perhaps be '... more beaten [than other groups], when arrested, if a Darfuri but the level of ill-treatment would depend on which organisation arrested and detained you.
- 'NISS personnel are generally from the Nile State and Khartoum, and do not treat Darfuris well. NISS are taught that all Darfuris are rebels, hence the poor treatment.
- 'If a person is arrested by the police, made up of all tribes, they would treat all people the same, regardless of tribe.'²¹⁰
- 3.3.10 The human rights defender thought that '[t]he poor treatment of Darfuris in prisons is aimed at sending a message to all Darfuris to stop supporting the rebels.'²¹¹

[Back to Contents](#)

Treatment of family members

- 3.3.11 Siddig Yousef observed:

²⁰⁵ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

²⁰⁶ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

²⁰⁷ [A civil society activist](#)

²⁰⁸ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²⁰⁹ [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

²¹⁰ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

²¹¹ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

‘Sometimes if the authorities are interested in an individual but cannot find them they will arrest a family member. SY recounted the example of the chair of a farmer’s union in Gezira which occurred in July 2018. The chairman was wanted by the authorities, who went to his home but finding that he was not there arrested his son instead. They released the son when his father, the chair, returned. The chairman was detained for 24 hours and then released.’²¹²

- 3.3.12 However, the human rights defender thought that ‘[i]n general, families of people who are wanted by NISS would not be at risk unless there are personal issues between NISS and the family concerned. It is very rare that families would be targeted – HRD said this wasn’t the way things worked in Sudan. This applies to all ethnic groups.’²¹³ Similarly the activist observed: ‘...NISS would not arrest family members. Families of wanted persons might be harassed or have their phones bugged, to try and identify persons whereabouts, but families normally would not face arrest.’²¹⁴

[Back to Contents](#)

‘Ghost houses’

- 3.3.13 The university professor from Darfur (UP) noted:

‘... “ghost houses” – different places of detention around Khartoum. People talk about these as being a fact but they have not necessarily seen them. Ghost houses were special places of torture; they may be used less now, more selective unmarked detention houses. UP knew people who had been detained and illtreated in ghost houses. If someone is detained in Kober prison it would be easier as it’s a known detention institution, there is a system but the ghost houses are unruled, don’t know what is happening.’²¹⁵

- 3.3.14 The activist also thought ‘ghost houses’ still existed but ‘while they used to be normal houses, now in NISS offices. It’s not possible to find NISS detention centres, i.e. formal detention centres run by NISS do not exist.’²¹⁶

[Back to Contents](#)

Arrest warrants and the death penalty

- 3.3.15 An official of Western Embassy A commented that ‘Arrest warrants are not published in newspapers. An Embassy colleague who has been monitoring the press for 25 years has found no evidence of such publications. However, if a person was in an area where they were wanted by the police or NISS they may be at risk of being seen or found.’ The source also observed

‘Some Sudanese asylum seekers in the western country claim they face the death penalty. It is the official’s understanding that the death penalty is only handed down by a court ruling and in such cases the person would be detained. The official thought it highly unlikely that NISS would threaten

²¹² [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²¹³ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

²¹⁴ [An activist](#)

²¹⁵ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

²¹⁶ [An activist](#)

someone with execution and then release them. It is more likely that if NISS found a person of interest they would arrest and detain them at the time.’²¹⁷

[Back to Contents](#)

Demonstrations and arrests: January 2018

- 3.3.16 A number of sources mentioned protests in Khartoum on 17-18 and 31 January 2018²¹⁸ during which a range of groups, including Darfuris, demonstrated against the deteriorating economic situation, fuel shortages and rises in prices^{219 220 221}. There were a large number of arrests, one source estimating 500 were arrested²²², including some members of civil society interviewed by the FFT^{223 224}.
- 3.3.17 The civil society activist noted: ‘Many people were arrested in the protests about fuel and the economic situation in January 2018 – students; people over 30 are not normally touched. If Darfuris are arrested they are more likely to be ill-treated – “sliced”. All those arrested and detained were represented by lawyers and have been released now.’²²⁵
- 3.3.18 The Swiss official observed ‘... that every now and then there is government oppression of civil society. In January 2018, there were protests due to the economic crisis, the government came down on the activists, and people were arrested. There have been less protests since then; people are more concerned and focussed on obtaining food and fuel than protesting.’²²⁶ The activist provided further detail:
- ‘... there was a demonstration in January 2018 following the government’s reduction of subsidies and lack of fuel, at which time many people, from all tribes, were arrested. The government kept those arrested for a “long time”. Some of the cases were taken to the constitutional court – court responded that NISS is able to arrest people without justification and hold them without trial for 3 months, part of their job. Some people were arrested at their houses – think they were probably the leaders of the protests. Now been released after 2, 3, 4 months without trial. People i.e. relative and lawyers not allowed to see them when arrested by NISS. The source was not aware of visible physical violence against those arrested but they were exhausted through continual interrogation. Women who were arrested were sent to a prison in Omdurman; while the men were sent to NISS facilities... Ordinary people were released, but those believed to be leaders / activists / politicians were kept – didn’t know the exact numbers of these categories.’²²⁷

²¹⁷ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

²¹⁸ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²¹⁹ [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

²²⁰ [A Swiss official](#)

²²¹ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²²² [An activist](#)

²²³ For example, [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#), and [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²²⁴ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²²⁵ [A civil society activist](#)

²²⁶ [A Swiss official](#)

²²⁷ [An activist](#)

3.4 Profiles and specific groups

3.4.1 A number of sources suggested that a variety of factors may be relevant to considering if someone might be of interest to the state^{228 229 230}. Almost all sources considered that activism generally and, in particular, that by students was likely to attract the adverse interest of the government and its various agents - see section on [students](#) below.

3.4.2 Dr Enrico Ille considered the risks faced by a non-Arab Darfuri needed to be based on a person's individual profile and experiences, arguing for an approach to assessing individual cases

'... that does not aim for identification as non-Arab Darfuri **per se**, but for an individual at-risk status. If, for operational purposes, the category of non-Arab Darfuri is applied, this means that individual cases will not be decided automatically after identification as member of a collective identity (i.e. NAD), but based on an individual's situation: a NAD member of a former rebel group involved in rape and killings of civilians, now living in a villa after being paid off by the government to agree to a peace agreement will certainly not deserve the same status as a NAD rape victim whose family was killed, who is now living off scraps in Khartoum's suburbs and is regularly harassed by the police. The latter has more in common with an impoverished 'Arab' than the former, even though she or he may be from the same ethnic group.

'This is not merely a theoretical, conceptual view. Biographical studies [i.e. existing academic literature] of people staying in Darfur have shown, especially among young men, significant fluidity of life courses, pursuing a chain of precarious livelihood strategies (e.g. Behrends 2011, 2014). But even the group central to globally circulating representations of Darfur's Arab militias often summarized as Janjaweed, Musa Hilal's Mahamid group, part of the Northern Rizeigat, shows how its leader's changing fate – from bank robber to Ministry of Foreign Affairs special advisor to imprisoned rebel – shifted its own position in the local political setup and its alliances.

'In general, the myriad of small ethnic groups in Darfur, some of which are temporarily or permanently in conflict with each other, also actively belies the view of a stable position on either side of the Arab/Non-Arab dichotomy. In consequence, individuals can only be assessed based on their specific individual circumstances, not categorically.'²³¹

3.4.3 The official of Western Embassy B 'was not aware of a specific profile of Darfuri who may be targeted by the GoS but noted it was a difficult topic to discuss with local staff at the western government B's Embassy.' The official was also unaware of evidence that the government targets groups linked with the rebels but thought '... it is possible further noting that the GoS disliked activism which it viewed with suspicion. The official thought that students generally might be more of interest to the GoS, but not [was] aware

²²⁸ [Dr Enrico Ille, anthropologist](#)

²²⁹ [An activist](#)

²³⁰ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

²³¹ [Dr Enrico Ille, anthropologist](#)

of specific profiling (for example, young people who have recently migrated from Darfuri to Khartoum as compared to those Darfuris who were settled in Khartoum).²³²

3.4.4 The Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy thought

‘... that [the government]t was not interested in Darfuris unless they were in some way politically active or having ties to rebel groups. The government does not like demonstrators. The government does not monitor Darfuris in particular but if there is a gathering of Darfuris or other citizens, it will break this up because it fears protests snowballing into something big. The government doesn’t like gatherings of any kind... not seen specifically Darfuri demonstrations other than those by students – the only restive group is students...’²³³

3.4.5 Siddig Yousef thought that ‘Darfuris would be targeted if they took part in demonstrations’. He also observed, when asked who the state may have an interest:

‘Whole areas of South Kordofan are not under government control whereas all of Darfur is under government control. Nuba are ill-treated by the government [in South Kordofan], also in Khartoum... the government is facing opposition from everyone – because of the lack of fuel, increase in prices. There is a state of emergency in 9 out of 18 states / provinces, including 5 in Darfur, 3 in South Kordofan and one in Kassala... the public order laws are against women. If a woman is not covering her head, may be oppressed, arrested and lashed – only in Khartoum state... many women are affected every day – 1000s – all women of different groups.’²³⁴

3.4.6 The official of Western Embassy A considered ‘... that any high-level opposition members would be at risk. However, reasons would be required to arrest someone with a high profile as it would be reported in the media. For someone with a low profile, no reasons would be required as there would be less interest [in the media].’²³⁵ Similarly, the IOM official observed that while ‘[t]he nature of NISS’ likely priorities are not known... it is assumed to be in those who are suspected of being a threat to state security, but qualified this by noting that ‘IOM works closely with immigration, not NISS’²³⁶.

3.4.7 The civil society activist observed ‘[t]he Nuba people and Darfuris are often associated with the SPLM-N, SLM-AW and JEM – they are seen as rebels. Most cases that the organisation deals with [are] Darfuris and Nuba, to whom it provides legal aid. The organisation has a lot of contact with Darfuris in Khartoum, as well as those in Gezira, White Nile and Kordofan.’²³⁷ However, the human rights defender considered that ‘... not all Darfuris are suspected of supporting rebels; just those that are suspected of opposing

²³² [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

²³³ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

²³⁴ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²³⁵ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

²³⁶ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

²³⁷ [A civil society activist](#)

the government, it is a well-known fact that there are many Darfuris who are members of the ruling party and some assume high ranks within the party and the government.’²³⁸

- 3.4.8 In regard to state treatment / targeting, the activist thought it not possible to generalise and ‘could not say every Darfuri has a problem. If he is a politician, an activist... each case should be considered/dealt with on its merits.’ When asked what profiles of person would be of interest to the government the source ‘thought it would be any opposition, anyone not affiliated to the NCP... human rights defenders, politicians. They don’t want people to help the South Sudanese in IDP/refugee camps.’²³⁹

[Back to Contents](#)

Students

- 3.4.9 Sources generally agreed that non-Arab Darfuri students faced difficulties from the state, including arrest and detention, because of their perceived opposition to the government and (suspected) links to rebel groups. However, there was not consensus amongst sources on the nature and type of risks faced, and whether all students were at risk or only those who participated in activities that were, or were perceived, to oppose or criticise the government.
- 3.4.10 A few sources attempted to estimate the size of the student population in Khartoum and Sudan generally. Amjed Farid El Tayeb reckoned that there ‘... are around 25,000 students at Khartoum University, and around 15% - 20% of all students are Darfuri or from Darfuri origins. It is safe to assume that the percentage would be the same out of the over 300,000... students in Sudan. The Darfur Student Association is one of the biggest student bodies in Sudan.’²⁴⁰ Salih Osman thought there might be 100,000s of Darfuri students across Sudan²⁴¹, while 2 other sources described there being a ‘strong presence of’²⁴² and ‘many’²⁴³ Darfuri students in Khartoum. The Second Secretary Political considered that Darfuri students ‘came to Khartoum/Omdurman for better quality education. Students are of mixed backgrounds, predominately Fur, then Massalit, Zaghawa, Berti.’²⁴⁴
- 3.4.11 The university professor from Darfur observed:
- ‘As a result of migration, there are many Darfuri students attending universities. Many families have left Darfur so their children can have a better education. Most of those Darfuris who gain places at university will have sat their secondary exams in Khartoum or Saudi Arabia. The total number of Darfuri university students in Khartoum is likely to be in the thousands.’²⁴⁵

²³⁸ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

²³⁹ [An activist](#)

²⁴⁰ [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

²⁴¹ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

²⁴² [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

²⁴³ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

²⁴⁴ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

²⁴⁵ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

3.4.12 The political scientist, however, observed ‘... 1,000s of Darfuri students had the opportunity to go to university but [this is] no longer the case as fees had stopped being paid. It’s mostly graduates, who received free university education, who are looking to leave Sudan. Many graduates are unemployed – leaving is not down to ethnicity.’²⁴⁶

3.4.13 The university professor from Darfur provided his view on the current education system:

‘Opportunities for education lie more in “chances” than in policies of discrimination. Schools in Darfur are poor, so Darfuris don’t receive a good education and find it hard to compete in the national exams. In some places it’s possible a school might not have, for example, a physics teacher or an English teacher (which are rare in Darfur). So pupils at schools like that are disadvantaged right from the beginning.

‘The government has adopted a policy of concentrating resources in Khartoum. The government has withdrawn resources from education and healthcare, and given more to security. The government has adopted an education system which discriminates against pupils from poor families across the whole of Sudan. Resources for both government and private schools have dried up. In the past, the best teachers went to teach in government schools and the best students came from government schools, while students from private schools did not do so well and had poorer results. Now the best teachers go to the private schools as the pay is higher. Because less resources have been allocated now to public secondary schools, parents pay for their children to attend private school so they will enter university. A teacher can earn 2,3 or 4 times the salary they would get in a government school by teaching in a private school.’²⁴⁷

3.4.14 The political scientist observed: ‘Students are well organised: open about their convictions, but aware of need not to expose themselves. Lots of political activity in areas around Khartoum, and young people get arrested for this activity.’²⁴⁸

3.4.15 Amjed Farid El Tayeb considered that:

‘... Darfuri youth (students) face cruel and brutal targeting by the state and National Congress Party (NCP)- affiliated students, particularly the Jihadist Units and Jihadist battalions (formed by NCP students), who attend universities and cause problems for Darfuri students which can lead to physical harm, dismissal or stopping their studies. This pushes Darfuri students to join or support rebel groups.

‘Arab Darfuris face the same problems and politically active students in general also do... Darfuri students have been killed over the last 5 years. In 2012, 70 students were arrested; 66 were released but 4 disappeared - [their](#)

²⁴⁶ [A political scientist](#)

²⁴⁷ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

²⁴⁸ [A political scientist](#)

[dead bodies were thrown into an irrigation canal](#)²⁴⁹. No charges were brought.

'In 2014, a [Darfuri student was shot by security forces](#) at Khartoum university²⁵⁰: [Ali Abakar Musa Idris, third year student at the Faculty of Economics](#)²⁵¹. And there are many other similar cases. There are at least [13 Darfuri students who were killed](#)²⁵² in their universities by government-affiliated bodies between 2003 - 2016.

'As well, NISS fabricates cases against students and forces them to resign from university in fear of arrest and security prosecution or even direct physical harm. AT noted that 20-22 year-old students; children of IDPs who were raised in the camps, can easily be intimidated. Many of them have witnessed the rape and killing of family members.

'Asked why this was happened, AT said it is complicated. There are 2 major reasons that cause Darfuri students to protest:

- 'First, both Darfur's peace agreements - Abuja in 2006 and Doha in 2011 – waived university tuition fees for Darfuri students. Most of these students are from IDP families who cannot afford the fees. However, the government did not implement the Articles ruling this and students have been forced to pay fees. Prior to 1989 Islamists coup, education – including university- was free. There were no tuition fees or accommodation fees, and university students in public universities were paid a stipend. However, tuition fees were introduced. And have increased over the years after the coup that brought the current government in place. The government did not implement any of the social articles of the peace agreements – including the waiving of fees; it only implemented the inclusion of former rebels into the government.
- 'Second, the Janjaweed and rebels still have a presence in rural Darfur; they attack villages and sexually assault women. The security forces – Rapid Support Forces (RSF), NISS – have full impunity. This enrages students.

'... Young people in Darfur have currently 2 choices – after normal economic activity has been disrupted by the ongoing war - so the choice is to either join the fighting or study. Many choose to study.

'Asked if all Darfuri students are at risk even if they are not politically active [the source]... said he thought so.

'NISS does not make such differentiation. It antagonizes all Darfuri students.

'There are NISS agents (informants) and NISS offices on campus. When something happens, NISS arrest everyone. Sometimes students are taken to these offices of the Jihadi Units, for may be 6/12 hours or overnight, beaten

²⁴⁹ Amjed Farid El Tayeb provided a link to an article of 8 December 2012 in [The Chicago Tribune](#), however online access to this newspaper is not currently available in the UK.

²⁵⁰ Amnesty International, Sudan: Student shot dead and more than 100 arrested at Khartoum protest, 11 March 2014, [url](#)

²⁵¹ Dabanga, One dies as troops fire on Darfuri students in Khartoum, 11 March 2014, [url](#)

²⁵² Amnesty International, Video: Darfuri students arrested, detained and tortured for speaking out, January 2017, [url](#)

and released - it's not classed as official detention. This happens to all students, including non-Darfuris, especially if they are political activists. There are problems for students who join different student organisations... many Darfuri students are involved in activist groups due to the continuous conflict in Darfur, which makes them more politically aware. Also there are problems faced Darfuris who join other (i.e. not rebel) opposition groups. They are being more targeted by the security forces than others in the same opposition parties.'²⁵³

3.4.16 Amjed Farid El Tayeb also claimed it 'very common for the security forces to storm student dormitories and arrest large numbers of Darfuri students' for both male and female students²⁵⁴, providing links to articles documenting incidents dated 2012²⁵⁵ and 2014²⁵⁶ respectively.

3.4.17 Salih Osman acknowledged that it was necessary to have an ID card to attend university, noting 'it is necessary to sit for university exams'. He went on to note that:

'... university places are overwhelmingly taken up by Darfuri students. The Doha Peace Agreement stipulated that Darfuri students have their university fees waved, but this was not sufficiently implemented during the period of the Darfur Authority from 2011 to 2016. Now the government has revoked this provision and students are finding they cannot sit exams, graduate or receive their graduation certificates – unless they pay. This is the same for other students without funds (not just the Darfuris). But the Doha Peace Agreement made a specific allowance for Darfuris as they lost relatives, land and livelihoods following the conflict and still have nothing now.

'If they protest against this policy, it is considered by the government as a political, economic and racial matter. Protesters who take part in protests that take place over university funding are targeted on racial grounds.'²⁵⁷

3.4.18 The activist also acknowledged that '... following the Doha Peace Agreement, Darfuris are entitled to free university education. But the source thought that once the funds ran out of the process, the government declined to give money to students to cover student fees.'²⁵⁸

3.4.19 The university professor from Darfur noted:

'Discrimination is faced by Darfuri students in limited areas, for example a prominent Darfuri student competing for a university staff position may be discriminated against if an equally talented student from a Riverain tribe applied for the post. In a closed competition, discrimination is more likely than in an open competition where everything is visible...

'Student leaders are often pushed to deliver at "speaker box corners".

²⁵³ [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

²⁵⁴ [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

²⁵⁵ Sudane Tribune, Sudanese police storm Khartoum University's compounds, over 300 students arrested, 18 February 2012, [url](#)

²⁵⁶ Guardian, Female students from Darfur arrested and beaten in Sudan, says HRW, 17 October 2014, [url](#)

²⁵⁷ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

²⁵⁸ [An activist](#)

'All Sudanese opposition parties have their student activists, but the Darfuri students tend to be more agitative. The Fur and Zaghawa students are more active so may face more problems because they also represent the tribal make-up of the main rebel groups (JEM; and SLM-AW). Rebel movements have their own student supporters and are told to push their agenda, making Darfuri students become more agitated/violent due to the conflict so they become victims of the security forces. Umma party students will talk about the economy, but Darfuri students will talk about the killing of a relative in Darfur last month, they are more violent.

'...if a Darfuri student studies hard and doesn't agitate the risk to them is very much less and they will get their grades. But that person may be subject to indirect, subtle social exclusion, just as any person would who didn't show solidarity to the 'group' and may be classed as outsider.'²⁵⁹

3.4.20 Dr Enrico Ille observed that '... the continued stronger reaction by the governmental organs to any Darfur-related political action may enhance how people from there are perceived as [a] potentially disruptive force; this seems, however, rather to be true for those going to educational institutions (especially universities) than in the areas people live.'²⁶⁰

3.4.21 The civil society activist considered that students are

'... labelled as trouble due to their perceived rebel support. There is a lot of violence, including people being shot dead, on campus at the Universities. The targets are mainly the Darfuri and the Nuba.

'Some students are affiliated to the security forces and are trained in the use of firearms. Darfuris are deliberately targeted. Darfuri students in the White Nile State were accused of killing 2 police officers – the organisation is providing them with assistance. These are the types of cases the organisation deals with.

'The organisation is trying to reduce the level of violence amongst students, move towards more peaceful means and focus on the political process, but there is a lot of provocation from the regime. There are discussion gatherings in the universities - some students get aggressive. Most times they can't contain themselves and it ends in violence. Last week a student was injured suffering a broken nose and eye damage.

'When asked if Darfuris were targeted based on ethnicity or due to their perceived support of the opposition, the organisation said that some student organisations are tribe affiliated, but there is a lot of stereotyping and Darfuris are accused of supporting the rebels.'²⁶¹

3.4.22 The civil society activist recalled an incident in White Nile state

'About 1,000 students demonstrated in Bakhat Al Rwoda University, El Dewaim, White Nile, protesting because of irregularities in the students' union. Darfuri students were singled out and 15 students arrested and charged with the killing of two police officers and now the trial is going on in

²⁵⁹ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

²⁶⁰ [Dr Enrico Ille, anthropologist](#)

²⁶¹ [A civil society activist](#)

Kosti, White Nile state. In Khartoum, Darfuri students were demonstrating about the treatment of Darfuris. One student was arrested, detained and was physically abused by NISS, which resulted in his nose being broken.’²⁶²

- 3.4.23 Siddig Yousef thought that ‘Darfuri students may be treated more severely, accused of supporting the Sudan Liberation Movement–Abdul Wahid.’ He also noted:

‘... Following the Doha Peace Agreement, the government agreed to pay the fees of Darfuri students from the IDP camps. However, the government has stopped paying, and Darfuri students have protested. Darfuri students when detained are ill-treated... there are 2 cases against students still running in the courts. One for 8 students at Al Azhary university who are charged for protesting about killing of 3 students at the Islamic university which took place in September 2017. The second trial is for 14 students accused of killing 2 policemen during the riots which took place at Bakht Aroda university in May 2017 and they are kept since that time at Kosti town prison [see case referred to by civil society activist above].’²⁶³

- 3.4.24 Siddig Yousef also mentioned a specific case of a student ‘who was sentenced to death (14/08/2018) for his involvement in the death of a policeman during a demonstration in 2016. The student was sentenced to death but managed to get a re-trial. SY hoped he will be acquitted; the case has become quite high profile and has drawn a lot of international attention.’²⁶⁴

- 3.4.25 The human rights defender observed that:

‘Some Darfuri university students claim they are members of rebel groups and this causes more tensions and difficulties for all Darfuri students, makes NISS more aggressive. The HRD did not know why some students claimed this but found it a strange phenomenon as it put students at risk without reason. One doesn’t need to call oneself a rebel to oppose the government or to express one’s demands. If NISS take an interest it is because of such a claimed link with rebel groups.’²⁶⁵

- 3.4.26 The human rights defender also noted: ‘The last wave of large-scale arrests took place last year (2017) when students in the White Nile area resigned from university – in protest at having to pay fees – and large groups of students marched on Khartoum. The HRD believes that students, being young, are being ill-advised by certain political groups, and that causes their real demands [to] fade away.’²⁶⁶

- 3.4.27 The representatives of western Embassies were generally more circumspect about the evidence of targeting of students. In the view of the Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy,

‘The only restive groups of Darfuris in Khartoum are university students. Some student groups are quite militant and quite active in politics, influenced

²⁶² [A civil society activist](#)

²⁶³ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²⁶⁴ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²⁶⁵ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

²⁶⁶ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

by rebel groups; some are less active. There was a case a year or so ago where Darfuri students were involved in a big protest after a Darfuri student was put on trial for murder of a police officer. The students demonstrating against the charges were beaten by police. In protest, Darfuris students walked from Gezira (area just south of Khartoum) with their suitcases. When they came to the outskirts of Khartoum, the government stated that the students were over-reacting and bringing attention to themselves, but they were supported by the local people who got involved.

‘Throughout [his]... 4 years in Sudan, aware of a number of incidents involving Darfuri students – he has met student leaders. For example, met a delegation of Darfuri students who had complained that although they were exempt from paying fees under the Doha Peace agreement. They were being told to pay or else they would not receive their degrees.’²⁶⁷

3.4.28 The Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy added that some students ‘are militant, some are not. Non-militant students think that the militant students are causing problems for them. Those not active are able to get on with their studies.’²⁶⁸

3.4.29 An official of Western Embassy B ‘observed that students are politically active and that there had been clashes with the government. For example, there were clashes in January 2018 – although not just Darfuris. There have been some incidents where Darfuris have been shot / detained.’²⁶⁹ While the official of Western Embassy A commented:

‘There are news reports – for example in Radio Dabanga and Sudan Tribune [media sites based in Europe] - of Darfuri students facing some problems. The official questioned the reliability of such news if they are only reported by one source, as with the reliability of many news stories. The issue is frequently that media might report about an incident, but the details in that report don’t have to be accurate. A frequent example are numbers [statistics] which are often exaggerated and quotes, which can be freely invented.’²⁷⁰

[Back to Contents](#)

3.5 Socio-economic rights - general

3.5.1 Most sources thought that non-Arab Darfuris faced difficulties in accessing public services and employment but the reasons that hindering access may depend on a number of factors. The university professor from Darfur thought the socio-economic situation for non-Arab Darfuris mixed:

‘There is no official discrimination by the state, but the degree of access to certain services depends how those in charge, who sometimes practise favouritism or nepotism towards their own people, but there are also issues of limited resources and bad governance. People in charge give more access to some “favoured” people – those without relatives who hold some influence are denied. A Darfuri who is in a position of some authority, or

²⁶⁷ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

²⁶⁸ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

²⁶⁹ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

²⁷⁰ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

knows someone who is, can access services. It is not that Darfuris are categorically denied access.

'The public sector has been disrupted since 1989 when the National Congress Party (NCP) took charge. It is possible for a person to request services and to complete the necessary application form, but officials favour who they want to, secretly.'²⁷¹

3.5.2 The university professor from Darfur went on to note:

'In business, Darfuris arrived late and although some appear successful, such as the Zaghawa, they have been targeted. For example, in 2008/09 when the JEM attacked Omdurman, the Zaghawa were targeted as the JEM leader was Zaghawa. They were forced to quit their businesses. Some went to operate in quieter places, in the south for example, some left Sudan and were successful, but the numbers of those were very small.

'The government is not interested in Darfuri small traders, who are not affected by its actions, only those who are successful on a larger scale, those who could be in competition to the government are targeted. People (Darfuris) relay stories of being targeted in business to make them bankrupt, making it hard to continue or a lower ceiling is set. If a person becomes more successful, they will be targeted. The source was aware of 2-3 people who had signed contracts with the government to provide a service, which the person had invested in to fulfil the work but the government dragged its feet, resulting in void contracts, investments lost and bankruptcy. However, UP observed that such discrimination was not quantified; it is based on perceptions and people talking amongst themselves.

'The government advocates free trade and economy but there are more than 400 companies in Sudan which are government owned, trading in commodities such as tyres; shoes; clothes; etc. These companies / the government has the monopoly across the country. For those not run by the government there are indirect issues, not obvious policies but hearsay, taxes and "additional" duties levied. This is across the whole of the country in general, to anyone who is seen as opposition or who is not part of the government, not only for Darfuris.

'For an ordinary Darfuri, there could be latent discrimination, which the government tries to conceal. Many Darfuris complain, for example, that a Darfuri may not be promoted. It is a "feeling" that they are discriminated. For example, a Darfuri who was best in their class, best in the department, will not be given the promotion they deserve - that would go to a less qualified and less able non-Darfuri. Discrimination existed before the conflict, but after "Inghaz" [Arabic for "salvation", the term used to describe the take-over of the government by the, then, National Islamic Front (now NCP) in 1989] it became ideological. There were people who supported the system found themselves in a situation where they could get what they wanted, they were accepted "in" but they weren't given key posts (some Darfuris say they are

²⁷¹ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

discriminated in the ruling party). This includes the Arab Darfuris too - most Darfuris in the NCP are Arabs.²⁷²

- 3.5.3 The Second Secretary Political thought Darfuris might face discrimination in their socio-economic rights, such as accessing housing and education, but did not know for sure. He also observed ‘that there is a Darfur Bar Association, so there are enough Darfuri lawyers to have their own group but this is not the case for the Nuba... had met only one Nuba lawyer.’²⁷³
- 3.5.4 An official of Western Embassy B observed: ‘Darfuris were generally discriminated against – found it difficult to access services but are well-documented, have ID cards’. The official did not know if they experienced difficulties in accessing healthcare but ‘observed that Darfuri children generally go to school.’ The source also noted that ‘[a]ccess to land was difficult generally, but... was not sure of the extent [it affected Darfuris]. Darfuris that come to Khartoum generally can’t afford to buy land.’²⁷⁴
- 3.5.5 The civil society activist observed:
- ‘Darfuris do better than the Nuba in terms of socio economics. Darfuris and people from the Zaghawa tribe often work together (particularly students at university to fund their studies). One of the main features of the Zaghawa is their aptitude for trade and they help each other in business.
- ‘But since the conflict, Zaghawans have also been targeted by the government with huge tax bills. Everything in Sudan is money; but it is not a free market: 40-60% of the country is run by (government-backed) companies and individuals, although some Zaghawans are still in business.
- ‘In general Darfuris are better off than the Nuba people. Nuba IDP families rely on income generated by their children collecting re-cyclable items to sell from rubbish dumps. The Fur, who used to be farmers, make-up the majority of the people in IDP camps [in Darfur]. They are not able to look after their children so well.’²⁷⁵
- 3.5.6 Siddig Yousef thought that access to public services ‘depended on where the person lived. In the periphery of Khartoum there are no facilities, so [people] have to come into the city.’²⁷⁶ While the human rights defender observed ‘[p]eople living in shanty towns face difficulties in accessing healthcare, have no services. This affects all tribes living in such conditions. In Khartoum, don’t feel the divisions caused by insecurity as in Darfur.’²⁷⁷
- 3.5.7 The King of the Berti observed , when asked about access to services, ‘that the Berti have been coming to Khartoum for 100 years, to work as labourers, on farms. They face some discrimination in the labour market, have some difficulties.’ He singled out discrimination ‘that the Berti are not incorporated into the regular security forces – police, army, RSF – across Sudan. Representation in these groups may help improve relationships with them.’

²⁷² [A university professor from Darfur](#)

²⁷³ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

²⁷⁴ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

²⁷⁵ [A civil society activist](#)

²⁷⁶ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²⁷⁷ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

He noted that difficulties in accessing health and education are problems for all tribes, adding that he ‘helps Berti with accessing health and education.’²⁷⁸

3.5.8 Salih Osman observed that

‘... [The] DBA... usually deal with cases of forced eviction by the authorities. There are Darfuri IDP camps around El Fasher and the main cities in Darfur, but Darfuris who have migrated to Khartoum tend to find remote areas on the perimeter of the city and set up home there (“shanty towns” – illegal settlements). People who are living in these places are all Darfuris and Nuba. They are often forcibly evicted. The DBA has challenged some evictions and, in some cases, has won. Asked if the courts discriminate, SO thought it not hopeless but difficult.’²⁷⁹

[Back to Contents](#)

Employment

3.5.9 The political scientist thought that non-Arab Darfuris ‘definitely’ experienced discrimination ‘... for government jobs. The private sector, second only to the public sector is not a big employer. A private company employing 100 people would be huge.’²⁸⁰ Salih Osman (SO) similarly thought that Darfuris experienced discrimination in accessing jobs and were under-represented in government positions:

‘Darfuris do not enjoy socio-economic rights - most are not registered, i.e. do not have National ID numbers. So, they cannot take up employment; they cannot participate in elections, they do not get recognition. However, some Darfuris who are affiliated to the ruling party have better opportunities than those who are considered enemies of the state. The Darfuris are known as moderate Muslims not as religious fanatics, or zealous for the ruling party; Darfuris are considered as not co-operative with the government.

‘After the separation (of South Sudan from Sudan) some NADs were employed in government positions, but only a small percentage –very few in high ranking positions. Darfuris should hold 30% of positions in government, judiciary, army, etc. NADs do hold many low-ranking roles, but SO did not know exact numbers.

‘This is the same for all people accused of being against the government and not showing sufficient loyalty. Other marginalised groups, for example the Nuba, are also denied high-ranking places. The government is dominated by Jalayin and Shaigiya (Nile valley tribes).’²⁸¹

3.5.10 Amjed Farid El Tayeb also thought ‘employment is difficult for young Darfuris, especially government jobs. Security checks are made by the government for some jobs, e.g. in oil or telecoms, and Darfuris don’t pass these checks, neither do political activists.’²⁸² Similarly, the official of

²⁷⁸ [King of the Berti](#)

²⁷⁹ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

²⁸⁰ [A political scientist](#)

²⁸¹ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

²⁸² [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

Western Embassy B also considered that ‘Darfuris would find it difficult to get into government, i.e. government jobs.’²⁸³

3.5.11 Siddig Yousef considered that finding work was difficult generally:

‘... permanent jobs are rare, most graduates don’t find work and if they find work they do not work in areas of their studies. This is an outcome of the financial / economic situation in Sudan: most factories have closed down in Khartoum North – which were mostly for processing vegetables (peanut and sesame oil production for example) and making textiles. Gezira (south of Khartoum) used to be planted with cotton – but has stopped producing. Decline in agriculture has also affected factory production. Warzone areas used to produce peanuts, but this production has declined. The economic situation has affected everyone. All sectors of the economy have been affected – so high (general) unemployment.

‘Asked if it is more difficult for Darfuris to find work, SY said yes. In Darfur services are poor, so children [young people] have to migrate to Khartoum. Difficult to attend university because people are poor and can’t afford to live, to pay the fees.’²⁸⁴

3.5.12 Siddig Yousef also thought that ‘the government accuses / suspects Darfuris are linked with rebels, so discriminates against Darfuris in accessing jobs, e.g. if in competition with a different tribe.’²⁸⁵

3.5.13 However, the activist was of the view that it was difficult for all people to find work, the key factor was political affiliation:

‘For jobs, many prefer to go abroad like every other young person. For work, Sudan is a kind of hell for everyone. There is no clear plan of enrolment for graduates. Thousands are applying for 10-15 positions. When asked if Darfuris faced discrimination in getting jobs, the source considered it was more about political affiliation, whether a member of the NCP or not. Maybe someone (fellow tribe members) inside an organisation could help a person get a job. Some people of one tribe employ people others of same tribe in an organisation, e.g. in the oil industry, where most employees are of the same tribe of the Minister for oil.’²⁸⁶

[Back to Contents](#)

Healthcare

3.5.14 Amjed Farid El Tayeb noted that ‘Healthcare is expensive (private) and above the means of many. Non-Darfuri groups may have family support that may help them sometimes in paying for healthcare. There are free health clinics in Khartoum University but these are poorly resourced and equipped. If a student cannot pay their tuition fees, they will not receive a student ID card, which is required to access the university clinic.’²⁸⁷

3.5.15 Siddig Yousef observed:

²⁸³ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

²⁸⁴ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²⁸⁵ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²⁸⁶ [An activist](#)

²⁸⁷ [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

'Most government facilities / services are very bad. No free health treatment, people have to pay for treatment in government health facilities; the price may depend on the hospital director. But civil societies - youth organisations - stay near the hospitals and try to help. One organisation is called "Hospital Casualty Street" which is comprised mostly of students, help any poor person, for example by calling relatives by phone and helping the person access health services.'²⁸⁸

3.5.16 The civil society activist observed:

'A person needs insurance to access healthcare. Even so, a contribution of 25% is needed towards the cost of medicines. The insurance used to cost around 500-800 Sudanese Pounds (SDG) per annum, before the economic problems – unaffordable for most Sudanese. Surgery may cost 4000 SDG and could be reduced to 2000 SDG, but still not within the reach of most Sudanese. There are some clinics, health centres in the shanty areas where the marginalised groups live, but they provide a very basic service. For example, you could attend if you had a cough or malaria (and have the test) – but you wouldn't be able to pay for the treatment.

'In any case, the most common medicines have not been available in Sudan since the economic crisis, apart from a few supplies in expensive "chemists" which are not affordable. Some people who have the means order medication from outside Sudan, for example from Egypt.'²⁸⁹

3.5.17 However the activist thought that Darfuris had access to healthcare, treated the same as other tribes²⁹⁰.

[Back to Contents](#)

3.6 Access to ID numbers and cards

3.6.1 See also section, [Obtaining passports, ID numbers and cards](#) above, for a description of the process and requirements for obtaining ID numbers and cards as set out by Lieutenant-General Dahiya.

3.6.2 Sources varied in their views on whether Darfuris would be able to readily access an ID number (unique to all Sudanese, issued free and necessary to have to obtain an ID card) and ID card, and if most Darfuris had cards. As noted by the Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy, 'all Sudanese need to have an ID card, to get a driving license, a job, to go to university, etc'²⁹¹

3.6.3 Salih Osman thought it difficult:

'The government makes it impossible to get a National ID number as verification from a male relative is required (and in many cases women do not have a surviving male relative) [however Salih Osman also noted that many Darfuris are at school and university which he acknowledged was likely to require having an ID number and card].

²⁸⁸ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

²⁸⁹ [A civil society activist](#)

²⁹⁰ [An activist](#)

²⁹¹ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

'Other people, for example from the East, Blue Nile and the Nuba Mountains, are also discriminated against on these grounds (particularly in the respect of women that are not able to obtain verification as they do not have male relatives).'²⁹²

3.6.4 Similarly the civil society activist also thought obtaining an ID card would be difficult:

'It's not easy to obtain a National ID number. A person requires a male relative from their father's side, with the same name and with documents proving their ID, nationality etc. This requirement for documentary proof stops many people from getting the ID number, which is required for everything, including purchasing a phone; renewing a car licence; getting a passport; cashing a cheque; signing a contract; registering land.

'Not having a National ID number creates a lot of problems. Not all Darfuris in Khartoum or Darfur have them. Most IDPs don't have National ID numbers. IDPs do have their own 'camp' registration, but this is for getting their rations of food provided in the camp.'²⁹³

3.6.5 The university professor from Darfur observed:

'There may be problems obtaining ID cards and numbers.

'Some are related to the policy of how to determine if a person is Sudanese (Sudanese nationality is based on whether the mother / father were born in Sudan). People born on the border, such as members of Zaghawa, may not be Sudanese so it may be more difficult to demonstrate nationality for these groups. Such people may face logistical problems such as having to provide 2 or 3 witnesses rather than a single witness (a tribal leader or male relative over 60) or face more in depth questioning to establish where they are from. During the conflict, some people coming from Chad or Niger brought in to fight the rebel groups were given Sudanese nationality. In the early days of the war, it was easier for non-Sudanese to get nationality than it was for Sudanese from some Darfuri tribes. For example, a Zaghawa may be asked to provide the nationality document of a brother or an uncle, or a witness. If the Zaghawa is 50, the witness would need to be 60. This can be very difficult if the relative is not 60, or there is no one in the village aged 60.

'In Khartoum, it is easier [to obtain an ID card] but the process for a rebel-affiliated tribe member would take longer and be more difficult. If a person has to return to Darfur for the evidence required, it may be assumed by the state in Darfur that they are an activist even more so if the person is young and a graduate, and therefore perceived as a security risk. Some choose not to go back and forego the national ID number.

'It's easier for Berti to get an ID number, they are not a border group and not largely associated with rebel movements. But for the Fur, Massalit and Zaghawa, these are border groups and linked to the rebel groups therefore face more difficulties, it will be a longer process. For Zaghawa the age of a

²⁹² [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

²⁹³ [A civil society activist](#)

person's father may be an issue and the person may be asked more about their village.'²⁹⁴

- 3.6.6 On whether it might be possible for someone from Darfur to obtain an ID number and card in Khartoum, the university professor thought it might be possible for a Zaghawa to get an ethnic association to testify on their behalf (instead of a blood relative) but it would be more 'difficult than for a Berti. Certain tribal leaders are given cards so they can testify in front of government officers.'²⁹⁵
- 3.6.7 Salih Osman mentioned women and children living on farms on the outskirts of Khartoum are '... unable to obtain the National ID number as they have no male relatives to confirm their identity in the ID process and are therefore also not able to access any services (healthcare; education; formal employment etc). They are vulnerable to sexual violence by landowners and farm labourers.' But other non-Arab Darfuris travelling to Khartoum have 'less problems' and 'find a way' to obtain ID cards²⁹⁶.
- 3.6.8 However other sources either considered that obstacles were generally possible to overcome or that there was no particular problem faced by Darfuris compared to other groups. The political scientist (PS) thought:
'... it is possible to get an ID card through formal channels, and a person can also get one through informal channels. Depends on the contact, which also governs the price - more senior contacts exact a higher price... not aware of problems faced by Darfuris in obtaining cards. Heard of cases who are, possibly, linked to the rebels so the authorities say they are not Sudanese - examples in Darfur.
'There are offices for obtaining ID cards all over Sudan. A person just needs an older community member to testify on their behalf, does not need to be a blood relative.
'Asked if it was more difficult in Khartoum if someone was not with their immediate family, PS noted that people in Khartoum tend to be in family, tribe, geographical groups, so can get someone from their tribe to testify. Not difficult, unless the authorities do not want to issue a card. For example, the authorities may stipulate the witness has to be over 60, if this is not possible a person can pay some money to have the witness waived.'²⁹⁷
- 3.6.9 Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim considered
'It is a very easy process to obtain a National ID number or an ID biometric card.
'The National ID number is free, but there is a fee (was about 50 SDP) for the biometric card - which can be used to obtain other documents such as a passport.

²⁹⁴ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

²⁹⁵ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

²⁹⁶ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

²⁹⁷ [A political scientist](#)

'All that is required is to prove nationality, regardless of ethnicity and be fingerprinted. The National ID number is key – it is necessary to get a job or to obtain healthcare, but the biometric card is optional. The government has encouraged everyone to get a card.'²⁹⁸

- 3.6.10 While the Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy considered that it was not a problem to obtain an ID card:

'There was an issue for Darfuris who fled their villages (in Darfur) without ID documentation and then to get documents.

'There was a big campaign before the last elections in 2015 for people to get ID cards and there will be again before the 2020 elections. Individuals needed 2 people (male relatives or tribal leaders) to vouch for them.... did not know the proportion of people who have ID cards, thought the DBA might know... problems with not having an ID card is not something that has been reported to him / FCO... had not heard of anyone not having ID; it was possible to pay a bribe for an ID card... everyone in an IDP camp has UN card and probably government cards too... nearly every Darfuri he has come across has a mobile phone, however poor they are, so he thought they would be able to pay for an ID card too.

'There are problems for those without ID cards – can't go to university, or if they pass through a check point without one they will have to pay a bribe.'²⁹⁹

- 3.6.11 Similarly, Siddig Yousef 'did not consider Darfuris would have difficulties obtaining ID cards; people of mixed parentage, e.g. from Sudan and South Sudan, have difficulty getting cards – by law they have a right to a card but the issuance of cards affected by politics.'³⁰⁰

- 3.6.12 The human rights defender did not know if it was possible to obtain an ID card in Khartoum, but observed

'He had not heard of any difficulties for people getting ID. To obtain a national ID number, which is issued on an A4 sized document and is free, the person needs a male relative to witness they are Sudanese. If a person does not have the necessary documentary evidence or witness they would have to go back to their home area to obtain it. IDs are issued in all major towns and cities, including in Darfur.

'Most people have an identity card as it is required for voting (in upcoming elections). If you don't have a National ID number you cannot have a bank account, cash money, go to university or access any government services.'³⁰¹

- 3.6.13 The activist was also not aware of problems in accessing ID cards for Darfuris:

'In order to obtain an ID card a person needs to get a male relative on the father's side to confirm their identity. When asked if difficult for Darfuris to get cards, particularly those who have moved to Khartoum without family, source

²⁹⁸ [Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

²⁹⁹ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

³⁰⁰ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

³⁰¹ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

said that if there is a problem it is not necessarily because the person is from Darfur.

'Problems faced by Darfuris are similar to those faced by other Sudanese tribes. Sometimes a person will pay to get an ID card if they don't have any relatives to confirm/give a hand.'³⁰²

3.6.14 Regarding the Berti in particular, the King of the Berti noted:

'... the government used to consider the Berti a border tribe, which meant a person needed 4 witnesses who were elderly (and male) to confirm their identity. However, more recently the Berti have been able to demonstrate that they are only in Sudan [and not a tribe that straddles the border with a neighbouring country], so only need 2 witnesses. Asked if it would be possible for someone to migrate to Khartoum to obtain an ID number /card even if they had no family to authenticate their identity, KB agreed it was possible. There are "tribal" witnesses who can testify even if not the person's blood relatives. KB can do this, but has also appointed a delegate to do so on his behalf.'³⁰³

[Back to Contents](#)

3.7 National service

3.7.1 Sources generally agreed that all Sudanese have to do national service (NS), including Darfuris, which was for between 1 and 2 years depending on whether the person is a graduate or non graduate. The penalties for evading NS were likely to be restrictions on travel, access to education and jobs, rather than imprisonment.

3.7.2 The university professor from Darfur noted:

'All Sudanese do National Service (NS). Most Darfuris do NS, like all Sudanese. People who have connections can get better placements. But it is more difficult for Darfuris, who are not likely to obtain such good placements as non-Darfuris unless they have a "good connection" who can secure them a better placement.

'Darfuris are more likely to be sent to the military, in the past this would have meant being sent to the "frontline", i.e. one of the conflict areas.

'If a person doesn't do NS they will be denied their university certificate; they will not be able to get a good job and they will not be able to travel.'³⁰⁴

3.7.3 Salih Osman observed:

'All Sudanese graduates do National Service (NS), there is no exemption for any group. You have to have a National ID number to do NS and you have to be a graduate.

'In the past, the government used to capture non-graduates from the streets for the army and paramilitary forces like the Popular Defence Forces. Now

³⁰² [An activist](#)

³⁰³ [King of the Berti](#)

³⁰⁴ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

the government uses mercenaries from Chad, Niger and Mali, so don't do this anymore. People from Chad, Mali, etc are mainly in the RSF.

'It is a policy to recruit graduates into government jobs. NS takes place in government departments (ministries).'³⁰⁵

3.7.4 The activist observed:

'Darfuris have to do national service (NS) – there are no exceptions. They have military training, sent to a camp (but this is not for firearms training). After this, they are attached to a government ministry to complete NS.

'NS is one year for a graduate, 2 years for non-graduates. Most students go after they have completed university.... the source thought that [round-ups for conscripts]... used to be the case in the past but this has stopped in the last 5 years.

'The FFM team had heard it suggested that it might be possible to pay money to avoid NS, the source had heard about this but did not have evidence of it occurring.

'The source noted that once NS is completed a person was given a certificate / letter. They then got a card showing they had done NS, which had to be renewed every 2 to 3 years to maintain proof of having completed NS, which costs around 200 Sudanese Pounds each time.

'... [if the person did not do national service] it would prevent a future career and [the source] gave the example of a lawyer, they would not be able to enrol at the bar. Nor would a graduate be able to apply for a masters degree without showing the NS card. When asked if there are other penalties – for example prison or fine – the response was no.

'NS is for both men and women, but the government does not "insist" that women undertake NS.'³⁰⁶

3.7.5 An official of Western Embassy B 'observed that Darfuris are still required to do national service but they would find it difficult to get "sensitive" jobs. But this is the same for all "African" groups.' The source also noted:

'Everyone has to do NS, which is supposed to be compulsory and, depending on the person's level of education, is for 1 to 3 years. Some tribes, rich families pay to get a medical certificate to exempt them from NS. Not sure of the penalties for not doing NS.

'Anecdotally, NAD generally tend to end up in lower ranks and are sometimes not allowed to go to "sensitive" places.'³⁰⁷

3.7.6 Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim considered:

'Although compulsory, it is possible to pay a bribe to avoid national service (NS) and to obtain a card that states you have undertaken national service. You can keep paying over the years in case you want to travel for a good reason such as getting a work contract abroad, so never have to do it.

³⁰⁵ [Salih Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

³⁰⁶ [An activist](#)

³⁰⁷ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

'The terms of service are one year for a graduate; two years for non-graduate. There are classes A- B - C for people not physically able to complete a lengthy term. Military training is for 45 days, it is for people over 18yrs. There is an upper age limit. If you get work abroad, you can be exempted from national service – or get it delayed.

'It is not obstacle to leaving the country. NS can be delayed.'³⁰⁸

3.7.7 Siddig Yousef observed that:

'Everyone has to do national service (NS) for 2 years, military service is for 6 months. Military service continues (despite the end of conflict) however because the government hasn't got the facilities to accommodate all the NS conscripts, it concentrates on students. The punishment for not doing NS is that students do not get a degree and therefore not a (good) job, but they are not sent to prison.'³⁰⁹

3.7.8 Similarly, the human rights defender noted:

'National service is compulsory for all Sudanese men and women, under a certain age, who have completed schooling/university, but generally, not served in the military.

'The military do not get people; they go into government institutions. People are supposed to do it, but some do not. Some Nomads, farmers and uneducated men may avoid undertaking national service.

'Penalties include not being able to obtain a passport or leave the country (by legal channels) without proving you've completed national service or have got an exemption.'³¹⁰

3.7.9 The King of the Berti observed it is '... the same rules for everyone. 1 year for graduates, 2 years for non-graduates. In general, NS done before university, but if accepted at university persons may be able to postpone. If a person did not do NS, then not able to go to university, won't get (formal) employment and technically not allowed to travel although there are exceptions to this which cost money.'³¹¹

3.7.10 Regarding round-ups, an official of Western Embassy A '... had heard of one incident of army personnel in vehicles stopping young men and asking them if they had completed their NS in Khartoum... [but] that it was explained to them that this was unlikely to happen outside of Khartoum. This practice may vary depending on the security situation of the country at the time.'³¹²

[Back to Contents](#)

³⁰⁸ [Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

³⁰⁹ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

³¹⁰ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

³¹¹ [King of the Berti](#)

³¹² [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

4. Freedom of movement

4.1 Exit process

4.1.1 Lieutenant-General Dahiya (LG Dahiya) and colleagues explained what Sudanese nationals are required to do to leave Sudan:

'... Exit visas are [...] required and can be applied for at passport offices all over Sudan – there are 5 main offices in Khartoum. The applicant must provide their valid passport, evidence they have completed national service, and their reason for travel. For example, they would need evidence of where they were going to study or access healthcare. The cost for an exit visa was 105 Sudanese pounds (around US\$2). You must not be banned from travelling, for example, if you have a pending criminal case. There is also some political banning and information of people banned from travel is stored on a electronic database – a national alert/watchlist.

'A person does not have to purchase flights until your exit visa is issued. Exit visas are required for all border crossings. No entry visas are required for Eritrea or Libya – there is a small fee of US\$10 at the entry point. Visas for Egypt are required for men under age 50, but not required for women.'³¹³

4.1.2 LG Dahiya added:

'When departing the country via the airport a person's passport is checked by immigration and security. The validity of travel documents are checked as well as personal belongings. The exit visa is checked on the database and verification that the person is not banned from travel or wanted by the state.

'Forged passports were reportedly not a problem, especially since electronic, biometric passports had been introduced.

'Some entry visas to Europe have been found to be false and sometimes detected by the airline.

'No trafficking of groups through the airport had been heard of.'³¹⁴

4.1.3 A number of sources echoed LG Dahiya's description of the exit process. The IOM official provided a detailed description of leaving Khartoum International Airport:

'Persons leaving need exit permission to pass through airport (both for foreign nationals and Sudanese). The exit visa for the Sudanese is a piece of paper. The exit visas for foreign nationals is either contained in the original entry visa (for short term visitors) or is in the form of a separate entry/exit sticker for longer term residents.

'When passengers enter the departure area of the airport there is a counter immediately inside the building. It is understood that this is operated by NISS. Ad hoc checks can be made here. The check is done to the right of the baggage area after having passed the security guard. The next stage is to check in at the airline desks. Once checked in passengers proceed to a NISS check point – look at passport and boarding pass (this check is done

³¹³ [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

³¹⁴ [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

for all departing passengers) – then the embarkation area which includes an immigration check operated by the Police.

‘... the exit visa process was the same for Sudanese. They need to go to an immigration office to get an exit visa, though it is also possible to obtain one from the airport. Local IOM staff need exit visas; never not got one to leave.

‘There is an electronic system for checking Sudanese exit visas at the airport. IOM is in discussion with the Sudanese government to upgrade their entry/exit electronic systems.

‘The IOM official, however, said that checks were based on a person’s name, since this is checked when passing through the NISS check at the airport (in his experience).’³¹⁵

4.1.4 While the official of Western Embassy A considered:

‘Some asylum seekers have provided forms, allegedly from immigration police, which state the person is banned from leaving Sudan. The western official had attempted to verify the form existed but the immigration police said they were not aware of such a form. However, there are laws that can ban people from leaving Sudan. In these cases, the person is denied an exit visa, for example, because of criminal activity or drug-related charges and so the individual is aware they are unable to leave.

‘A NISS “Black Control List” exists; people on the list may not be warned they cannot leave the country and on attempting to do so would be apprehended at the airport. As an example of a travel ban, an opposition member was banned from leaving Sudan to travel to a political event. However, the person, who held dual nationality with the US, was allowed to travel to the US to visit family. Travel bans may not necessarily be permanent.’³¹⁶

4.1.5 The official of Western Embassy B noted:

‘An exit visa costs 150SDG (Sudanese pounds). The police do a check for any outstanding debts, criminal record. The official noted that there is sometimes an issue with double-names; anecdotally if someone has a similar name to someone who is not allowed to leave the country this may cause a problem.

‘The FFM team member suggested this latter point might raise questions over the integrity of the data held by the government and asked how “good” the government databases are. The official observed that the GoS spends a lot on security and it has a large network but not sure how sophisticated it is.’³¹⁷

4.1.6 While the Human Rights Defender considered that ‘[i]f someone attempted to travel out of the country on a forged passport, this would likely be detected at the airport and the person detained.’³¹⁸

³¹⁵ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

³¹⁶ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

³¹⁷ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

³¹⁸ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

4.1.7 Siddig Yousef noted that the government sometimes restricts the departure of political activists: ‘... opposition leaders and human rights activist are sometimes banned from traveling outside the country and NISS confiscates their passports. They may also sometimes be detained specially if they travelled abroad and participated in activities outside of Sudan.’³¹⁹

4.1.8 Other sources while generally agreeing with the outline of the process provided by LG Dahiya suggested that it may not be as systematic in practice. The political scientist opined:

‘To leave Sudan, need an exit visa and a passport. The problem is getting an exit visa. Need to go to an immigration office, show plane ticket and give reason why leaving. If a person is under 24, or if person has no official invitation from abroad, they need someone older to support their case. Everything is under the authority of an individual decision-maker and if refused, there is no appeal. However, the issuance of exit visas is the job of the police but NISS present and will decide. Passport and ID card[s] are easy to obtain, an exit visa harder.

‘PS observed that until around 2013 it was possible to go to Egypt without a visa, but this has become more difficult as the government now recognises it as a transit place. However, PS said a person could buy their way out of the airport – nothing’s impossible.’³²⁰

4.1.9 While Dr Ahmed Eltoun noted:

‘... that the security at the airport gates is not the national intelligence and security service (NISS), but provided by private contractors... [he] did not believe that security was strong at the airport or that there were thorough checks when going through immigration. For example, he implied that if one person handed over a number of passports for people within a group, each passport would not be thoroughly checked. This made it easier for traffickers to take people out of the country. Easy to pass through the airport, to smuggle people out. More difficult now to get to the UK as there are no direct flights.

‘It is possible to leave Sudan crossing the Libyan or Ethiopian borders without an exit visa.’³²¹

4.1.10 The IOM official, having outlined the process at Khartoum International Airport, went on to observe that the ‘main issue with the government’s system is that there is limited consistency in how it operates – it can be difficult to put a finger on how the immigration process works. There is a degree of informality in the system, the rules are not always clear and there is evidence of local variations.’ The official further observed the practical difficulties in managing Sudan’s borders:

‘... Sudan has 6-7,000km of border, not clear how many official border crossing points there are, but IOM estimate that there are 22. The borders are mostly unregulated. Many enter Sudan illegally and it is also easy to leave illegally. Sudanese are supposed to have exit visas for land borders

³¹⁹ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

³²⁰ [A political scientist](#)

³²¹ [Dr Ahmed Eltoun Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

too, but this does not seem to be enforced. Many communities straddle the borders, so cross borders all the time without documentation on a daily basis.

'... [adding that it is] quite difficult to generalise about the entry/exit system across the country. For example, at the Sudan/Ethiopia border, Ethiopians can come into Sudan without a visa if they are only going to make a local visit. If they intend to go beyond the local area, they are supposed to declare this but the onus is on them to declare this – not checked by immigration officials. The authorities have some capacity to manage emigration/immigration but Sudan has a huge border which is difficult to police.'³²²

- 4.1.11 See also the [FFM team's observations of their departure](#) from Khartoum International Airport.

[Back to Contents](#)

Penalties for leaving without an exit visa

- 4.1.12 LG Dahiya, representing the Government of Sudan, stated that, in practice, there is no punishment for leaving the country without an exit visa³²³.

- 4.1.13 Some sources made similar observations to LG Dahiya. Dr Ahmed Eltoun opined:

'In theory, there is a punishment for not having an exit visa but this is not a crime which is punished – people are generally "let through" without the visa. For example, 273 returnees from Algeria and Jordan had left Sudan without an exit visa, but they suffered no consequences on return. Therefore, returning on an Emergency Travel Document (ETD) and having no evidence of exiting the country legally was not a big problem.

'Immigration check people's identity, then let NISS know who they may interfere with. Most immigration officers are from the Nuba; General Dahiya (the Sudanese government's head of immigration) is from the Nuba³²⁴.³²⁵

- 4.1.14 The official of Western Embassy A explained that in their 'experience having no evidence of an exit visa is unlikely to prevent return. This is evidenced by the number of returnees arriving in the country on Sudanese laissez passer (i.e. the person has no passport proving exit from Sudan was legal). The airport is not bothered by the lack of exit visa.'³²⁶ Similarly the the Norwegian official and official of Western Embassy B were not aware of problems faced by returnees who had left without an exit visa³²⁷ ³²⁸.

³²² [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

³²³ [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

³²⁴ Lieutenant-General Dahiya confirmed that he is a Nuban, see [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

³²⁵ [Dr Ahmed Eltoun Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

³²⁶ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

³²⁷ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

³²⁸ [A Norwegian official](#)

- 4.1.15 The IOM official, despite the organisation handling over 1,500 returns between 2016 and 2018, did ‘not have any information on whether returnees who left without an exit visa and experienced problems because of this.’³²⁹
- 4.1.16 However, the political scientist thought doing so would result in a problem but did not have specific examples³³⁰.

[Back to Contents](#)

4.2 Entry process

4.2.1 All the Western Embassies bar the British Embassy (which is not involved in the returns process from the UK³³¹) and LG Dahiya stated that where a person does not possess their own travel document (passport), they require a laissez passe issued by the Sudanese authorities to return to Sudan^{332 333 334 335 336}.

4.2.2 LG Dahiya explained

‘Regarding the checks made for returnees, the person’s passport is stamped on arrival. If it is found a person is wanted, i.e. on the watchlist, they would be handed to security. If there was no evidence of an exit visa the person would be interviewed to establish how and why they left Sudan illegally. There is no penalty for leaving the country without an exit visa (although there may be a temporary travel ban) but the authorities would need to establish the returnee was Sudanese.’³³⁷

4.2.3 The IOM official described the entry process at Khartoum International Airport:

‘[On arrival] Persons first come to the immigration control (who are police, part of the Passport and Civil Registration Corporation), then there is a hand baggage security check before a second checking desk, operated by NISS. Once through this process passengers proceed into the baggage hall.

‘At the first desk, a check is undertaken of the person’s personal details (name, etc), which are logged electronically by the Police officer. There is an alert list.’³³⁸

4.2.4 See also the [FFM team’s observations](#) of their arrival at Khartoum International Airport.

[Back to Contents](#)

³²⁹ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

³³⁰ [A political scientist](#)

³³¹ The Home Office, the government department responsible for managing immigration and asylum cases, would not usually inform the Foreign Office of an impending return.

³³² [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

³³³ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

³³⁴ [A Norwegian official](#)

³³⁵ [A Swiss official](#)

³³⁶ [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

³³⁷ [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

³³⁸ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

4.3 Obtaining passports, ID numbers and cards

4.3.1 Lieutenant-General (LG) Dahiya explained that '[t]o obtain a passport a national number is required. We have biometric data for 90-95% of Sudanese recorded on the civil registration database. When someone applies for a passport, the data is retrieved from the system, or obtained from taking a fingerprint. Fingerprints are taken for everyone over the age of 12.'³³⁹

4.3.2 The LG Dahiya also provided detail about the civil register, the process for obtaining ID numbers and card:

'... [There are] more than 29 million citizens are registered with a national number, 9 million of them children (under 12). These figures are based on the 2008 census. The FFM team observed that they had heard that the population has been estimated at 40 million [a figure offered by the UK DFID official³⁴⁰] – so how did GD know the census was accurate. GD noted that the accuracy of the census cannot be guaranteed.

'The registration of national numbers for everyone began in 2011. There are 73 fixed centres for registration across the country; 1,400 mobile units were sent across the 18 states to ensure registration.

'There are certain regions where registration has not been fully completed but overall indicators suggest 80% of the country has been covered. Some regions have lower rates of registration than others. As the security situation in Darfur and South Kordofan improves, more mobile units will be sent out to gather additional data to complete the process begun in these areas.

'A national ID number is required to access services, including bank accounts and schooling; government services.'³⁴¹

4.3.3 LG Dahiya explained the requirements for obtaining a national ID number

'... that conditions of citizenship include birth to Sudanese parents who were born in Sudan. Citizens of other countries can get citizenship under certain conditions, for example, naturalisation. When issuing national ID cards, the civil registration database is checked to ensure the applicant is Sudanese.

'Statements will be taken to establish nationality before a national number is issued; 2 male witnesses (relatives or tribal elders) may be required to verify identity. Four witnesses may be required if no close relatives are available.

'National ID numbers are free so accessible to all citizens. Most government services are free.'³⁴²

4.3.4 The IOM does not assist returnees in obtaining ID numbers or documentation³⁴³.

4.3.5 See also [Access to ID numbers and cards](#).

³³⁹ [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

³⁴⁰ [UK DfID official](#)

³⁴¹ [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

³⁴² [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

³⁴³ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

Forged and fraudulently obtained documents

- 4.3.6 LG Dahiya noted that '[f]orged passports were reportedly not a problem, especially since electronic, biometric passports had been introduced. Some entry visas to Europe have been found to be false and sometimes detected by the airline.'³⁴⁴
- 4.3.7 However, an official of Western Embassy B commented that he did not know if it was possible to obtain forged Sudanese travel documents but 'anecdotally there were media stories that fraud and corruption is an issue.'³⁴⁵ On corruption generally, the Norwegian official observed 'According to the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, Sudan is one of the most corrupt countries in the world. It starts at the top and filters down through all levels.. [while] he did not have concrete evidence of corruption... the conditions were in place for it to occur.'³⁴⁶
- 4.3.8 See also [Access to ID numbers and cards](#).

4.4 Checkpoints and travel within Sudan

Movement in Sudan generally

- 4.4.1 Some sources considered travel was possible generally throughout most of the country for Sudanese nationals, while others did not make specific observations. Siddig Yousef thought that security is an issue nevertheless Sudanese can travel anywhere³⁴⁷, while the IOM official observed that 'Sudanese can travel "freely" within Sudan – [they] do not need travel permits [unlike foreign nationals]'.³⁴⁸ Siddig Yousef did not 'consider an ID card was necessary to travel [internally within Sudan], unless on a domestic flight and then you were required to have a copy of your ID number, although this wasn't retained by the airport.'³⁴⁹
- 4.4.2 Similarly the civil society activist noted:
- 'It is easy to travel in the country. There are some road checkpoints but you will not be checked unless you're a particular target. The organisation was not aware of buses being pulled over at checkpoints.
- 'It is not necessary to leave a copy of your ID when travelling via the airport. For domestic flights you need to show your ID card. Your baggage will be checked. You might be deemed suspicious if you're carrying 'fancy' equipment. A mobile phone can be the most incriminating evidence for an activist.'³⁵⁰

³⁴⁴ [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

³⁴⁵ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

³⁴⁶ [A Norwegian official](#)

³⁴⁷ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

³⁴⁸ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

³⁴⁹ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

³⁵⁰ [A civil society activist](#)

- 4.4.3 The human rights defender also noted that '[n]o identity documents are required to travel within the country. However, if taking an internal flight, all passengers must provide a photocopy of their ID.'³⁵¹
- 4.4.4 Only 2 sources commented on travel within Khartoum, both stating that they were not, generally, aware of checkpoints. The Norwegian official noted that '.... he travelled a lot in Khartoum but he was not aware of checkpoints in the city (although he added he travels as a diplomat, always in a diplomatic vehicle). There are checkpoints at the State borders, although vehicles are not always stopped.'³⁵² While the human rights defender observed '[t]here are no restrictions for travelling around Khartoum. There may be checkpoints in the city late at night (after midnight) in certain locations, which affect all people. These may be a deterrent against crime and coups, for example.'³⁵³

³⁵⁴

[Back to Contents](#)

Travel between Darfur and Khartoum

- 4.4.5 Those sources that commented generally agreed that while there are checkpoints, manned by different organisations, travel is possible between Darfur and the capital.
- 4.4.6 The university professor from Darfur noted there 'are many check points but less police and security checkpoints than there used to be. There are NISS and army intelligence checkpoints. Army intelligence don't ask questions; they are just looking for fighters.'³⁵⁵ While Siddig Yousef did not consider '... there were problems in travelling between Darfur and Khartoum' although '[s]ometimes bandits stop cars, so people try to travel in the day time... [he] did not think there were problems at police checkpoints.'³⁵⁶ The King of the Berti also did not think there was an 'issue' in travelling from Darfur to Khartoum³⁵⁷.
- 4.4.7 Similarly Salih Osman thought
- '... it is becoming easier [to travel], more tolerated, though not for [non-Arab Darfuri] NAD IDPs living in camps in Darfur.
- '...It is possible to travel between Darfur and Khartoum by bus or aeroplane, but it is too expensive for most people to be able to fly.
- 'There are no longer any Janjaweed checkpoints along the route, which would in the past have imposed fees, but government and NISS checkpoints still remain. There is a problem because of the state of emergency, particular

³⁵¹ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

³⁵² [A Norwegian official](#)

³⁵³ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

³⁵⁴ The UK FFM team travelled during the day and on occasion at night during their stay in the centre of Khartoum and did not observe any checkpoints on the main roads, including past a number of government ministries and the presidential palace.

³⁵⁵ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

³⁵⁶ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

³⁵⁷ [King of the Berti](#)

people can be identified at checkpoints and arrested. NISS have an ability to track people.³⁵⁸

4.4.8 The HRD considered that:

‘It is possible to travel between Khartoum and Darfur by bus, sometimes by train, and by plane from Khartoum airport. There is a regular bus service from Khartoum to El Fasher in Darfur. However, the cost is not always within the means of people who want to travel so for a fee they may travel on top of lorries... Between Darfur and Khartoum, there are road checkpoints and these affect all travellers. In conflict areas, there are checkpoints at city entrances. There are checkpoints going into Darfur; some people may be searched; affects all groups. ID numbers are not checked. Checks are made by different groups, looking for different things – drugs, weapons. Checks are arbitrary.’³⁵⁹

While the activist noted ‘when travelling from Khartoum to Darfur have to report to NISS and fill a form but also explained that this was for travelling on a UN plane. Activists have travel restrictions, but for ordinary people there are none. However, there are many checkpoints between Khartoum and Darfur. There are NISS at the airport.’³⁶⁰ The political scientist noted that ‘[i]t doesn’t take much to get to Khartoum – can get their by truck. There are checkpoints en route but there is not very much questioning. They just say that they are fleeing the violence and coming to the safety of Khartoum. It is generally smooth unless there are weapons or someone is already suspected of affiliation with a rebel group.’³⁶¹

4.4.9 On movement back to Darfur, the UK DfID official was ‘doubtful’ if non-Arab Darfuris were returning to Darfur³⁶². The university professor from Darfur noted that if someone had to return to Darfur for evidence to support an application for an ID card ‘it may be assumed by the state in Darfur that they are an activist even more so if the person is young and a graduate, and therefore perceived as a security risk. Some choose not to go back and forego the national ID number.’³⁶³

[Back to Contents](#)

Travel in Darfur

4.4.10 Parts of Darfur remain unsafe to travel in³⁶⁴ and there continue to be check points throughout Darfur, with the Arab militias controlling the areas outside the towns and internally displaced persons (IDP) camps. There is no regular army presence outside of the main towns of El Fasher, Geneina and Nyala, ‘The government sees every young person as a threat in the area, as a potential rebel since they are the main rebel recruitment constituency’³⁶⁵.

³⁵⁸ [Sailh Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

³⁵⁹ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

³⁶⁰ [An activist](#)

³⁶¹ [A political scientist](#)

³⁶² [UK DfID official](#)

³⁶³ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

³⁶⁴ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

³⁶⁵ [A political scientist](#)

- 4.4.11 However, the number of checkpoints appears appears to have declined, the human rights defender observing: ‘Checkpoints have reduced since the conflict ended in Darfur – checkpoints are now government-run, not run by militia. The HRD gave the example of the road between El Fasher and Nyala in Darfur: during the war there were 15 checkpoints, now 3.’³⁶⁶
- 4.4.12 See also [Security-political situation in Darfur](#) for discussion of the security situation.

[Back to Contents](#)

5. Government monitoring

5.1 Monitoring and tracking

- 5.1.1 Most sources who commented thought there was government monitoring of the Sudanese population, some suggesting there was a particular focus on non-Arab Darfuris because of their possible links with rebel groups. Sources expressed different views on the effectiveness of state monitoring.
- 5.1.2 The government spending on security is believed to be significant with one estimate cited of 70% of its budget³⁶⁷. Another source thought that the government had ‘withdrawn resources from education and healthcare, and given more to security’³⁶⁸. An official of Western Embassy A was ‘... unsure how joined-up NISS (security) operatives were across Sudan. There is no standard recruitment process which applies to all security services.
- ‘Recruitment processes for various security forces including different armed forces and militia vary throughout time and location. Even some police stations and prisons do not have computers. Some members of the security forces are reportedly hostile to each other, e.g. the police and Rapid Support Force (RSF) in Darfur.’³⁶⁹
- 5.1.3 The political scientist thought NISS had an electronic database of names based on his experience of travelling and talking to people³⁷⁰.
- 5.1.4 An official at Western Embassy A ‘... made the assumption that everyone was monitored by NISS in some way but could not confirm this and did not know how well such monitoring worked. NISS have offices everywhere and have freedom under the law to act with impunity. Also true to a lesser extent for the police.’³⁷¹ While an official of Western Embassy B thought that the government had informers but was not sure how it monitored Darfuris³⁷².
- 5.1.5 The Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy observed:
- ‘There is general monitoring of all Sudanese by the government... [but] thought that it was not interested in Darfuris unless they were in some way

³⁶⁶ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

³⁶⁷ [UK FCO official](#)

³⁶⁸ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

³⁶⁹ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

³⁷⁰ [A political scientist](#)

³⁷¹ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

³⁷² [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

politically active or having ties to rebel groups. The government does not like demonstrators. The government does not monitor Darfuris in particular ... did not consider that Darfuris were targeted for monitoring more so than other groups.³⁷³

5.1.6 The university professor from Darfur observed that:

‘There is a NISS presence in universities but this happens more in the political arena of student life – universities are quite politically active. The government is interested in students who are in charge of student unions, student bodies. Heard about NISS amongst staff and administrative staff, for different reasons and not just Darfuris. Faculty and administrative staff will also be monitored if they have Darfuri relatives. This enables the government to monitor what’s going on – as it’s aware that Darfuri students want to express their views and protest because of the situation in Darfur.’³⁷⁴

5.1.7 The civil society activist was of the view that:

‘NISS monitoring is not sophisticated enough to be able track people from one region to another. Apparently, it has tried phone tapping, including the use of an Italian system, but training of NISS operators was not possible. It does monitor social media and there is evidence that if NISS can obtain a person’s phone, it will use it to gather information – either by accessing Facebook for example, or to set a trap for activists luring them to a “safe place” where they are arrested.

‘The organisation did not believe a person’s Facebook account could be hacked. Activists will change their mobile numbers if this happens. If a person has good anti-viral software that will offer good protection, so will regular awareness training. Email is ok. People who have fancy cameras will attract suspicion, but activists remove the memory cards for their mobile phones. The only way NISS will be able to access phone and computer systems is by physical infiltration or by a person acting as an informer passing on information.’³⁷⁵

5.1.8 However, Siddig Yousef thought

‘... that most of the time NISS track people using their (mobile) phones – these are tapped. If NISS arrest you the first thing they do is take your phone – that’s one way of tracking people. People are traced by their phones. All phone providers are under the government. It is difficult to know a person’s phone number but if the government has information about a relative, it could track the person. A person can’t be traced / tracked without NISS knowing their phone number.’³⁷⁶

5.1.9 The human rights defender did not consider that all Darfuris were monitored by NISS, only ‘those who are suspected as having links to the rebel groups or known to oppose the government but true for all Sudanese’. The source also observed ‘NISS and military intelligence have informants across Sudan

³⁷³ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

³⁷⁴ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

³⁷⁵ [A civil society activist](#)

³⁷⁶ [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

which allow them to track the whereabouts of individuals. This is how the rebel movement in Darfur was crushed – because informers reported on them. NISS have the ability to tap phones and monitor social media; this monitoring affects everyone, not just Darfuris.³⁷⁷

- 5.1.10 The activist noted ‘... NISS is very advanced. It has technology – across the whole of Sudan databases and employs a number of IT people. It is funded by international bodies to deal with illegal immigration, but uses the resources on its own (Sudanese nationals) people too.’ The source also observed that family members of wanted persons who the government had not been able to locate might have their phones’ tapped³⁷⁸.

[Back to Contents](#)

5.2 Overseas - monitoring the diaspora

- 5.2.1 The Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy noted:

‘NISS do monitor the diaspora for rebel activities, many people in the UK report to the Sudanese. Sudan has a big monitoring / reporting culture – the regime is paranoid. However, as rebel influence diminishes, the government’s interest in them declines.

‘The Sudanese government lobbies the UK, claiming that there are many rebels in the UK, ask the UK to kick them out. SLM-MM has members in London, MM’s brother is in London. JEM also in London. The government is tapped into the diaspora.’³⁷⁹

- 5.2.2 On whether Sudanese authorities monitored activists in Europe, the activist thought ‘... [being an activist abroad] would be dangerous. Knew of women activists in the UK, with family in Sudan, have to be careful and try not to be visible...’³⁸⁰

[Back to Contents](#)

6. Returns

6.1 Statistics

- 6.1.1 Officials from 4 of the western Embassies interviewed (Norway, Switzerland, and Western Embassies A and B) confirmed that since 2017 these countries have returned voluntarily and by force a number of Sudanese nationals, including unsuccessful asylum seekers, to Sudan^{381 382 383 384}. British Embassy officials were not asked if the UK returns unsuccessful asylum seekers. However the Home Office, as the UK government department responsible for managing migration and asylum cases, at the time of writing (November 2018) continues to remove Sudanese who have no right to

³⁷⁷ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

³⁷⁸ [An activist](#)

³⁷⁹ [A political scientist](#)

³⁸⁰ [An activist](#)

³⁸¹ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

³⁸² [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

³⁸³ [A Norwegian official](#)

³⁸⁴ [A Swiss official](#)

remain in the UK voluntarily and, if necessary, by force on a case-by-case basis^{385 386 387}.

6.1.2 The numbers of returns, including unsuccessful asylum seekers, cited by sources were:

- Western Embassy A: 2 enforced returns in the last year (2017/2018); 25 assisted voluntarily returns (see International Organisation for Migration data below)³⁸⁸
- Western Embassy B:
 - (up to September) 2018 ‘a few ‘enforced returns (resumed on a case-by-case basis in 2017); 10 voluntary returns
 - 2017 – 12 voluntary returns³⁸⁹
- Norway (enforced returns):
 - (Upto June) 2018 – 1
 - 2017 - 21
 - 2016 – 18
 - 2015 – 22³⁹⁰
- Switzerland:
 - 2017 – 4 enforced returns; 9 voluntary returns (Switzerland does not track voluntary returns)
 - 2018 (upto August) – 5 enforced returns³⁹¹
 - The IOM assisted a total of 19 Sudan eturns from Switzerland between 2016 and 2018^{392 393}

6.1.3 The UK official noted that there had been ‘2 lots of Sudanese returnees from Europe in 2016/2017; the Frontex flight run by the Swiss/Norwegians and 2 enforced returns by the Dutch (in December 2017).’³⁹⁴

6.1.4 The IOM facilitate voluntary returns to Sudan, mainly from other countries in the region but also from Europe. The IOM official interviewed by the FFM

³⁸⁵ [UK FCO official](#)

³⁸⁶ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

³⁸⁷ See Home Office, Immigration statistics, List of tables, 8. Returns (Tables 8.3 and 8.4), updated on a quarterly basis, [url](#); Country Policy and Information Note, Sudan: Unsuccessful asylum seekers, July 2018 (periodically updated), [url](#)

³⁸⁸ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

³⁸⁹ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

³⁹⁰ [A Norwegian official](#)

³⁹¹ [A Swiss official](#)

³⁹² [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

³⁹³ The IOM data includes 8 voluntary returns in 2017, as compared to 9 reported by the Swiss official. It is not clear, however, if the IOM and Swiss data refer to the same individual voluntary returns in 2017.

³⁹⁴ [UK FCO official](#)

team thought it likely that the ‘majority’ of the returnees from Europe were unsuccessful asylum seekers but those from the region were probably not³⁹⁵.

- 6.1.5 The IOM official provided data on the number of returns the organisation has assisted since 2016³⁹⁶, noting ‘[t]he numbers reflect processes in countries from which people travelling which can be slightly ad hoc.’:

IOM Sudan In bound returns of Sudanese nationals				
Country of departure	2016	2017	2018 (to Aug)	Total
Algeria	0	0	43	43
Australia	2	0	1	3
Belgium	4	11	5	20
Bulgaria	1	1	0	2
Denmark	1	0	0	1
Djibouti	0	7	0	7
Egypt	133	159	156	448
Estonia	0	1	0	1
Ethiopia	0	3	0	3
Finland	0	5	0	5
Greece	3	3	0	6
Germany	0	32	27	59
Hungary	0	1	0	1
Indonesia	18	14	0	32
Italy	1	4	8	13
Jordan	5	0	12	17
Libya	2	607	158	767
Malta	1	2	1	4
Niger	0	0	41	41
Netherlands	12	9	7	28
Slovakia	0	0	0	0
South Sudan	0	0	3	3
Sweden	2	2	0	4
Switzerland	8	8	3	19
Tunisa	0	0	1	1
Turkey	0	0	3	3

³⁹⁵ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

³⁹⁶ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

United Kingdom	0	2	3	5
Yemen	0	0	0	0
Overall total	193	871	472	1536

6.1.6 The total number of returns from EU states between 2016 and August 2018 was 154, plus a further 19 from Switzerland respectively.

[Back to Contents](#)

6.2 Returnees ethnic profile / place of origin

6.2.1 There was consensus amongst officials from the western Embassies (Western Embassy A, Western Embassy B, Norway and Switzerland) interviewed by the FFT that their respective countries all received Sudanese asylum applications but these were relatively few - in the low hundreds or less. There was no specific focus on Darfur or awareness of the number of claims made by non-Arab Darfuris^{397 398 399 400}.

6.2.2 The official of Western Embassy B observed that of the 'few' forced returns to Sudan, they were not aware of any of these being Darfuris⁴⁰¹. While the Norwegian official 'did not know whether the returnees were from Darfur or Khartoum but added that Darfuri people do claim asylum in Norway.'⁴⁰² The Swiss official thought that most Sudanese asylum applications in Switzerland were people from Khartoum, not Darfur although some might claim to be from Darfur⁴⁰³.

6.2.3 However, the IOM official observed, with regard to IOM's cohort of returns, that the while organisation did 'not generally collect data on where Sudanese are from... it has done some mapping of recent returns from Libya, most appear to be from Darfur.'⁴⁰⁴

[Back to Contents](#)

6.3 Treatment of returnees

6.3.1 Lieutenant-General Dahiya (LG Dahiya or GD), head of of immigration, put forward the Sudan government's position on returns and allegations of ill-treatment on or after arrival:

'The [Ministry of Interior] Mol had heard of allegations of returned failed asylum seekers (FAS) being arrested. GD cited cases of 495 Sudanese nationals forcibly returned from Jordan (in 2015) and 40 from Italy (in 2017). All were well received and supported on return. Most were economic migrants. Unless there is a criminal case pending against a returnee they do not face any problems on return. Of the 500+ returnees, and 129 from Libya

³⁹⁷ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

³⁹⁸ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

³⁹⁹ [A Norwegian official](#)

⁴⁰⁰ [A Swiss official](#)

⁴⁰¹ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

⁴⁰² [A Norwegian official](#)

⁴⁰³ [A Swiss official](#)

⁴⁰⁴ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

in 2018 ⁴⁰⁵ – the Sudanese authorities have to verify their identity. GD was not aware of any arrests. Returnees are interviewed to establish nationality.

‘GD had heard of the FAS returned from Belgium who claimed he was mistreated. The Sudanese government supported Belgium by verifying the identity of more than 60 asylum seekers; 40 were found to be Sudanese and 6 have been returned. Some FAS have also been returned from Switzerland and the USA. If the returnee doesn’t have a passport they are returned on a Sudanese issued emergency travel document (laissez passer) obtained from a Sudanese Embassy in the country of return. The government only accepts Sudanese laissez passer, not documents issued by the country from which the person is returning.

‘Claiming asylum abroad is not seen as a crime.

‘Sudanese nationals returned from Israel have been interviewed and released. As law enforcement agents, the interest is not from where a person is from, e.g. Darfur, but what they are doing.’⁴⁰⁶

6.3.2 However, some of the sources stated that they had heard about about problems for individuals returning to Sudan, including arrest, detention and ill-treatment, or considered it likely that returnees may experience difficulties. However, only Amjed Farid El Tayeb claimed to have met returnees who had been ill-treated, noting ‘he had personally spoken to 3 returnees – 2 from Jordan in 2015 and 1 from Belgium in April/May 2018 (the latter revealed this information while discussing another human rights matter).’ Amjed Tayeb also stated that ‘he was aware of returnees from Jordan and Belgian being detained at the airport and beaten. They were questioned and accused of tarnishing the image of Sudan. They were released but their passports were confiscated.’⁴⁰⁷

6.3.3 The professor from Darfur, who had participated in study looking at the reasons for migration of internally displaced persons from Sudan, said ‘... he had no direct knowledge of returnee experiences, but had heard mixed accounts from his research assistant who had interviewed people who had returned.

‘The returns had mainly come back from Egypt and Israel; passports not stamped – suggesting they had used a different passport. Maybe returns from Israel had been detained and then released. Some others had been detained from the airport and kept longer.’⁴⁰⁸

6.3.4 Salih Osman of the Darfur Bar Association (DBA) considered that:

‘Returnees will be treated severely simply by the fact of having claimed asylum. They will be treated as opponents of the government and accused of being rebels. Most people arrested at the airport are accused of being

⁴⁰⁵ See International Organisation of Migration, 129 Sudanese Migrants Return Home from Libya under EU-IOM Joint Initiative, 8 August 2018, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁶ [Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

⁴⁰⁷ [Amjed Farid El Tayeb](#)

⁴⁰⁸ [A university professor from Darfur](#)

rebel sympathisers. There have been 100s of arrests of returnees from Jordan and Israel.

'Asked about alleged arrested of returns from Belgium at the end of 2017, SO said he knew they were arrested. The Sudanese government knows about the returns as they arrange travel documents.'⁴⁰⁹

6.3.5 But on being asked to provide examples, Salih Osman

'... was unable to provide specific details and had not investigated any cases of returnees being arrested /detained on arrival. He knew of such arrests from relatives of returnees arrested.

'When asked whether failed asylum seekers (FAS) - individuals whose cases had been considered by European states but found not to be at risk - would be of interest to NISS, SO said he knew that some asylum seekers manipulated the system by claiming to be Darfuris, but still said it was possible they might be at risk for being a FAS.'⁴¹⁰

6.3.6 The civil society activist observed:

'The organisation was aware of returnees (failed asylum seekers) from Jordan whose passports were confiscated and destroyed by the authorities, and a couple who were deported from Israel who were detained and then released.

'If a person travels on an emergency travel document they will be asked questions on arrival. In some cases, returning asylum seekers will have their passports confiscated. This is because the authorities will assume a person has talked about the human rights situation in Sudan (especially since International Criminal Court charges were brought against the President in 2009).

'The source was aware of this through a conversation with a person who was with someone when this happened to. If the authorities are aware that a person has been deported (perhaps because the cabin crew tell them), even if they are allowed to leave the airport, they may be asked to return for questioning. If the authorities do not receive the right responses to the questioning, the person will be abused. The returnee will only be monitored if they have aroused suspicion. If there is no knowledge of a returnee having claimed asylum they will not face any problems.

'Though not recently, the source had been summoned for questioning 10-12 times after returning from abroad and in the airport had faced 6-7 questions from NISS about the destination of travel and who they had met. It's possible NISS thought the source was working for a foreign intelligence agency.

'If the source was arrested, as a high profile human rights activist, there would be media attention from the international human rights community, which would be unwanted by the Sudanese authorities. But for other Darfuris, when arrested there is no press release, no one to make a noise and intervene, this is what happens to Darfuri students. For example, one

⁴⁰⁹ [Sailh Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

⁴¹⁰ [Sailh Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

Darfuri student was detained for 9 months. He was tortured and has problems with his eye. He's now in Egypt. His name is Naser El Dein Mokhtar.⁴¹¹

6.3.7 Siddig Yousef thought that:

'... any activist outside of Sudan, regardless of tribe, may face problems. On specific examples, SY said people are sometimes taken from the airport, detained for 2 days and then released. Eg a British citizen (of Sudanese origin) – teacher of economics now at the University of Khartoum, and taken by NISS.

'Asked if a Darfuri who had made an asylum claim, but was rejected and returned to Sudan, would be of interest / at risk, SY said he had no idea.'⁴¹²

6.3.8 While the human rights defender had:

'... heard of the returns from Israel, interrogated by NISS then released.

'Returnees may be questioned by NISS at the airport, or at a NISS office. Some may be asked to report at a NISS office for a couple of days following their return. This affects all people, not just Darfuris. If it is identified you have been deported, you may face more in-depth questioning.

'The HRD was aware of people who have returned from Egypt but they faced no problems. A person is only detained if they are deemed suspicious... Asked if claiming asylum would cause someone to be of interest, the HRD thought not, there has to be a reason. Government has to have information or the person has been involved in some activity.'⁴¹³

6.3.9 Similarly, the activist considered there would be risks for returnees, stating that failed asylum seekers:

'... if returned by force - the authorities will know about their status, they will face problems, definitely face arrest. Having a Western Embassy person at the airport to greet returnees would identify [failed asylum seekers] FAS. The authorities will interrogate them to see how dangerous they are and to find out the reason for claiming asylum. Had heard of one case on social media who was arrested at the place where he has staying and surrendered to the NISS in Khartoum.

'However, when asked if the source personally knew of a case, the source had not.

'The source went on to add that the government will arrest and detain at the airport to find out why the person claimed asylum, to connect it to other activity – political or opposition related reasons. This would happen for political activists.

'The FFM delegation explained that European governments return only those they consider not at risk. The source then observed that the authorities are likely to interrogate someone and if they have no connections with the

⁴¹¹ [A civil society activist](#)

⁴¹² [Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

⁴¹³ [A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

political opposition, then release them. But if they have a connection, they will arrest them.’⁴¹⁴

- 6.3.10 Conversely, the representatives of Western Embassies and the IOM official were unanimous in stating that they were not aware of verified cases of ill-treatment of returnees. The UK official noted:

‘The EU Migration Coordination Group (MCG) (made up of representatives from 8 EU Member States in Khartoum - Spain, UK, France, Italy, Romania, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden - as well as the EU Delegation) discusses returns to Sudan regularly. Various countries have enforced return of failed asylum seekers in recent years, with none reporting verified incidents of mistreatment on return. Those MCG members who observed the arrival of the Frontex flight [the source had earlier in the interview ‘mentioned 2 lots of Sudanese returnees from Europe in 2016/2017; the Frontex flight run by the Swiss/Norwegians and 2 enforced returns by the Dutch (in December 2017).’] reported an orderly and calm process, with no concerns over treatment of returnees. However, the group recognise that post-return monitoring in this context is very difficult and there is a risk that they may not have visibility of such incidents.’⁴¹⁵

- 6.3.11 While the Second Secretary Political at the British Embassy stated he had not heard of returnees being ill-treated. He further observed:

‘[The Sudanese] Government checks the background of returnees. If linked to a rebel group the person will have problems but if, in effect, they are economic migrants then the authorities will let him go. If just a failed asylum seeker, they’ll get a “shake down” to solicit money and then let go.

‘When asked if would be possible for a Darfuri who had not previously lived in Khartoum, who returned from Europe to Sudan, to integrate into Khartoum, PS thought so. Unless they were suspected of having ties to rebel groups, in which case the Government would want to investigate them and take further action. PS noted that most Sudanese look to go to Khartoum to improve their prospects, there are greater opportunities.

‘...[in his view] the bulk of Sudanese going to the UK are seeking a better life, trying to make it as asylum seekers. If return[ed] Sudan, and they don’t have links to rebels, they will not have a problem.’⁴¹⁶

- 6.3.12 The official of Western Embassy A:

‘... was not made aware of the removals by their immigration authorities so did not meet the returnees at the airport... Of the 2 enforced removals, both travelled on a Sudanese laissez passer and boarded the plane voluntarily without being accompanied by officials.

‘The official received no feedback on the returnees. The western official’s impression from another Embassy which had met returnees at the airport was that they faced no difficulties coming through immigration.

⁴¹⁴ [An activist](#)

⁴¹⁵ [UK FCO official](#)

⁴¹⁶ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

'Following allegations⁴¹⁷ of ill-treatment of a returnee from Belgium [in December 2017], the western official had attempted to investigate risks on return: spoke to the IOM and tried to contact by email the Tahir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP), which had originally reported the allegations about the returnees from Belgium, but received no response. An EU colleague also tried to contact the TIMEP, but also received no response.

'The western official found no substantiated, verified example of returnees facing problems on arrival in Sudan.'⁴¹⁸

- 6.3.13 None of the other Western Embassies were aware of or had received reports of ill treatment of returnees^{419 420 421}. The Norwegian official observed:

'The return of unsuccessful asylum seekers is a smooth process. Returns to Sudan from Norway have been going on for many years. Although lobbying by activists has raised issues for other countries this has not occurred in Norway and returns continue to take place. There are about 20 forced returns of Sudanese asylum seekers from Norway to Khartoum a year and 1-2 assisted returns...

'The only case that he had been specifically aware was that of a person who was mentally ill, receiving psychiatric treatment. The Embassy contacted the individual's brother advising that medical treatment was maintained, the person was returned – heard nothing since.'⁴²²

- 6.3.14 The official of Western Embassy B explained, when asked about allegations of ill-treatment of returnees from Belgium at the end of 2017⁴²³, that '... western country B was informed of these by the [Belgium] BE government. However... had not seen reason or evidence to change its policy on returns to Sudan in light of these.'⁴²⁴

- 6.3.15 The official of Western Embassy B provided additional observations about the Government of Sudan's attitude to returns:

'... the GoS is aware of EU concerns about returns. Western country B assumes that the GoS does monitor returns; it is likely that the GoS knows who is moving into and out of the country.

'The official had heard of the GoS "telling people off" for having "western habits"; knew of someone being "talked" to by NISS for being westernised, "pressured" then released. Asked if this included detention and ill-treatment, the official stated that he was not aware of such allegations for western country B returns and western country B had not investigated any cases in Sudan.

⁴¹⁷ For details of the allegations and the subsequent Belgian investigations, see the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons report, 9 February 2018, [url](#)

⁴¹⁸ [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

⁴¹⁹ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

⁴²⁰ [A Norwegian official](#)

⁴²¹ [A Swiss official](#)

⁴²² [A Norwegian official](#)

⁴²³ For details of the allegations and the subsequent Belgian investigations, see the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons report, 9 February 2018, [url](#)

⁴²⁴ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

'The official observed that following re-commencement of returns of failed asylum seekers to Sudan in 2017, the GoS, unprompted, had provided a report confirming the safe arrival of a Sudanese national returned.

'Asked if claiming asylum was considered a political act by the GoS, the official thought not really. Evidenced by the fact that some Sudanese had come back to Sudan, i.e. been returned. The GoS seems to understand that claiming asylum may be a means to get into Europe for economic reasons. How someone is treated on return may depend on who they are, how they are "connected"; i.e. family, tribal ties.'⁴²⁵

6.3.16 The IOM official noted:

'Returnees are mostly voluntary but included a small number of enforced returns. However, returning states do not tell IOM if a return is voluntary and IOM do not get involved on this side of the process.

'Returnees are also of a mixture of migrants but include some failed asylum seekers. IOM is not informed of the immigration status of migrants returning from Europe.

'IOM does not facilitate enforced returns as a matter of policy but may provide assistance after arrival.'⁴²⁶

6.3.17 The IOM official noted with regard to returnees from Europe

'... that the majority of returnees from Europe are probably failed asylum seekers (FAS) but those from the region probably are not. The latter are generally stranded migrants, many of whom have failed to make a journey to Europe. He expanded that he would assume that many of the returnees from Europe are probably FAS, likely that the government also thinks so.

'The IOM official was not aware of evidence that claiming asylum is an issue for the [Sudanese] authorities, nor was the IOM official aware of any evidence of ill-treatment which might be expected if claiming asylum was an issue.

'The IOM official not aware if returnees from Europe included those from Darfur but did know that a high proportion of those returning from Libya are Darfuris.'⁴²⁷

6.3.18 The IOM official further explained that:

'If a returnee is traveling on an emergency travel document (ETD), they may be taken for questioning at the point that it is seen and may not reach the visa / passport control. Also, some returnees are believed to choose not to identify themselves to the IOM. The IOM official supposed this may be because the person does not want to be seen as a returnee.

'Most returnees travelled on ETDs and were likely to be questioned by NISS. For example, in August 2018, IOM were airside to meet 129 returnees from Libya; all had ETDs and all were interviewed first by NISS. Their ETDs were stamped, they were finger-printed, then allowed to pass through immigration.

⁴²⁵ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

⁴²⁶ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

⁴²⁷ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

The whole process took 4-5 hours. On this occasion IOM staff were present in the area in front of the immigration desks and witnessed the clearance of the returnees by the Sudanese authorities.

'The IOM official has never been told of, or observed, mistreatment of returnees on arrival in Sudan. There are no safety problems for returnees visiting the IOM office.

'[However]... IOM do not witness interviews by immigration or NISS at the airport, nor are they always present for small scale returns (of 1 or 2 people). Most returns are small scale. However, IOM is present at large scale returns, but not present when individuals are interviewed by the authorities. In the case of large scale arrivals by charter flight from Libya, IOM is present in the immigration control area when returnees are interviewed by NISS and the Police.'⁴²⁸

- 6.3.19 The IOM official also noted '... that large numbers of Sudanese return from Saudi Arabia, but there is no evidence of interest taken in them by the authorities.'⁴²⁹
- 6.3.20 The IOM official considered that there is '[n]o evidence... that NISS are interested in returnees'; 'no reason to believe that NISS have an interest in returnees because of where they are from or for their origin, but NISS do pick up on ETDs; no particular interest in people from Darfur'; and had 'not seen targeting in the returns process'. And concluded that they agreed with the assessment of risk faced by returnees set out in the Home Office's [Sudan: Country Policy Information Note, Unsuccessful asylum seekers, July 2018](#)^{430 431}, i.e. that there is no risk to unsuccessful asylum seekers per se on return.
- 6.3.21 Amongst the remaining sources, including the King of the Berti, none were aware of specific problems for returnees including unsuccessful asylum seekers^{432 433 434 435}. However, the UK DfID official observed 'that [returns were]... not something he would know about'⁴³⁶ while Dr Enrico Ille made a similar point, caveating his notes by stating he was 'stronger concerning the situation of social relations in Darfur' than, amongst other things, the treatment of returnees⁴³⁷. The King of the Berti (KB) was principally '... concerned that asylum seekers from Sudan claimed to be Berti when they were not (because there is little to distinguish the Berti from other tribes that cannot be learnt), and wanted to help put a stop to this which would help prevent illegal migration. KB is able to help identify and confirm individuals

⁴²⁸ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

⁴²⁹ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

⁴³⁰ The Country Policy and Information Note, Unsuccessful asylum seekers, is periodically updated. An archived version, however, is available on [refworld database](#).

⁴³¹ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

⁴³² [A political scientist](#)

⁴³³ [UK DfID official](#)

⁴³⁴ [Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

⁴³⁵ [King of the Berti](#)

⁴³⁶ [UK DfID official](#)

⁴³⁷ [Dr Enrico Ille, anthropologist](#)

as members of the Berti and has written letters confirming this a number of times.⁴³⁸

6.3.22 Dr Ahmed Eltoun (AES) provided a number of detailed observations, stating that:

‘[He] had met with 7 returnees from Libya in May 2018 who had been enroute to Europe, and another person who had returned from Israel. Neither he, nor his organisation, had met with any returnees from Europe recently, but he was aware of 3 people who had returned from Holland, Belgium and Italy, from colleagues / civil society. All 3 returnees from Europe had experienced some level of administrative delay at the airport, but he had not heard of any issues for them since entering Sudan.

‘One of the returnees had been in Belgium for 1.5 years, returned to Sudan in December 2017. Heard that the individual was not happy but colleague met with him, had no problem on arrival.

‘AES heard about the returnee from Italy in January 2018, it took longer for the Sudanese authorities to find out about him, whether he is Sudanese or not, but released from the airport but not clear what happened – there is a gap.

‘There is a need for civil society to monitor returnees, if not interviewed by a neutral organisation get biased views from government and non-government organisations.

‘EAC was also aware of 4 returnees from Europe who claimed to have been detained and tortured, as documented by [Patrick Kingsley in an article that appeared in the New York times](#)⁴³⁹ newspaper on 23 April 2018.

‘... AES cited a case of an US-Sudanese who, when departing the airport in Khartoum, was assaulted by airport security. AES did not believe this was due to the person’s Darfuri ethnicity, but because he had provoked the airport staff. NISS intervened and the matter was resolved. However, it appeared on social media and it was implied the assault was because of the man’s ethnicity.

‘The 7 returnees from Libya claimed to have been ill-treated by the traffickers and kept as hostages. They were asked to join the Libyan militia, but wanted to continue to Europe, so were made to work to pay their way, having been told that they had only covered the cost of the journey from Darfur to El Fasher and that the cost from El Fasher to Libya was still to be met. The Sudanese government investigated at the border, contacted their family to confirm that they are Sudanese. They are now in Gezira where AES met them.⁴⁴⁰

[Back to Contents](#)

⁴³⁸ [King of the Berti](#)

⁴³⁹ New York Times, By stifling migration, Sudan’s feared secret police aid Europe, 23 April 2018, [url](#)

⁴⁴⁰ [Dr Ahmed Eltoun Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

6.4 Monitoring of returnees (and of human rights generally)

- 6.4.1 The UK FCO official acknowledged that the EU Migration Co-ordination Group recognised 'post-return monitoring in this context [i.e. returnees to Sudan] is very difficult and there is a risk that they may not have visibility of such incidents.'⁴⁴¹ The official of Western Embassy A noted that they 'were not made aware of the removals by the country's immigration authorities so did not meet them at the airport... Of the 2 enforced removals, both travelled on a Sudanese laissez passer and boarded the plane voluntarily without being accompanied by officials.'⁴⁴²
- 6.4.2 The official of Western Embassy B made a similar caveat, noting that there was no monitoring of returns on or following arrival, and their Embassy 'does not meet returnees on arrival at the airport in Khartoum, although it is informed of returns taking place by the western government B's repatriation and departure service.' The official elaborated on the reasons why there is no in-country monitoring of returnees:
- '... it is the policy of western country B not to monitor failed asylum seeker returnees because they have been found not to need protection, so would not be at risk on return; monitoring them would require additional expertise at embassies, and would risk undermining the decision-making process in western country B. (The FFM team member conducting the interview observed that the UK took the same approach: returnees are not monitored in general since returns would only take place where it was found that there was no protection need and it was safe to do so.)'⁴⁴³
- 6.4.3 However, unlike other Western Embassies, Swiss officials attend the airport when returns are made: 'A team of Swiss representatives were at Khartoum airport when the returnees arrived in 2018, and waited until the returnees had gone through the immigration process, but were not present during interviews by immigration and NISS.'⁴⁴⁴
- 6.4.4 Similarly, the IOM met some, if not all, voluntary returnees that it supports:
- 'IOM do not meet all returnees. Will do so if the returning country requests IOM to be present, particularly for vulnerable individuals – old, young, medical reasons, etc.
- 'IOM also has some issues in accessing immigration control due to limitations on the number of airport access passes issued by the Sudanese authorities. In general staff are able to access the baggage hall but are not able to enter the area where the immigration officers' desks are located. This means IOM cannot always be present when returnees arrive at immigration control.'⁴⁴⁵
- 6.4.5 The IOM official noted:
- 'IOM do not witness interviews by immigration or NISS at the airport, nor are they always present for small scale returns (of 1 or 2 people). Most returns

⁴⁴¹ [UK FCO official](#)

⁴⁴² [An official of Western Embassy A](#)

⁴⁴³ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

⁴⁴⁴ [A Swiss official](#)

⁴⁴⁵ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

are small scale. However, IOM is present at large scale returns, but not present when individuals are interviewed by the authorities. In the case of large scale arrivals by charter flight from Libya, IOM is present in the immigration control area when returnees are interviewed by NISS and the Police.'

- 6.4.6 Although the IOM do not 'monitor' returnees there is sometimes further contact with individuals following their arrival in order for them to access the particular support package that they may be entitled:

'IOM was involved in providing post arrival assistance to European Refugee Integration Network (ERIN) cases but this ceased in May 2018. IOM Sudan no longer handles new ERIN cases.

'... most [returnees] have [an] entitlement to some sort of reintegration package and are likely to be seen by the IOM after their return but it depends on the project agreement IOM has with the country from which the person is returning.

'The Libyan returns are being dealt with under the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in the Horn of Africa. They are entitled to an individual economic reintegration pack. In some cases, some of those returnees IOM was not able to contact. Not able to say what happened or why, some may have left, changed their phones, doing something else. No reason to believe it was because of persecution.

'IOM will usually follow up with returnees once reintegration assistance has been given – this depends on the requirements of the specific [Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration] AVRR project. IOM is currently providing assistance under a number of projects. This includes the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in the Horn of Africa. The caseload includes migrants who have returned to their areas of origin on Darfur. In these cases, IOM may organise onward transportation from Khartoum to the returnees' place of origin, if they do not wish to remain in Khartoum. This includes arranging for the onward transportation of those wishing to travel to Darfur.

'Most returnees from Europe have reintegration packages; some countries who are returning people asked that IOM follow-up with returnees. Normal process is that the IOM will have an initial meeting with a returnee within a month of the return, then another after 3 months. IOM has not been made aware or suspected ill-treatment of returnees.'⁴⁴⁶

- 6.4.7 On monitoring of human rights generally, raised in the context of how ill-treatment of returnees would come to the British Embassy's attention, the Second Secretary Political explained:

'... the FCO obtained information about human rights incidents via several sources:

- Domestic press

⁴⁴⁶ [An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

- Social media – activists circulate information through these media. There was an example of US-Sudanese citizen who was documented being beaten at the airport.
- Embassy political officers pick up information through contacts (in civil society / human rights defenders). Likely to pick the issue of returns if it was a recurring issue
- UK is also one of the most approached Embassies by Sudanese on other issues, so people who returned might approach the Embassy directly'.⁴⁴⁷

6.4.8 The Second Secretary Political added, '[t]he FCO monitor the human rights situation using the same mechanisms outlined above: plugged into the human rights network, keeping in touch with NGOs, social media. The UK is one of the largest western Embassies – if we are not aware of issues, either the issue is not significant or we are not doing our job!'⁴⁴⁸ The UK FCO official echoed this observation, noting '[t]he Embassy knows the political opposition and civil society well, who will raise an issue if they have a problem. The Embassy will raise with the government.'⁴⁴⁹

6.4.9 Other Embassies in Khartoum also have contact with civil society and are accessible to the general public:

- The official of Western Embassy B stated that their Embassy does engage with civil society, 'some of which have Darfuri members or interests, specifically the Darfur Bar Association (DBA).' When asked if these civil society contacts 'had provided evidence of problems on return the official stated he was not aware of any but added he was not sure how much these groups would know. Western country B talked about Darfur on general terms with civil society groups, not particularly on returns.'⁴⁵⁰
- The Norwegian official noted:

'... that [there] had been another official who worked on human rights and had contacts but that person had left the post in spring 2018...

'When asked how a returnee would contact the Norwegian Embassy if they faced a problem after return, the Norwegian official said that the Norwegian immigration police may give the contact details of the Embassy to the returnees, it is up to the head of the escorting team. The Embassy is easily accessible however an appointment is needed to meet Embassy staff; if someone turned up without an appointment guards would inform Embassy staff who would then decide whether to meet the person. There is also a visa section (for public access).'⁴⁵¹
- The Swiss official commented '[t]he Embassy hears a lot from civil society groups, who are quick to raise issues. Though not well organised, civil society are quite active; they are quick to make declarations about

⁴⁴⁷ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

⁴⁴⁸ [Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

⁴⁴⁹ [UK FCO official](#)

⁴⁵⁰ [An official of Western Embassy B](#)

⁴⁵¹ [A Norwegian official](#)

human rights issues and have been known to repeatedly attempt to get permission have public gatherings.’⁴⁵²

- 6.4.10 With regard Darfur, the political scientist thought that the government has an interest in controlling the flow of information out of the region, noting
- ‘... the government wants to suppress information coming out of Darfur, hence researchers are being denied access to the area [and]...observed that he faced problems in undertaking research – a permit is required to collect any field information in Darfur. It is the Humanitarian Assistance Commission (HAC) which is authorised to issue these permits and these are always difficult to obtain - although young people are keen to share information...’⁴⁵³

[Back to Contents](#)

⁴⁵² [A Swiss official](#)

⁴⁵³ [A political scientist](#)

Annex A: Terms of reference (ToRs)

Ethnic demography

- Existence of different groups in Khartoum
- Size, location, structure and leadership tribal groups
- Employment and education

Treatment of persons from Darfur in Khartoum, including treatment by authorities as well as treatment by other tribes, ethnic, religious and/or militia groups

- Persons belonging to a particular tribe
- Students, political activists, persons associated with rebel insurgents, human rights activists, journalists, civil/tribal leaders, persons involved in humanitarian activities and persons who have been abroad
- Possible difference in treatment of persons mentioned in Khartoum based on tribal and/or ethnic affiliation
- Family members to people from one of the above-mentioned profiles

Situation in Khartoum for persons from Darfur, including for internally displaced persons (IDPs)

- Population figures for IDPs and economic migrants living in Khartoum
- Living conditions: access to basic services, food, water/sanitation, housing, health, education and protection
- Prevalence of societal or state-initiated discrimination/harassment against specific groups, including discrimination with regard to obtaining documents
- Complaint mechanisms and possibility to seek redress
- Existence of non Arab Darfuri civic society / NGOs, or groups that support non Arabs in Khartoum, nature of assistance they provide

Freedom of movement

- Ease of movement within Khartoum
- Access to Khartoum by road and air from Darfur and vice versa
- Ease of movement out of Sudan by air and land routes, documents and checks

Treatment of people returning to Sudan after having left the country, including failed asylum seekers

- Possibility to re-enter Sudan for people returning to Sudan after having left the country legally or illegally, including unsuccessful asylum seekers
- Immigration checks undertaken at Khartoum International Airport for enforced returnees/persons without a current passport and the likelihood of detention; existence of watchlists.

[Back to Contents](#)

Annex B: Questions based on the ToRs

Main themes to explore:

- Ethnic demography Africa groups, primarily Non-Arab Darfuris (NAD or Darfuri)
- Socio-economic circumstances of NAD in Khartoum
- Treatment of Africans, primarily NAD in Khartoum and, depending on the source in Darfur, by the state and non-state actors
- Motivations, methods and capability of state security forces
- Freedom of movement to and within Khartoum
- Treatment of returnees generally, NAD in particular

Also ask sources to consider if there has been a change in state attitudes and treatment overtime, in particular since 2008/9 (when country guidance (CG) case of AA promulgated) and 2015/ 2016 (when CG case of MM promulgated, first FFM).

Source background

Who is source, which organisation do they belong, what is their role and experience?

Are they Darfuri and do they have direct contact with Darfuri people?

Ethnic demography / socio-economic position

Sources previous told HO that is a significant population of NAD in (Greater) Khartoum. Any idea of size of and where NAD in Khartoum?

Historically Darfuris and others have migrated to Khartoum. Does this continue and what is the scale? How do new migrants support themselves?

Which Darfuri groups live in Khartoum? Are they located in particular areas?

Are NAD identifiable to other Sudanese / state, if so how (language, appearance, skin colour, scarring, etc)?

What is the structure / leadership of the Darfuri community?

Are there Darfuri community groups / civil society? What do they do – monitor the situation of Darfuri people?

What is the socio-economic position of NAD?

What is their access to:

- Employment? (Are they represented across society / sectors)
- Healthcare?
- Education?
- Land and property
- Water and food
- Financial services (eg, micro loans)

- ID documentation (how many people have ID cards, what are the requirements to obtain documents, what problems have without documents, are many / most are NAD documented)

What obstacles do NAD face in accessing services?

Are there factors that affect access to services, such as NAD tribe, whether the person has recently arrived in Khartoum or was born there, gender, education, age, etc?

Is National Service compulsory?

Do NAD have to complete national service too? Are they required to register and have ID?

Treatment of NAD by state and societal actors in Khartoum

How does the government view and treat NAD tribes generally? [Depending on the answer, explore specifics – so if widespread or common, ask what does this mean exactly and ask for examples]

Does these vary by tribe, if so why?

Are there other factors that may affect the state's interest (how recent arrive in Khartoum, age, gender, education, other)?

Are there particular profiles of person who the state has an interest? [ask for specific examples – arrest, detention, disappearance, or intimidation]

How does the state monitor the Darfuris?

In the past there were largescale arrests, have these taken place in recent years?

Has the government's attitude to NAD changed with the decline of violence, unilateral ceasefires by gov't and rebels, and the weakening of the rebel threat in Darfur?

Is there a difference in how the state treats NAD between Khartoum and Darfur?

Is NISS / security forces able to trace and track people from place to place – does it have electronic records? So if someone is arrested in Darfur by the Janjawid or RSF, will this be communicated to Khartoum?

How are family members of people of interest treated?

What methods do use to monitor and control people?

How do other tribes / groups treat NAd?

What exactly?

Freedom of movement

Is it possible to travel by road and air from Darfur to Khartoum?

What documents does a person need to travel from Darfur to Khartoum?

What obstacles are there (are there checkpoints, if so set up by whom – why are there)? What are the risks for Darfuris in travelling to Khartoum?

Do many make this journey?

Are there restrictions in movement in and around Khartoum? If so what are these, how do they affect Darfuris?

Do you need documents to travel in and around Khartoum?

Exit from Sudan

What documents do you need to leave Sudan by air? Is it possible to obtain these forged documents or by fraud?

What is the process for obtaining an exit visa?

What is the exit check process?

Is corruption amongst officials generally an issue?

Are you aware of examples where people have avoided security at the airport to leave illegally (by bribery, forged documentation, etc)?

What controls are in place to leave Sudan via the Libya – Sudan, or Chad – Sudan borders?

Treatment of returnees

Are you able to describe the entry control process?

What checks take place? Does the government have electronic databases and interconnected systems?

Are you aware of problems faced by returnees from Europe, including the UK? If so what and are you aware of specific examples?

If examples, did these persons have a particular profile that made them of interest?

Are you aware of NAD returning from Europe? How were they treated – specific examples and background?

If the government takes an interest in returns, are there particular profiles of person they are interested?

What is the government's view of Sudanese claiming asylum in Europe and elsewhere (does it consider this a political act)?

Are there any civil society groups that monitor returns?

It has been suggested that if any 'ordinary' returnee, i.e. not an activist, this would not come to the attention of civil society or other activists?

[Back to Contents](#)

Annex C: List of sources

[Amid Farid El Tayeb](#)

[A political scientist](#)

[A university professor from Darfur](#)

[Sailh Osman, Darfur Bar Association \(DBA\)](#)

[UK DfID official](#)

[Dr Enrico Ille, anthropologist](#)

[Dr Ahmed Eltoum Salim, European and African Centre \(EAC\)](#)

[UK FCO official](#)

[Second Secretary Political, British Embassy](#)

[An official of Western Embassy A](#)

[An International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) official](#)

[A civil society activist](#)

[An official of Western Embassy B](#)

[A Norwegian official](#)

[Siddig Yousef, Communist Party and Sudanese Solidarity Committee](#)

[A human rights defender, Sudan Social Development Organisation \(SUDO\)](#)

[A Swiss official](#)

[Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya, Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation](#)

[King of the Berti](#)

[An activist](#)

[FFM team observations: Arrival at Khartoum International Airport](#)

[FFM team observations: Departure from Khartoum International Airport](#)

[Back to Contents](#)

Annex D: FFM background explained to sources

Home Office Fact Finding Mission

Officials from the United Kingdom (UK) Home Office are undertaking a Fact Finding Mission (FFM) to Sudan to obtain information about the treatment of non-Arab Darfuris and returnees to Sudan from Europe and would like to interview you about this subject.

The FFM team consists of 3 officials from the Home Office, the UK government department responsible immigration and asylum. More information about the Home Office can be found on our website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office>

The information you provide the FFM team may be cited in a report which is likely to be placed on the Home Office's public-facing website. It will be used to assist UK immigration officials and judges involved in the asylum and human rights decision-making process.

However, the FFM team will only publish information you provide with your consent. If you prefer that the information is not made publicly available, then the Home Office will not release it.

The FFM team will give you an opportunity to review the notes of the interview to ensure they are an accurate reflection of the meeting and ask if you are willing to be identified as the source of the information.

If you do not wish to be identified by name, then the FFM team will ask if you are willing to be identified in more general terms, for example as a representative of your named organisation, or as 'an official of an international humanitarian organisation'...

The FFM team would find it helpful if you could provide some background to your organisation (where appropriate) and your role in the organisation. This will help them to understand the context of the information you provide.

The FFM team will be seeking to explore the following issues:

- 1. Treatment on arrival of people returning to Sudan**
- 2. Ethnic demography of Khartoum**
- 3. Treatment of persons from Darfur, particularly in Khartoum, including treatment by authorities as well as treatment by other tribes, ethnic, religious and/or militia groups**
- 4. Socio-economic situation for non-Arab persons, in particular non-Arab Darfuris, including for internally displaced persons (IDPs), in Khartoum**
- 5. Freedom of movement, including to Khartoum other parts of Sudan, within Khartoum and out of Sudan from Khartoum and other exit points**

[Back to Contents](#)

Annex E: Notes of meetings with sources

Amjed Farid El Tayeb

Researcher and political activist, spokesperson of Sudan Change Now movement, British Embassy, 15 August 2018

Amjed Tayeb (AT) is a medical doctor by profession. Eight to 10 years ago AT became a social researcher and political activist. He is head of policy and advocacy for Sudan Democracy First Group (SDFG). He works with Darfuri youth groups in Khartoum.

[AT provided a number of links to articles relevant to the topics discussed subsequent to the meeting – see footnotes below.]

Darfuris

AT said it was hard to differentiate between non-Arab Darfuris (NADs) and Arab Darfuris, an issue which AT has raised with the British Embassy and FCO. Even for AT, who grew up in Sudan, it is hard to distinguish NADs and Arabs; there is no real difference – only in the minds of non-Sudanese [a Western concept].

However, AT said NADs suffer racial discrimination. And whilst there is no doubt of the 2003-2008 crisis in Darfur, the media has made this into more of an ethnic problem rather than a political one. Darfuris in general suffer because of racism and discrimination but so do the other Sudanese who are opposed to the regime. So while there is a racial factor, it is more of a political issue – not being affiliated to the regime. If a person is not affiliated, Arabs / non-Arabs receive discriminatory treatment. It is political targeting, not tribal.

There are many officials in government who are Darfuris (proclaiming both Arab and Non-Arab Identities), including the vice president.

Students

Asked about the situation in Khartoum, AT said that Darfuri youth (students) face cruel and brutal targeting by the state and National Congress Party (NCP)- affiliated students, particularly the Jihadist Units and Jihadist battalions (formed by NCP students), who attend universities and cause problems for Darfuri students which can lead to physical harm, dismissal or stopping their studies. This pushes Darfuri students to join or support rebel groups.

Arab Darfuris face the same problems and politically active students in general also do.

Being detained is normal for activists though the treatment faced by Darfuris is worse. Some are tortured or racially abused, and women face sexual assault. Darfuri students have been killed over the last 5 years. In 2012, 70 students were arrested; 66 were released but 4 disappeared - [their dead bodies were thrown into an irrigation canal](#)⁴⁵⁴. No charges were brought.

⁴⁵⁴ See <http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-12-08/news/sns-rt-us-sudan-studentsbre8b70dv->

In 2014, a [Darfuri student was shot by security forces](#) at Khartoum university⁴⁵⁵: [Ali Abakar Musa Idris, third year student at the Faculty of Economics](#)⁴⁵⁶. And there are many other similar cases. There are at least [13 Darfuri students who were killed](#)⁴⁵⁷ in their universities by government-affiliated bodies between 2003 - 2016.

As well, NISS fabricates cases against students and forces them to resign from university in fear of arrest and security prosecution or even direct physical harm. AT noted that 20-22 year-old students; children of IDPs who were raised in the camps, can easily be intimidated. Many of them have witnessed the rape and killing of family members.

Asked why this was happened, AT said it is complicated. There are 2 major reasons that cause Darfuri students to protest:

- First, both Darfur's peace agreements - Abuja in 2006 and Doha in 2011 – waived university tuition fees for Darfuri students. Most of these students are from IDP families who cannot afford the fees. However, the government did not implement the Articles ruling this and students have been forced to pay fees. Prior to 1989 Islamists coup, education –including university- was free. There were no tuition fees or accommodation fees, and university students in public universities were paid a stipend. However, tuition fees were introduced. And have increased over the years after the coup that brought the current government in place.

The government did not implement any of the social articles of the peace agreements – including the waiving of fees; it only implemented the inclusion of former rebels into the government.

- Second, the Janjaweed and rebels still have a presence in rural Darfur; they attack villages and sexually assault women. The security forces – Rapid Support Forces (RSF), NISS – have full impunity. This enrages students.

AT estimated there are around 25,000 students at Khartoum University, and around 15% - 20% of all students are Darfuri or from Darfuri origins. It is safe to assume that the percentage would be the same out of the over 300,000 universities' students in Sudan. The Darfur Student Association is one of the biggest student bodies in Sudan.

Young people in Darfur have currently 2 choices – after normal economic activity has been disrupted by the ongoing war - so the choice is to either join the fighting or study. Many choose to study.

Asked if all Darfuri students are at risk even if they are not politically active; AT said he thought so.

NISS does not make such differentiation. It antagonizes all Darfuri students.

There are NISS agents (informants) and NISS offices on campus. When something happens, NISS arrest everyone. Sometimes students are taken to these offices of

[20121208_1_girifna-justice-and-equality-movement-darfur](#)

⁴⁵⁵ See <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2014/03/sudan-student-shot-dead-and-more-arrested-khartoum-protest/>

⁴⁵⁶ See <https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/one-dies-as-troops-fire-on-darfuri-students-in-khartoum>

⁴⁵⁷ See <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2017/01/darfuri-students-arrested-detained-and-tortured-for-speaking-out/>

the Jihadi Units, for may be 6/12 hours or overnight, beaten and released - it's not classed as official detention. This happens to all students, including non-Darfuris, especially if they are political activists. There are problems for students who join different student organisations.

AT claimed many Darfuri students are involved in activist groups due to the continuous conflict in Darfur, which makes them more politically aware. Also there are problems faced Darfuris who join other (i.e. not rebel) opposition groups. They are being more targeted by the security forces than others in the same opposition parties.

Darfur

The state-run army, i.e. the Sudan Armed Forces, have very weak control over what happens in Darfur. It is the RSF and NCP militia groups who run the show. RSF was initially formed as part of NISS but recently it was restructured under SAF, but without any control of the army over its operations. Some people have no choice but to join the militia due to the poor economic situation. Forced recruitment also exists.

As the [Janjaweed was making 'bad press' it was dissolved and restructured with the same 'fighters' as the RSF](#)⁴⁵⁸ as the Sudanese Army did not want the untrained militia fighters under its ranks. The Sudanese Army was also reluctant to commit the degree of human rights abuses as the RSF and Janjaweed who care only to achieve decisive victories at all costs. Despite having no formal military training or any other sort of academic qualification, the leader of the RSF is just below the President in rank and is now responsible with his forces for protecting the borders and stemming migration to Europe through Sudan.

Employment

Access to employment is difficult for young Darfuris, especially government jobs. Security checks are made by the government for some jobs, e.g. in oil or telecoms, and Darfuris don't pass these checks, neither do political activists.

Healthcare is expensive (private) and above the means of many. Non-Darfuri groups may have family support that may help them sometimes in paying for healthcare. There are free health clinics in Khartoum University but these are poorly resourced and equipped. If a student cannot pay their tuition fees, they will not receive a student ID card, which is required to access the university clinic.

There is a large displaced Darfuri community in Khartoum, which lives in the outskirts of the city. There are some wealthy Darfuris but few are in this bracket. They used to trade in a market – Libya market. Libya market was built on importing goods from Libya, which now decreasing. However, there is a notion of ethnic class migration. Many rich Darfuris tend to claim an Arab identity and cut their ties with Darfuri community.

The things that happen to Darfuri students also happen to Darfuris in general.

Asked if aware of widescale arrests of Darfuris, AT described the time he was detained in January 2018 for 4 months. A Darfuri student was moved into his cell and became very ill. Only when AT said the man would die did the prison officers call a doctor. It later transpired that the man had been arrested during student protests in March 2017, others had got released but security officers had forgotten about him.

⁴⁵⁸ See <http://sudanseen.blogspot.com/2014/07/sudans-votes-and-violence-high-road-to.html>

He was then released. It is also very common for the security forces to storm student dormitories and arrest large numbers of Darfuri students. This is happen in both [Male](#)⁴⁵⁹ and [Female](#)⁴⁶⁰ student dormitories.

Returns

AT said he was aware of returnees from Jordan and Belgian being detained at the airport and beaten. They were questioned and accused of tarnishing the image of Sudan. They were released but their passports were confiscated. AT said he had personally spoken to 3 returnees – 2 from Jordan in 2015 and 1 from Belgium in April/May 2018 (the latter revealed this information while discussing another human rights matter).

[Back to Contents](#)

A Sudanese political scientist

16 August 2018, British Embassy

Personal background

The political scientist (PS) is a governance advisor for the British Council (BC) in Sudan, previously a UK Department of International Development (DfID) policy advisor. A political scientist by training, taught at Universities of Khartoum, Toronto (Canada) and Reading (UK).

Started working for DfID in 2008, lent to UNAMID. Spent 3 years in Darfur (2008-2010) working on a project to encourage peace-building through grassroots consultations with communities (Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation).

Also spent 11 years as a senior researcher at the International Research Center, Canada, part of the Canadian International Development Agency.

The PS was involved in research in Darfur in 1991-92 on issues of resource management and food security and since 2004 on issues of conflict.

Darfur

When conflict erupted in 2004 everyone thought it was because of environmental / resources issues, a conflict between pastoralists (nomads) and sedentary farmers. But what made it more complicated was the ethnic dimension: 90-95% of pastoralists are Arab (at least they claim to be Arab), some combine this with farming; almost 100% sedentary farmers are non-Arab. Small groups of non-Arab Darfuris are pastoralists, but not significant numbers, mixed with sedentary farmers.

The conflict was a multi-dimensional issue: a livelihood conflict, i.e. a conflict between two modes of livelihood –pastoralism and farming – scarcity of resources and environmental degradation also an ethnic conflict. A unique combination. There are tensions between pastoralists and sedentary farmers all over Sudan but not necessarily between different ethnic groups. For example, there are tensions in North Kordofan but this is between Arabs.

⁴⁵⁹ See <http://dev.sudantribune.com/NorthSudan/Article/Index/2-18-2012-Sudanese-police-storm-Khartoum-University-s-compounds-over-300-students-arrested-/41644>

⁴⁶⁰ See <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/17/female-students-darfur-arrested-beaten-in-sudan-says-hrw>

A further issue was the position taken by the state. From day 1 the state was not neutral but took the side of the Arabs who had already been supporting the Khartoum government in its fights against the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in the south.

When asked about the numbers of different non-Arab groups, the PS stated that the Fur are the biggest group, then Zaghawa and Massalit (the Fur, Zaghawa and Massalit make up about 70% of the population of Darfur). Also, Tunjur and Djaju are big groups; the Tunjur are a large group in North Darfur. The Midob had a separate 'entity' but have since been absorbed into the Fur. However, PS observed if you tried to list all the tribes in Darfur, you would have a list 3 pages long.

The FFM team noted that they had spoken to the King of the Berti, who had claimed that the Berti were the second biggest tribe in Darfur. The PS had spoken to Berti elders, some of whom thought they were Arabs, linked with Yemen or the Nile peoples, near Dongola. The Tunjur have a similar claim of having their origin in the old Nubian Sudan along the Nile. However, they are generally classified as non-Arabs. Historically the Berti kingdom preceded the Fur's. Most of the Berti live in north North Darfur, around Omkaddada and Millit – they are a large group. Since 2004 they have been at the 'frontline'.

There is an Arab group, the Mahameed (part of the government militias), who have given the Berti a hard time. However, the Mahameed have split. One militia, led by Musa Hilal, opposes the government. Musa Hilal is now in prison, waiting to go to a military court in Khartoum. But the other half of the Mahameed militias have been absorbed into the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) led by Musa Hilal's cousin. So still militia but now part of the formal security apparatus – the army is not happy. However, the militias still conduct themselves as if they are still militias. They make up 90% of the Sudanese forces in Yemen.

The militias / RSF are also being used in the campaign to control migration out of Sudan.

In 2004, almost all Arabs were with the government, but now large sections of the Arabs tribes are disillusioned and feel betrayed by the government. This is because the government promised to give the Arabs land as an incentive to fight. But under international pressure, the government stopped giving land to the Arab tribes. However, the Arab militias continue to take land, forcing populations out and seizing land. This is still going on, but less than 10 years ago. A further problem is that the UN is talking about returning people to Darfur but the issue is where these people can go – their land is occupied by someone else.

The Arab militias control areas outside of camps and towns. No regular army presence outside the main towns – Al Fasher, Geneina and Nyala – the militia control other areas. The militias are well armed. They have political groups (RSF and others) - there are 20 significant militia groups: the RSF are the largest, then the Border Guards are the next biggest. They are violent, brutal – no accountability. It is dangerous for non-Arab Darfuris (and UNAMID) outside camps and towns.

In any IDP camp [in Darfur] youth unemployment is near 90%. People can go out of the camps during the day for menial jobs, e.g. construction, selling things on the roadside. Everyone knows the risk of leaving but are prepared to do so.

Asked about the cost of travelling / leaving from camps, the PS noted that from Al Fasher to Libya, the approximate cost is US\$200 per person. From the Libya border

to Tripoli or Benghazi, US\$300 per person (but many people get stuck in Libya) and up to US\$500 across to Italy. Asked how long the journey would take, the PS considered that from Al Fasher to Kufra (Libyan town over the border from Sudan) it would take around 3 days (in a convoy). Then people stay in Kufra for a while as part of the arrangement, where it's likely they are handed over to a different group of traffickers.

Asked how people afford the cost of travel, the PS said he had asked people. Most mention a relative somewhere, who made it to US, Canada. Some say they have relatives in the Gulf. Very few are in a position to save enough. They are forced to leave the camps to find work, usually in construction, peddling or menial work. However, the rate that people can save has declined as there has been a reduction in food assistance as provided by the Red Cross working in the camps, so people have a greater expenditure on daily living. Support from World Food Programme in IDP camps is basic. Ten years ago there was plenty of assistance as Darfur was much more of a concern to the international community. Most international NGOs are no longer in Darfur due to a lack of resources and the security situation. Now only WFP which relies on DfID support. At least 5 International NGOs (INGOs) used to support a lot but their presence has reduced (10 INGOs were expelled from Darfur by the Sudan Government in 2009); they faced harassment from the security forces.

There are checkpoints everywhere in Darfur and getting to camps is difficult. Government-affiliated militias normally man the checkpoints. The government sees every young person as a threat in the area, as a potential rebel since they are the main rebel recruitment constituency. 20 years of displacement has contributed to a high level of political awareness and activism which is seen as a threat by the state so young people are closely monitored and harassed in Darfur.

When asked about the motives of people leaving Darfur, the PS observed that when he had talked to people in the IDP camps, in individual and structured interviews or group contexts – the issue of migration is no longer a 'confidential' subject, they talk openly about it and it is becoming a 'legitimate dream'. Young people (from 13/14 to 30 years old) ultimately dream to leave Sudan. There are two stages:

- i) Leave camp, go to Al Fasher
- ii) Then either go to Khartoum, or from Al Fasher go to Libya and beyond

What determines the option taken are resources. It doesn't take much to get to Khartoum – can get there by truck. There are checkpoints en route but there is not very much questioning. They just say that they are fleeing the violence and coming to the safety of Khartoum. It is generally smooth unless there are weapons or someone is already suspected of affiliation with a rebel group.

But to go to Libya is not straightforward. Need an agent, someone to protect them. Some, mostly, Arab militias provide paid protection to convoys of trucks to take migrants to Libya. It's not unusual to see 4-5 trucks and 2 militia armed trucks protecting them (the same militia who may attack people. There are lots of contradictions, ironies.) The money made from this smuggling is used to buy arms.

The issue in Darfur cannot be resolved by talking: lots of groups, some 20+ militia, have an interest in the conflict and are making a business of the current situation. Same for 'freedom fighters' (the non-Arab) rebels: also making a living out of the conflict.

Asked if the conflict in Darfur had improved, the PS considered that it depends on the indicator. If, for example, it was based on how many (military) engagements there are between the government and the rebels, then yes, this has declined as the rebels are not in a position to engage with the government. The rebels (Sudan Liberation Army – Abdul Wahid (SLA-AW)) are in the middle of the Jebel Marra. The other area is near Kutum, where the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) are. JEM are in Libya and Chad as well. (JEM is largely composed of Zaghawa; SLA-AW predominantly Fur.)

So yes, violence is down but if you look at other indicators – clashes at a micro-level (community level clashes between non-Arab Darfuris (NADs) and Arabs and the numbers of IDPs), which are not reported extensively in the media, continue. Large scale violence has declined (the government says the rebel movement is over, only acknowledging 2 clashes last year) but factional violence and the humanitarian situation is getting worse. Can't consider the main conflict separately from the current inter-tribal conflict.

The government now admits that it has failed to collect arms as part of a disarmament campaign, there is an absence of peace and rule of law, so no community, small or big (including NADs), will give up arms.

Another indicator is the level of proliferation of small arms – which are proliferating.

A further indicator is displacement – continues to take place and is increasing. The government says this is a result of internal conflict. The newly displaced are in a worse position as they not recognised as IDPs, not supported / provided with services.

Asked if the displaced people had moved to Khartoum, the PS noted that most people do not go straight to Khartoum from rural areas. They move in groups from villages to camps, to a town within the greater Darfur region then Khartoum via western Omdurman (most people from Darfur are in west Omdurman) or Libya. People from the urban areas, such as El Fasher do travel straight to Khartoum.

The older generation of Darfuris say, yes go back. But younger people don't see a future in Darfur. Young leave because, first, the economic situation and, second, the political and security situation. But there is no guarantee of security in Khartoum.

Non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum

In Khartoum a Darfuri can be picked out by their accent. Darfuris go to west Omdurman (Fatah, Dar es Salaam neighbourhoods) and south Khartoum.

Asked if these are informal settlements, the PS said it was complicated. According to official zoning, some areas that are shanty towns are recorded as 'normal' areas even though they are a slum. Locals view these areas as IDP areas. There are social problems, poor access to services. There is no formal IDP classification in Khartoum as the government does not recognise them as IDPs or fully recognise them as residents of the area. This is a source of misery as they are not recognised as residents, nor given support.

Darfuris share the area with the Nuba, but the majority are Darfuri. The government sees these areas as a security threat and treats the people as suspects. The government media and security agencies (NISS) describe these areas as sleeping cells for rebels. There is an increased security presence, large NISS presence in

these areas. The PS and others have found it difficult to collect information about these communities as they are followed or don't get permits.

Some sections of the areas referred to above in Khartoum are formally zoned, land sold by the government. Find slum areas between recognised areas and hear about tensions between these communities (the formal and informal). The recognised communities want to expand; it is a daily phenomenon that informal communities are bull-dozed by the police.

Asked if the levels of security presence and monitoring are much less in Khartoum compared to Darfur, the PS said yes.

Students are well organised: open about their convictions, but aware of need not to expose themselves. Lots of political activity in areas around Khartoum, and young people get arrested for this activity.

Asked about numbers, the PS did not know but suggested asking IOM or GIZ (which is leading the consortium implementing the 'mega' migration programme funded by the EU in the Horn of Africa⁴⁶¹)).

Asked about the existing, established Darfuri community in Khartoum, the PS noted that it was not a small community, primarily composed of Zaghawa, known for their trading skills. Arabs and non-Arabs live in different areas so there is no friction.

NADs may be affected more by NISS as they live in known areas.

The PS observed that there are well established, wealthy Darfuri traders but most Darfuris look at them as not quite real Darfuris due to their (perceived) affiliation with the government. The government tries to use these people to influence other Darfuris.

Asked if there were individual factors that might affect the government's attitude to Darfuris – such as age, how recently a person left Darfur, income, gender and education – the PS agreed these might affect the government's attitude towards an individual. Education works both ways, may allow for more opportunity but may also raise suspicion.

On the number of students, PS noted that 1,000s of Darfuri students had the opportunity to go to university but no longer the case as fees had stopped being paid. It's mostly graduates, who received free university education, who are looking to leave Sudan. Many graduates are unemployed – leaving is not down to ethnicity.

Asked if Darfuris face discrimination on a daily basis, the PS said yes, definitively for government jobs. The private sector, second only to the public sector is not a big employer. A private company employing 100 people would be huge.

Asked if the government was interested in controlling information from Darfur, PS agreed and said the government wants to suppress information coming out of Darfur, hence researchers are being denied access to the area. PS observed that he faced problems in undertaking research – a permit is required to collect any field information in Darfur. It is the Humanitarian Assistance Commission (HAC) which is

⁴⁶¹ Deutsch Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, German aid agency that supports international co-operation and sustainable development. See projects in Sudan: <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/24880.html>

authorised to issue these permits and these are always difficult to obtain. - although young people are keen to share information with the PS.

PS noted that the minister of youth and sport, Dr Abulbashar Abdelrahman Yousif who worked for many years as the director of the Peace Research Centre at El Fasher University, is a Darfuri.

ID cards

Asked about national ID documents, PS noted that it is possible to get an ID card through formal channels, and a person can also get one through informal channels. Depends on the contact, which also governs the price - more senior contacts exact a higher price. PS not aware of problems faced by Darfuris in obtaining cards. Heard of cases who are, possibly, linked to the rebels so the authorities say they are not Sudanese - examples in Darfur.

There are offices for obtaining ID cards all over Sudan. A person just needs an older community member to testify on their behalf, does not need to be a blood relative.

Asked if it was more difficult in Khartoum if someone was not with their immediate family, PS noted that people in Khartoum tend to be in family, tribe, geographical groups, so can get someone from their tribe to testify. Not difficult, unless the authorities do not want to issue a card. For example, the authorities may stipulate the witness has to be over 60, if this is not possible a person can pay some money to have the witness waived.

Exit from Sudan

To leave Sudan, need an exit visa and a passport. The problem is getting an exit visa. Need to go to an immigration office, show plane ticket and give reason why leaving. If a person is under 24, or if person has no official invitation from abroad, they need someone older to support their case. Everything is under the authority of an individual decision-maker and if refused, there is no appeal. However, the issuance of exit visas is the job of the police but NISS present and will decide. Passport & ID card are easy to obtain, an exit visa harder.

PS observed that until around 2013 it was possible to go to Egypt without a visa, but this has become more difficult as the government now recognises it as a transit place. However, PS said a person could buy their way out of the airport – nothing's impossible.

Asked if he was aware of rejected asylum seekers returning to Sudan and facing a problem, PS said he was not.

Asked if leaving without an exit visa would be a problem, PS thought yes but did not have specific examples.

On whether NISS have an electronic database, PS thought so based on his experience of travelling a lot and talking to people.

[Back to Contents](#)

A university professor from Darfur

British Embassy, 15 August 2018

Background

The source is a university professor from Darfur (UP). He has been working (with others) on a migration research project on IDPs – exploring the factors pushing people to migrate, their destination and perceptions on their need to migrate.

Darfuris talk more about migration than anything else. Young people (at least amongst the educated) want to get out of Sudan because of the extremely difficult economic and political situations. IDPs in Darfur face harassment from the security forces, they have no rights to express themselves. Research has been undertaken in west, north, south and central Darfur. Youths from IDP camps were interviewed, as well as students in Khartoum and other areas. The youth are discontented.

UP has been following the Darfur crisis. Issues over the farmer/pastoral relationships and land tenure is where much of the conflict lies. The conflict is an expression of extreme competition of land and resources, and a lack of good governance.

UP was also interested with legal anthropology and conflict resolution. Around 5 years ago UP worked on a project on Darfuri IDPs in Khartoum. These are unseen - 'forgotten' - IDPs - as they are not accepted as being IDPs. Some research was undertaken on conflict resolution in shanty towns in Khartoum (west of Omdurman) inhabited by Darfuris and people from South Kordofan, who are 'security / environmental' IDPs and how they solve problems in their communities.

Non-Arab and Arab Darfuris: a distinction?

There is a cultural distinction between Arab and non-Arab Darfuris (NADs). Identification is a universal problem (from an anthropological perspective).

From a social/political view, identities are socially constructed. People distinguish themselves as NADs of differing types or as Arabs of differing types. Classification may be overt or covert; it has nothing to do with biology: Darfuris look the same. UP said if there were 10 Darfuris round a table you could not tell who was Arab, who was non-Arab. The differences lie in the language they talk or the way they claim their history and genealogy.

A non-Arab can become an Arab. People can disappear across a border and join a new group and be dealt with according to the newly acquired identification. In this way, after 20 years, an African could be treated as an Arab. A NAD who becomes Arab will be treated as an Arab. Culture and language is the only distinction.

The rest of Sudanese society is ethnically mixed. But Sudanese are clear about labels – this is all cultural and due to the history of migration, from north to south (Sudan), from West Africa and the Arabian peninsula. Before air travel, people travelled through Sudan for the Hajj. As a result, ethnic groups have mixed over the centuries. UP cited an American professor who, in the 1980s, wrote that up to 1/3 of present-day Sudanese were of West African origin. However, northern Sudanese would dispute this. So identities are social constructs. The disappearance of people into other groups has been happening for years.

Demography of non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum

There are no statistics available on the size of the population of Darfuris in Khartoum. UP was not sure of the number but wouldn't be surprised if it reached 1 million; it is definitely in the hundreds of thousands – all from different tribes – a mixture of NADs and Arabs. UP observed NADs dominated several neighbourhoods, including Mayo, Haj Yusef, Umbadda and Dar es Salaam (in Omdurman).

During social celebrations, for example, deaths or weddings, Darfuris invite hundreds or thousands of people from the areas they originate. UP gave his own example, citing his daughter's wedding due to take place in December, where he had booked a hall to accommodate 1,500 people, which would be predominately be people from his area of and (non-Arab) tribe in Darfur.

Leadership and support structures have grown in these Darfuri areas in Khartoum, including ethnic associations, which may be a mix of tribes, or just one tribe, depending on the size of the area and tribal mix in Darfur. For example, Zaghawas have one association as in the territory with same name in Darfur it is the only tribe. But there are also 'area' associations, comprised of different tribes from a particular area in Darfur.

Arabs and NADs Darfuris mix but after the conflict it is a cautious mix; they try to maintain diplomatic relationships. For example, those who knew each other at school or as colleagues, will greet one another cautiously, there is restraint – as there is between Arabs and NADs who interact in the markets in Darfur itself. There is still interaction and not a complete barrier.

Socio-economic situation for Darfuris in Khartoum

Asked about the socio-economic situation, UP thought it mixed. There is no official discrimination by the state, but the degree of access to certain services depends how those in charge, who sometimes practise favouritism or nepotism towards their own people, but there are also issues of limited resources and bad governance. People in charge give more access to some 'favoured' people – those without relatives who hold some influence are denied. A Darfuri who is in a position of some authority, or knows someone who is, can access services. It is not that Darfuris are categorically denied access.

The public sector has been disrupted since 1989 when the National Congress Party (NCP) took charge. It is possible for a person to request services and to complete the necessary application form, but officials favour who they want to, secretly.

There is now a coalition government. The NCP and a few other smaller parties, including Darfuri parties which have signed the Peace Agreement.

UP gave his view on the dynamics in government and politics: a Darfuri Minister or any other non-NCP Minister would have expected to be in charge of his Ministry, but there is another unknown, more powerful man, a strong man who can veto his decisions. This Minister and others were appointed for public perception, a political move, but they are puppets with privileges. They have no effective power and cannot transform the situation in Darfur or any other place.

There are some Darfuris in positions of authority, for example in the security forces. They do have power but their allegiance is to their political masters, the NCP. There is no transparent system of electing people to office, they are just appointed and the appointment may not be related to any achievement the person has done.

There are, however, Darfuris throughout Khartoum – in law, academia, government, business. There are some Darfuris in positions outside of Khartoum, for example some are doctors or lawyers, but their numbers are small as Darfuris access to education is less than other groups. In business, Darfuris arrived late and although some appear successful, such as the Zaghawa, they have been targeted. For example, in 2008/09 when the JEM attacked Omdurman, the Zaghawa were targeted as the JEM leader was Zaghawa. They were forced to quit their businesses. Some went to operate in quieter places, in the south for example, some left Sudan and were successful, but the numbers of those were very small.

The government is not interested in Darfuri small traders, who are not affected by its actions, only those who are successful on a larger scale, those who could be in competition to the government are targeted. People (Darfuris) relay stories of being targeted in business to make them bankrupt, making it hard to continue or a lower ceiling is set. If a person becomes more successful, they will be targeted. The source was aware of 2-3 people who had signed contracts with the government to provide a service, which the person had invested in to fulfil the work but the government dragged its feet, resulting in void contracts, investments lost and bankruptcy. However, UP observed that such discrimination was not quantified; it is based on perceptions and people talking amongst themselves.

The government advocates free trade and economy but there are more than 400 companies in Sudan which are government owned, trading in commodities such as tyres; shoes; clothes; etc. These companies / the government has the monopoly across the country. For those not run by the government there are indirect issues, not obvious policies but hearsay, taxes and 'additional' duties levied. This is across the whole of the country in general, to anyone who is seen as opposition or who is not part of the government, not only for Darfuris.

For an ordinary Darfuri, there could be latent discrimination, which the government tries to conceal. Many Darfuris complain, for example, that a Darfuri may not be promoted. It is a 'feeling' that they are discriminated. For example, a Darfuri who was best in their class, best in the department, will not be given the promotion they deserve - that would go to a less qualified and less able non-Darfuri. Discrimination existed before the conflict, but after 'Inghaz' [Arabic for 'salvation', the term used to describe the take-over of the government by the, then, National Islamic Front (now NCP) in 1989] it became ideological. There were people who supported the system found themselves in a situation where they could get what they wanted, they were accepted 'in' but they weren't given key posts (some Darfuris say they are discriminated in the ruling party). This includes the Arab Darfuris too - most Darfuris in the NCP are Arabs.

Education

Opportunities for education lie more in 'chances' than in policies of discrimination. Schools in Darfur are poor, so Darfuris don't receive a good education and find it hard to compete in the national exams. In some places it's possible a school might not have, for example, a physics teacher or an English teacher (which are rare in Darfur). So pupils at schools like that are disadvantaged right from the beginning.

The government has adopted a policy of concentrating resources in Khartoum.

The government has withdrawn resources from education and healthcare, and given more to security. The government has adopted an education system which

discriminates against pupils from poor families across the whole of Sudan. Resources for both government and private schools have dried up. In the past, the best teachers went to teach in government schools and the best students came from government schools, while students from private schools did not do so well and had poorer results. Now the best teachers go to the private schools as the pay is higher. Because less resources have been allocated now to public secondary schools, parents pay for their children to attend private school so they will enter university. A teacher can earn 2,3 or 4 times the salary they would get in a government school by teaching in a private school.

As a result of migration, there are many Darfuri students attending universities. Many families have left Darfur so their children can have a better education. Most of those Darfuris who gain places at university will have sat their secondary exams in Khartoum or Saudi Arabia. The total number of Darfuri university students in Khartoum is likely to be in the thousands.

Discrimination is faced by Darfuri students in limited areas, for example a prominent Darfuri student competing for a university staff position may be discriminated against if an equally talented student from a Riverain tribe applied for the post. In a closed competition, discrimination is more likely than in an open competition where everything is visible. There are only a small number of Darfuri staff at the University of Khartoum; in UP's department 4 out of 16 are Darfuris.

There is a NISS presence in universities but this happens more in the political arena of student life – universities are quite politically active. The government is interested in students who are in charge of student unions, student bodies. Heard about NISS amongst staff and administrative staff, for different reasons and not just Darfuris. Faculty and administrative staff will also be monitored if they have Darfuri relatives. This enables the government to monitor what's going on – as it's aware that Darfuri students want to express their views and protest because of the situation in Darfur.

The government wants to suppress freedom of expression. Heavy handedness happens when students agitate/are active. It happens frequently – scuffling, even shooting within the university campus. Asked how frequently, UP noted it had occurred a few times at universities in Khartoum and White Nile state. These conflicts take place between student activists and students supporting the government (NCP, many of whom are in the security forces) who may have access to weapons.

Asked whether there was difference in treatment between NAD tribes, UP observed it doesn't really make a difference what tribe a person belongs to as to whether or not they will be targeted, although Arab Darfuris receive less attention than NADs. It depends more on the membership of which activist group or rebel movement, and how active the person is. Student leaders are often pushed to deliver at 'speaker box corners'.

All Sudanese opposition parties have their student activists, but the Darfuri students tend to be more agitative. The Fur and Zaghawa students are more active so may face more problems because they also represent the tribal make-up of the main rebel groups (JEM; and SLM-AW). Rebel movements have their own student supporters and are told to push their agenda, making Darfuri students become more agitated/violent due to the conflict so they become victims of the security forces.

Umma party students will talk about the economy, but Darfuri students will talk about the killing of a relative in Darfur last month, they are more violent.

Asked whether a Darfuri student who was not active would face problems, UP thought that if a Darfuri student studies hard and doesn't agitate the risk to them is very much less and they will get their grades. But that person may be subject to indirect, subtle social exclusion, just as any person would who didn't show solidarity to the 'group' and may be classed as outsider.

Education and healthcare are reasons for net migration. People from rural areas migrate to Khartoum – whatever resources they have, they bring their families to Khartoum. Poorer people migrate too.

National Service

All Sudanese do National Service (NS). Most Darfuris do NS, like all Sudanese. People who have connections can get better placements. But it is more difficult for Darfuris, who are not likely to obtain such good placements as non-Darfuris unless they have a 'good connection' who can secure them a better placement.

Darfuris are more likely to be sent to the military, in the past this would have meant being sent to the 'frontline', i.e. one of the conflict areas.

If a person doesn't do NS they will be denied their university certificate; they will not be able to get a good job and they will not be able to travel.

Treatment by the State

This is subjective and related to perception. A Darfuri may feel discriminated against as generally they do not feel they are treated equally, compared to, for example, someone from the Nile. Feelings of inequality are based on poor job opportunities, promotion, etc. If a person feels discriminated against, even if the perpetrator denies it, the discrimination still exists as that is what the person feels. Darfuris talk in public about people of the Nile getting better treatment than them – in promotion, in jobs, in healthcare. There are lots of stories, they cannot all be exceptional.

Security targeting depends on the nature of the issue, even historically. During the 1976 coup d'état supported by Gaddafi many Darfuris were rounded up and even executed. It was the same 10 years ago following the JEM attack, people were rounded up based on their appearance, detained for several days and released (although at this time there were no summary executions). There have been no recent arbitrary arrests of Darfuris – the government needs a good reason, e.g. during protests. Even a bystander at a protest might face arrest, in which case an investigation would take place and if it was established you are not an activist you would be released. But a Darfuri person arrested at the same event would have a worse time than other Sudanese.

UP had heard of 'ghost houses' – different places of detention around Khartoum. People talk about these as being a fact but they have not necessarily seen them. Ghost houses were special places of torture; they may be used less now, more selective unmarked detention houses. UP knew people who had been detained and illtreated in ghost houses. If someone is detained in Kober prison it would be easier as it's a known detention institution, there is a system but the ghost houses are unruly, don't know what is happening.

Asked if Darfuris in Khartoum face societal discrimination, UP observed that in day-to-day life there is no open discrimination. If they do, it's silent discrimination. They may face discrimination in particular places.

National ID numbers

There may be problems obtaining ID cards and numbers.

Some are related to the policy of how to determine if a person is Sudanese (Sudanese nationality is based on whether the mother / father were born in Sudan). People born on the border, such as members of Zaghawa, may not be Sudanese so it may be more difficult to demonstrate nationality for these groups. Such people may face logistical problems such as having to provide 2 or 3 witnesses rather than a single witness (a tribal leader or male relative over 60) or face more in depth questioning to establish where they are from. During the conflict, some people coming from Chad or Niger brought in to fight the rebel groups were given Sudanese nationality. In the early days of the war, it was easier for non-Sudanese to get nationality than it was for Sudanese from some Darfuri tribes.

For example, a Zaghawa may be asked to provide the nationality document of a brother or an uncle, or a witness. If the Zaghawa is 50, the witness would need to be 60. This can be very difficult if the relative is not 60, or there is no one in the village aged 60.

In Khartoum, it is easier but the process for a rebel-affiliated tribe member would take longer and be more difficult. If a person has to return to Darfur for the evidence required, it may be assumed by the state in Darfur that they are an activist even more so if the person is young and a graduate, and therefore perceived as a security risk. Some choose not to go back and forego the national ID number.

It's easier for Berti to get an ID number, they are not a border group and not largely associated with rebel movements. But for the Fur, Massalit and Zaghawa, these are border groups and linked to the rebel groups therefore face more difficulties, it will be a longer process. For Zaghawa the age of a person's father may be an issue and the person may be asked more about their village.

Asked if it is possible for a Zaghawa in Khartoum to get an ethnic association to testify on their behalf (instead of blood relative), UP said he thought so but more difficult than for a Berti. Certain tribal leaders are given cards so they can testify in front of government officers.

UP observed that the 3 groups that government has most suspicions are the Zaghawa, Massalit and Fur – most security sensitive as linked with rebel groups. People from South Kordofan face same problem, as do peoples from Blue Nile and east Sudan. Darfuris face the same problems as all groups from periphery - it is only the Riverine Arabs who have all the power, who are free from these difficulties. This is why people in the margins wanted to create a Marginalised Association, 'the Crescent'.

Checkpoints

Asked if it possible to move from Darfur to Khartoum overland, UP said there are many check points but less police and security checkpoints than there used to be. There are NISS and army intelligence checkpoints. Army intelligence don't ask questions; they are just looking for fighters.

Returnees

Asked if aware of the treatment of rejected asylum seekers from Europe, UP said he had no direct knowledge of returnee experiences, but had heard mixed accounts from his research assistant who had interviewed people who had returned.

The returns had mainly come back from Egypt and Israel; passports not stamped – suggesting they had used a different passport. Maybe returns from Israel had been detained and then released. Some others had been detained from the airport and kept longer.

[Back to Contents](#)

Salih Mahmoud M Osman, Darfur Bar Association

British Embassy, 14 August 2018

Salih Osman (SO) is the Deputy Chair of the Darfur Bar Association (DBA), which is an unregistered organisation. The Government sees the DBA as an opponent and will not 'register' it but its members continue to practice law and are allowed to represent people in Court in their individual capacity as lawyers, filing cases against individuals affiliated to the government and defending individuals targeted by the government and charged with offences that carry capital punishment.

SO works in Darfur and in Khartoum, people flee Darfur due to displacement or intimidation by the government. SO has been working on human rights for 30 years and has been honoured 4 times in recognition of his work, by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the American Bar Association's International Human Rights Award in 2006 and the European Parliament Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in 2007.

SO has been arrested and detained 4 times, including being kept in a 'ghost house' and in Kober prison for being a Darfuri; for taking cases on behalf of victims of human rights violations committed in the context of the Darfur armed conflict; and for criticising government policies towards Darfur.

There are more than 500 non-Arab Darfuri (NAD) lawyers in Sudan, the majority are in Khartoum. If needed in another part of the country, lawyers will travel from Khartoum. The DBA also sometimes represents Arab Darfuris who have been victims of abuses from the government.

Demography of non-Arab Darfuris

Non-Arab Darfuris are called by the local Darfuri Arabs 'Zurga' – which means 'black people'. This refers to their dark skin colour and is a derogatory and racist term, used to devalue people.

The number of Darfuris is increasing in Khartoum due to those leaving Darfur and being forcibly displaced following the eruption of the conflict in 2003. Those who have enough means in Darfur travel to other parts of Sudan, mostly to Khartoum. The number of Darfuris in Khartoum is not known, but is thought to be in the 100,000s.

Darfuri people cannot return to their regions in Darfur as the villages have been destroyed and the absence of security – several areas are in the control of the Janjaweed, including some of the larger cities in Darfur. People returning to the region are either killed on the way or when they get there. There is no efficient

regular army, no efficient police, only NISS, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which includes many former Janjaweed members, and the remaining Janjaweed. The Courts don't have the power to bring these perpetrators to justice – they have impunity provided by laws including the NISS Act. The state of emergency allows for the government to violate rights, including prevention of freedom of movement.

The people leaving Darfur and travelling to Khartoum are always NADs such as those from the Fur, Zaghawa, Massalit, Berti and other smaller ethnic tribes and indigenous peoples.

In 2003, IDPs planned to establish a camp south of Khartoum but this was dispersed by the security forces. Since then, displaced persons from Darfur do not live together. The government has banned the formation of IDP camps for NADs in Khartoum – it does not want the international community to see NADs living in camps like the South Sudanese.

Asked where NADs live, SO stated some live on the perimeters of Khartoum with relatives in areas such as Haj Yusuf (Khartoum North); Umbadda (east of Omdurman); Mayo and Ingaz (south of Khartoum). There are also a number of lone women (widows mostly) and children (orphans) who live on farms outside Khartoum. These people are unable to obtain the National ID number as they have no male relatives to confirm their identity in the ID process and are therefore also not able to access any services (healthcare; education; formal employment etc). They are vulnerable to sexual violence by landowners and farm labourers. When asked how vulnerable people other than NADs travelling into Khartoum obtain ID, Mr Osman said they have less problems and 'find a way'.

Asked if it is possible for a NAD in Darfur to move to Khartoum, SO thought no during the height of the war (2003 to 2008) but it is becoming easier, more tolerated, though not for NAD IDPs living in camps in Darfur.

It is usually safer for NADs to live in camps around the big cities in Darfur as compared to rural areas where they are at more at risk of attacks. Although IDP camps are also insecure.

In Khartoum in some places NADs and Arabs live together (those that were not directly involved in the conflict). Some NADs run businesses and live 'normally' – not all are poor or victims of conflict. However, if a person is not a member of the ruling party, it is difficult to do business (this is the case for everyone, not just NADs) - the government won't allow it.

Some NADs side with the government, are high ranking politicians and Ministers. Most of the information the government has is from NAD government supporters, while some is from informers. Information is also provided by NAD politicians.

SO noted that some Arabs feel used by the government, gave the example of one of the Janjaweed leaders who is in prison.

National ID card

The government makes it impossible to get a National ID number as verification from a male relative is required (and in many cases women do not have a surviving male relative).

Other people, for example from the East, Blue Nile and the Nuba Mountains, are also discriminated against on these grounds (particularly in the respect of women that are not able to obtain verification as they do not have male relatives).

Darfuri community groups

Based on tradition and customs, there are Tribal Associations - 'Councils of Elders' for all Arabs and NADs representing each tribe (shura councils). All NAD groups have shura councils, including Darfuris in Khartoum. People feel more protected by the shura councils than by the government security services.

There are tribal associations for northern tribes, eastern tribes, the Nuba, Fur, Massalit and the Zaghawa. The associations protect the interests of the tribes and serve a role in social life. They may be involved in personal conflict management – for example, even a killing may be resolved without the need to refer the issue to a Court. The tribal associations did raise money to help IDPs fleeing Darfur to Khartoum during the height of the armed conflict (2003-2008) but do not provide support now, because the government prohibited the establishment of camps specifically for NADs in Khartoum. Tribal associations are unable to help with employment, nor do they offer financial assistance.

Asked if these associations monitor the human rights of the Darfuris, SO said that this was the work of the DBA. The shura councils may approach the DBA about issues of law and for pro bono legal aid, and they will ask for representation of defendants facing charges, including capital punishment.

The government accuses people, for example students, of being members of rebel groups outside of Khartoum, too - all over Sudan.

Identifying Darfuris

It is possible to identify a NAD by their skin colour and their language. They do not speak Arabic fluently.

Asked about Darfuris who speak Arabic and had been brought up in Khartoum, SO observed that even Darfuris who had lived in Khartoum since 1970s / 1980s are made to feel inferior.

Even those who have lived in the city a long time can easily be differentiated from other groups.

Socio economic rights for Darfuris

Darfuris have faced marginalisation for a long time, so feel they are not equal to other Sudanese and which is why the rebel groups started in 2003. All Darfuris feel some of this. Some enjoy life but feel this.

Darfuris do not enjoy socio-economic rights - most are not registered, i.e. do not have National ID numbers. So, they cannot take up employment; they cannot participate in elections, they do not get recognition. However, some Darfuris who are affiliated to the ruling party have better opportunities than those who are considered enemies of the state. The Darfuris are known as moderate Muslims not as religious fanatics, or zealous for the ruling party; Darfuris are considered as not co-operative with the government.

After the separation (of South Sudan from Sudan) some NADs were employed in government positions, but only a small percentage –very few in high ranking

positions. Darfuris should hold 30% of positions in government, judiciary, army, etc. NADs do hold many low-ranking roles, but SO did not know exact numbers.

This is the same for all people accused of being against the government and not showing sufficient loyalty. Other marginalised groups, for example the Nuba, are also denied high-ranking places. The government is dominated by Jalayin and Shaigiya (Nile valley tribes).

Education

The FFM observed that there appeared to be many Darfuri students. SO agreed, this is surprising: Darfuris do occupy positions in universities. SO was not sure of the numbers of students, but thought there may be 100,000s across Sudan. The FFM team asked if it was necessary to have a national ID number to attend university. SO agreed it was – it is necessary to sit for university exams.

SO noted that university places are overwhelmingly taken up by Darfuri students. The Doha Peace Agreement stipulated that Darfuri students have their university fees waved, but this was not sufficiently implemented during the period of the Darfur Authority from 2011 to 2016. Now the government has revoked this provision and students are finding they cannot sit exams, graduate or receive their graduation certificates – unless they pay. This is the same for other students without funds (not just the Darfuris). But the Doha Peace Agreement made a specific allowance for Darfuris as they lost relatives, land and livelihoods following the conflict and still have nothing now.

If they protest against this policy, it is considered by the government as a political, economic and racial matter. Protesters who take part in protests that take place over university funding are targeted on racial grounds.

Darfuris cannot go back to regions outside Khartoum as they have no homes and their home areas are under the control of the Janjaweed or the RSF. There is no regular army or police, only NISS and RSF in Darfur. There are problems everywhere, even in the cities of El Fasher and Nyala. The courts do not have the power to bring perpetrators of abuses to justice, the RSF/Janjaweed enjoy complete impunity.

National Service

All Sudanese graduates do National Service (NS), there is no exemption for any group. You have to have a National ID number to do NS and you have to be a graduate.

In the past, the government used to capture non-graduates from the streets for the army and paramilitary forces like the Popular Defence Forces. Now the government uses mercenaries from Chad, Niger and Mali, so don't do this anymore. People from Chad, Mali, etc are mainly in the RSF.

It is a policy to recruit graduates into government jobs. NS takes place in government departments (ministries).

Arrests and convictions

Asked if there were wide-scale arrests in Khartoum similar to those in 2008 following the JEM attack on Omdurman, SO noted that there are still arrests on a daily basis but not happening as it did in 2008. There is targeting of students mainly – SO has a lot of cases in the courts.

Asked if the government's attitude to Darfuris has changed with the increase in security in Darfur and the weakening of rebel groups, SO thought that in the past NAD had been arrested based on ethnicity – now they live in the camps, kept like prisoners and can't get to the cities. In Khartoum, it is more or less the same as the past – mentioned students (see above).

In the past, people protesting against government policies would have been detained, tortured and killed, but now there is change in policy. People are arrested and charged with criminal offences that often carry the death penalty, in the absence of sufficient evidence, and kept in prolonged pre-trial detention – up to 2-3 years. SO gave the example of an incident at the White Nile University, in which 1,000s of Darfuri students marched to Khartoum. A number of Darfuri students were accused of killing a police officer, but the DBA got 4 released and the charges dropped. 10 other cases are pending.

Asked how many cases he had in Khartoum, SO noted that he had a case on Karima. A death of a Darfuri student and which resulted in the conviction of 4 people, 2 of whom have been sentenced to death. Those convicted were from other tribes and the crime was deemed a racial Darfuri killing.

Asked if the DBA handled other Darfuri cases, besides those of students. SO observed that they usually deal with cases of forced eviction by the authorities. There are Darfuri IDP camps around El Fasher and the main cities in Darfur, but Darfuris who have migrated to Khartoum tend to find remote areas on the perimeter of the city and set up home there ('shanty towns' – illegal settlements). People who are living in these places are all Darfuris and Nuba. They are often forcibly evicted. The DBA has challenged some evictions and, in some cases, has won. Asked if the courts discriminate, SO thought it not hopeless but difficult.

The DBA is not always popular with the government and there have often been severe battles between it and the government. Members of the DBA fear for their lives. SO has been detained 4 times. The last time he was detained was for 2 months and 10 days from February to April 2018 in Kober prison following the January 2018 demonstrations against the rise in prices. He was accused of agitating the people and acting against the government. Asked how he was treated, SO said it was bad. While there was no physical torture he was forced to witness the beatings of other young detainees, which was very difficult for him as a human rights defender. NISS beat demonstrators from all backgrounds. He was later released without charge.

Darfur

The situation in Darfur is not as bad as it was 10 years ago, when villages were burnt. Now a partial peace agreement has been made between the government and some rebel groups, but it has not brought peace. Most NADs were attacked all over Darfur in the past, but now in some places some local agreements have been made between tribes that have brought some kind of stability. However, there is conflict within the IDP camps. People are kept in the camps like prisoners, they cannot go to El Fasher or other big cities – they do not have their liberty. Only Darfuris with contacts within the government are treated better.

The government does not allow people to return to their original lands, it is working on other options. It has established certain designated areas for the people (Darfuris)

to go to. This has led to ethnic cleansing, while their lands are being populated by those from outside Sudan, for example from Chad, Niger and Mali.

When the JEM 'invasion' of Khartoum in 2008 happened there were repercussions for the tribes, but that is not the case now. However, Darfuris always fear that if a similar incident takes place, they will be punished again.

Travel

It is possible to travel between Darfur and Khartoum by bus or aeroplane, but it is too expensive for most people to be able to fly.

There are no longer any Janjaweed checkpoints along the route, which would in the past have imposed fees, but government and NISS checkpoints still remain. There is a problem because of the state of emergency, particular people can be identified at checkpoints and arrested. NISS have an ability to track people.

Returns

Some people flee Sudan as they are frightened of being accused of being opponents of the government. They were also deprived from their means of livelihoods by the war and kept in the camps, so people also leave for security and lack of access to their lands and livelihoods. People haven't received any compensation for the loss of relatives, land, cattle, and IDPs in the camps receive much less assistance than before.

Returnees will be treated severely simply by the fact of having claimed asylum. They will be treated as opponents of the government and accused of being rebels. Most people arrested at the airport are accused of being rebel sympathisers. There have been 100s of arrests of returnees from Jordan and Israel.

Asked about alleged arrested of returns from Belgium at the end of 2017, SO said he knew they were arrested. The Sudanese government knows about the returns as they arrange travel documents.

However, SO was unable to provide specific details and had not investigated any cases of returnees being arrested /detained on arrival. He knew of such arrests from relatives of returnees arrested.

When asked whether failed asylum seekers (FAS) - individuals whose cases had been considered by European states but found not to be at risk - would be of interest to NISS, SO said he knew that some asylum seekers manipulated the system by claiming to be Darfuris, but still said it was possible they might be at risk for being a FAS.

[Back to Contents](#)

A UK official, Department for International Development (DFID)

British Embassy, 16 August 2018

Background

The UK official is a conflict advisor focusing conflict prevention / long term stability and also leads on migration issues, providing protection to victims of trafficking and other vulnerable groups. Has spent 2 years in Sudan.

Darfur

According to UN and media reporting IDP returnees have been systematically targeted by people who occupy their lands who may have had historical allegiance to ruling elites. Returnees rarely have protection from formal security and justice institutions; perpetrators often act with impunity.

Al Fashir is populated by a large spectrum of people (different tribal groups) and life goes on despite high levels of criminality. Many people who had fled remain in Chad as they are well looked after there. Non -Arab IDPs are currently under the protection of UNAMID – this is only likely to be for the next year however – provision of adequate security and protection after that point remains undefined.

The population of Darfur is around 10 million (out of a total population of about 40 million).

The UK is working with [the government of Sudan] GoS and the international community to consider how to ensure a smooth transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding and development. The UK is already supporting informal conflict resolution mechanisms as the government / police are not widely trusted by some communities. In the longer term, we need to consider how we can support reform within security institutions to rebuild trust and ensure better outcomes for citizens of Darfur.

Darfuris in Khartoum

The UK official noted that migration to Khartoum appears to be increasing rapidly, but didn't know the numbers. The official was doubtful that Darfuris in Khartoum were returning to Darfur.

Human rights

The UK official gave examples of human rights abuses. A Channel 4 reporter was picked up the RSF in Darfur and sent to NISS where he was reportedly tortured ⁴⁶².

The US Trafficking in Persons report indicates state complicity in trafficking of people. There have been allegations of widespread involvement of state actors being involved in people trafficking, for example, border police allowing smugglers to cross borders and allegations of sexual violence against trafficked victims by the police⁴⁶³.

Returns

The official not aware of any problems for returnees from Europe, but caveated that it was not something he would know about.

[Back to Contents](#)

⁴⁶² Provided sources subsequent to the material documenting this point: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/05/captured-in-darfur-south-sudan>; and <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/07/07/sudan-human-rights-defenders-detained-face-death-penalty>

⁴⁶³ See US State Department, Trafficking in Persons reports: <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/>, specifically for Sudan in 2017/18: <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2018/282755.htm>

Dr Enrico Ille

Note provided following email correspondence between Home Office FFM team and Dr Enrico Ille, on 12 September 2018

Background

Dr. Enrico Ille is a freelance German social and cultural anthropologist with a Dr. phil. degree of the University of Halle, Germany; he is affiliated with the [Law, Organization, Science and Technology \(LOST\) Research Network](#), based at the University of Halle. He has been studying Sudan since 2004, first with a M.A. thesis about the relation of land rights and concepts of history (2006), then with a doctoral thesis about development projects in post-war situations (2012).

Later research projects were about the political economy of gold mining (since 2013) and socio-ecological developments in the northern Sudanese Nile Valley (2016-2018), the latter as Urgent Anthropology Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute and the British Museum. He has been a permanent resident of Omdurman since late 2013.

His background on Darfur is based on general studies about the political situation in Darfur (e.g. his 2016 [article on conflict gold](#)) and work in the humanitarian sector (since 2016). The former includes working relationships with anthropologists at the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, University of Khartoum, several of them both from Darfur and Darfur researchers; a Darfur-related article by Andrea Behrends was part of the 2015 volume [Emerging orders in the Sudans](#) co-edited by him. The latter was in the position of Fundraising and Reporting Officer in a Sudanese NGO with projects in all five Darfur states, specifically emergency responses and interventions related to Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

He also acted as expert in a Darfur-related asylum case for the German Embassy in Sudan (2018).

Personal note

Dr Ille's motivation to respond to the Home Office's questions comes from, in his view, a conceptual problem in how asylum assessments on people from Darfur are made to whose management he'd like to contribute.

One side of the problem is that many of the social categories employed in such assessments, including 'non-Arab Darfuris' (NAD), 'Darfuri community'; 'tribe'; 'returnees', etc, are highly inaccurate and partly misleading, not least since they are derived from political discourses, rather than social analysis. This is a regrettable situation, especially given the wealth of recent social studies on Darfur that exist (see List of recommended references).

The other side is that the assessments belong to an intricate administrative system, which needs workable categories to take yes-no decisions, often under temporal, linguistic and other constraints, and which deals with a complex variety of cases from all over the world. Being aware of both sides, Dr Ille would like to attempt to play a small role in increasing the balance between them to some extent.

Since Dr. Ille's background is stronger concerning the situation of social relations in Darfur, he will concentrate on the aspect of identification and not answer the more specific questions concerning the treatment of returns, different profiles of NAD,

national service, access to various public services, National ID numbers and cards, and freedom of movement between Darfur and Khartoum.

Identification of non-Arab Darfuris

Dr. Ille contends that ethnic identity emerges out of a number of elements – social history, language, religion, physical traits, etc. – and combines with other, more individual elements – age, education, profession, economic status, political affiliation, life course – to a social identity. Different social groupings play a role in an individual's life, and each in a different way.⁴⁶⁴ It makes therefore sense to take the 'categorical' question of who is non-Arab Darfuri and who is not, and change it towards a 'processual' question: what makes somebody identify and be identified as non-Arab Darfuri, and what are potential consequences of such an identification?

The presumption of permanent social identity contradicts the situational or at least compositional character it has long been established to have. Rather than being fixed in one social status, an individual has always – but to vastly varying extent – different options of behaviour, and circumstances can change dramatically over the course of one's life. Furthermore, there are several roles and social circles overlapping or even contradicting in this life. While this may be less the case for one person than another, somebody's situation has, from his point of view, always to be approached with such considerations in mind.

Dr. Ille added that it has been a frequent assessment of social and political studies of conflicts in Darfur that their categorization as ethnic conflict, and even more its assessment through a dichotomy (Arab / non-Arab) is highly problematic and inaccurate. Conflict dynamics always existed on different levels: from localized quarrels (e.g. family feuds) to supra-regional politics (e.g. aftermath of Libyan pan-Arab military mobilization); from small-scale natural resource scarcity (e.g. co-used water wells) to geopolitically relevant natural wealth (e.g. oil fields in southern Darfur). How individuals are positioning and are seen positioned towards these different aspects of different conflicts cannot be read off one marker of identification. Accordingly, how someone is involved and affected cannot be put down to one factor, for example race or ethnic identity.

The perceptible circumstances that led to the stronger focus on one element, a differentiation between Arab and non-Arab, were the resurgence of Arab-Islamic supremacy discourses in Sudan politics, culminating in the National Salvation military coup that established the present government, and the mobilization of such discourses when early counter-insurgency recruitment against the armed rebellion in Darfur in 2003 did not succeed.

The ideological recruitment phase in the war in Darfur (about 2004-2006) coincided with a surge of international attention and, following a general post-9/11 anti-Arab (as equated to anti-Muslim) mood, the Arab vs non-Arab interpretation took a strong foothold in global media and beyond as the main interpretative frame for understanding the conflict. Not unusual for social conflicts, the interpretation fed back

⁴⁶⁴ Dr Ille observed that "'Tribe", for instance, is a term for socio-political entities that are relatively closed-up and tend to keep social reproduction inside its boundaries; the term is mostly deprecated in academic discourses, since it has been widely used by colonial administrators to denote uniform social groups (one chief and his subjects) they imagined to exist in their colonies. However, through the so-called Native Administration, tribal representation has continuing political importance, especially in Darfur.'

into behaviour, and the inadequate representation of the causes and dynamics of conflicts in Darfur became an important element of these same conflicts. In other words, the claim that the war was a genocide of Arabs against non-Arabs – and nothing else or nothing more – influenced how those involved in the war perceived and behaved towards each other. This does not mean that racist brutality and systematic targeting based on ethnic identification did **not** take place. It means that this aspect became so dominant, especially in global discourses on the war, that all other aspects and specific conflict dynamics between specific conflict actors were overshadowed. In consequence, even these actors themselves may start to adopt this simplification and act, or at least talk based on it. Even more, this obscures the existence of interlinkages and cooperative relationships between ‘Arabs’ and ‘non-Arabs’: intermarriage, peace agreements, trade relations, etc.

Dr Ille started with this short caveat to argue for a view that does not aim for identification as non-Arab Darfuri **per se**, but for an individual at-risk status. If, for operational purposes, the category of non-Arab Darfuri is applied, this means that individual cases will not be decided automatically after identification as member of a collective identity (i.e. NAD), but based on an individual’s situation: a NAD member of a former rebel group involved in rape and killings of civilians, now living in a villa after being paid off by the government to agree to a peace agreement will certainly not deserve the same status as a NAD rape victim whose family was killed, who is now living off scraps in Khartoum’s suburbs and is regularly harassed by the police. The latter has more in common with an impoverished ‘Arab’ than the former, even though she or he may be from the same ethnic group.

This is not merely a theoretical, conceptual view. Biographical studies of people staying in Darfur have shown, especially among young men, significant fluidity of life courses, pursuing a chain of precarious livelihood strategies (e.g. Behrends 2011, 2014). But even the group central to globally circulating representations of Darfur’s Arab militias often summarized as Janjaweed, Musa Hilal’s Mahamid group, part of the Northern Rizeigat, shows how its leader’s changing fate – from bank robber to Ministry of Foreign Affairs special advisor to imprisoned rebel – shifted its own position in the local political setup and its alliances.

In general, the myriad of small ethnic groups in Darfur, some of which are temporarily or permanently in conflict with each other, also actively belies the view of a stable position on either side of the Arab/Non-Arab dichotomy. In consequence, individuals can only be assessed based on their specific individual circumstances, not categorically.

On this basis, Dr Ille wanted to address some of the characteristics asked about under section 2 of the list of questions (Ethnic demography / socio-economic position), the answers to which are, in fact, a good guideline towards understanding an individual’s situation, and towards a differentiated assessment, independent from an overall ethnic / racial category.

a) Categories of identification

Two elements can be central here: centre of life and language.

The centre of life is a complex description of where life experiences come from, especially what kind of dependencies (those limiting or defining (im)mobility) have been experienced. The primary ways to assess the centre(s) is through geographical knowledge and details of everyday life. Dr Ille had an asylum case from West Darfur

(see Source background), where somebody was asked about major towns in Sudan and he answered with Zalingei and Saraf Omra, settlements not far from his alleged place of origin in El Geneina, which indicates limited exposure to the rest of Sudan. Dates of events were given exclusively with the moon calendar, which indicates lack of exposure to modern schooling and official administrative processes. Number of owned livestock and other questions placed him under a lower-income semi-nomadic group with subsistence horticulture. Basic mistakes in identification of places in Khartoum confirmed short stays there; prices of goods in the market could be used to check on the timeline. A respectful titling of Khalil Ibrahim (JEM founder) and overwrought positive statements on oppositional movements made his claim to have been forcibly recruited by Janjaweed questionable (since they recruited among 'their own'); etc.

Since the local representation structure called Native Administration is still quite influential, names of sheikhs and omdas,⁴⁶⁵ i.e. local leaders, can be helpful to relate the given ethnic group and can be checked (and dated, if leadership has changed in the meantime). Main food and its names, especially the stews (**mulāḥ**) eaten with sorghum porridge or bread, are sometimes locally specific (Dirar 1993)

Language is another complex marker since small differences in vocabulary show accumulated influences, a circumstance made use of in Language Analysis for the Determination of Origin (LADO) assessments. The problem is here temporality, as changes in language practices can occur over time (even while waiting for years in Europe for procedures); the result is thus only tentative and complementary to the other pieces of information.

In both cases, a community of practice (e.g. expert group on call) or other forms of crowd knowledge may be useful to post (anonymised) information from difficult cases to get feedback on this level of detail.

On the other hand, outward markers are mostly insubstantial, although they may be treated otherwise by applicants, or in superficial social interactions. Appearance, such as skin colour and scarring, provide locally only rough orientation to which group somebody belongs. This means a darker colour may indicate for people in Khartoum a provenance from a more southern area, sometimes summarized as 'Westerner' (**gharāba**), which can cover all of Darfur and all of Kordofan combined. Inside these areas, especially because of centuries of intermarriage, almost any brownish skin colour can be found in any group. Scarring is even less reliable, as it has been mostly discontinued in Darfur. A general orientation towards Darfur is sometimes established through names, such as Adam, Khatir, etc.

b) Socio-economic position

Since the assessment questions in this list seem steered towards living in Khartoum, and its quality, the identification under a) gives only a very partial picture.

Arguably, the main issue seems to be how others perceive and treat the individual, rather than how the individual can be described based on information he or she

⁴⁶⁵ Dr Ille observed 'The Native Administration system was introduced under British colonial rule and continues to exist, after temporary abolishment under President Nimeiri in the 1970s. Its role and power is strongly fluctuating over time and place: in 1986, it was reinstated, partly reduced but also politically much stronger instrumentalized under the present government, and since constantly under discussion. The main 'levels' (up-down) are amīr (among nomadic groups also nāzīr), ʿumda and shaykh.'

gives about him- or herself. But stereotypes are notoriously difficult to trace because of the fine line between different levels of latent and open prejudices, and discrimination; patterns of obvious targeting are rare, since discrimination is often cross-sectional (e.g. ethnic **and** socio-economic **and** gender). This is relevant to note because the socio-economic position is not only an expression but also a cause of discrimination, which always necessitates somebody to be in a weak-enough position to be excluded from the general rules of competition.

Concerning people from Darfur, similar to people of Kordofan, many appear as manual labourers, especially in rural areas across Sudan, due to a combination of high population numbers and a strong pattern of labour mobility (at least since the Sahel drought of the mid-1980s). The early development of vegetables and fruits as cash crops in Darfur made Fur, for instance, an important force in the small-scale horticultural sector; the wide, family-based trade networks of Zaghawa make them a perceptible part of the small-shop and petty trade landscape all over Sudan, including Khartoum.

There is, however, a strong variety of socio-economic status, which is difficult to compare to people from other regions since no statistics comparing income differences or wealth distribution based on provenance exist. 'Wealth' is also relative; Darfur has, together with Kordofan, the highest production of livestock in Sudan, and meat is partly much cheaper there than elsewhere, while other basic foodstuff can be rare.

Land property was long a basic characteristic to differentiate between but also inside groups – one of the long-term grievances of pastoralist groups against long-established land owners, such as the Fur (based on the historical Darfur kingdom). A chain of wars shifted many of the tenure systems, not just by widespread population displacement, but by disconnecting a growing generation from livelihood strategies as basic skills and thus life orientation. Much of the re-orientation towards low-skill labour – especially in artisanal mining and different forms of military groups – became much more attractive with less livelihood sources based on one's place of origin, and family. The displacement to an urban setting itself can also become a ground on which a worse socio-economic situation grows, as rural options for self-reliance disappear.

There is thus a potential cross-sectional chain of elements that lead to discrimination (and only an individual case assessment can tell, whether it applies): a provenance from Darfur increases the probability of being seen as potential rebel and of having been cut off from previous sources of wealth; without existing networks, displacement to urban areas, especially with the current strongly increasing prices, enhances this precarious situation and pushes people towards living in areas with others in a structurally similar situation, mostly with weak public services or even physical threats by governmental organs; the combination of the previous and the present provenance increases the difficulty to be perceived as reliable, for instance in accessing financial services, and limits the ability to concentrate on self-development, for instance through education. This is the general nature of structural inequality and is experienced by people from all of the so-called marginalized areas in Sudan – although, apart from the Nuba Mountains, they have not experienced the same level of violence in their home areas as people from war areas in Darfur.

In addition, the continued stronger reaction by the governmental organs to any Darfur-related political action may enhance how people from there are perceived as

potentially disruptive force; this seems, however, rather to be true for those going to educational institutions (especially universities) than in the areas people live.

The same line of questioning on everyday life that guided issues under a) can also help here to formulate an individual profile: places of living indicate a level of income; ownership of assets and networks (also outside Khartoum) the level of fallback resources; work (not employment) history indicates financial flexibility and mobility structures; etc.

List of recommended references

Ahmed, Abdel Ghaffar M. & Leif Manger. 2006. Understanding the crisis in Darfur: listening to Sudanese voices. Bergen: BRIC, University of Bergen.

[Abdul-Jalil, Musa Adam. 2015. From Native Administration to Native System: The Reproduction of a Colonial Model of Governance in Post-Independence Sudan. In: Assal, Munzoul and Musa Adam Abdul-Jalil \(eds\), Fifty Years of Anthropology in Sudan: Past, Present and Future. Bergen: CMI, 223-234.](#)

[Assal, Munzoul. 2004. Displaced persons in Khartoum: current realities and post-war scenarios. A report for MEAwards. Cairo: The Population Council.](#)

Behrends, Andrea, 2011. Fighting for oil when there is no oil yet: the Darfur–Chad border. In: Behrends, Andrea, Reyna, Stephen, Schlee, Günther (Eds.), *Crude Domination: An Anthropology of Oil*. Berghahn, New York, pp. 81–106.

Behrends, Andrea, 2014. The long history of conflict, integration and changing alliances on the Darfur/Chad border. In: Calkins, Sandra, Ille, Enrico, Rottenburg, Richard (Eds.), *Emerging Orders in the Sudan*. Langaa, Bamenda, pp. 39–68.

Collins, Robert O., Burr, Millard, 2008. *Darfur. The Long Road to Disaster*. Markus Wiener Publishers, Princeton, NJ.

Dirar, Hamid A. 1993. *The indigenous fermented food of the Sudan*. Wallingford: CAB International.

Doornbos, Paul & M. Lionel Bender. 1983. Languages of Wadai-Darfur. In M. Lionel Bender (ed.), *Nilo-Saharan Language Studies* (Vol. 13). East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University.

[Flint, Judith. 2009. Beyond 'Janjaweed': understanding the militias of Darfur. \(HSBA Working Paper 17\). Geneva: Small Arms Survey, Graduate Institute of International Studies.](#)

Flint, Julie & Alex de Waal. 2008. *Darfur. A new history of a long war*. London: Zed Books.

[Pantuliano, Sara, Munzoul Assal, Butheina A. Elnaiem, Helen McElhinney, and Manuel Schwab. 2011. City limits: urbanisation and vulnerability in Sudan. Khartoum case study. London: ODI.](#)

Prunier, Gérard. 2005. *Darfur: the ambiguous genocide*. Ithaca & New York: Cornell University Press.

[Waal, Alex de. 2005. Who are the Darfurians? Arab and African identities, violence and external engagement. African Affairs 104 \(415\), 181-205.](#)

[Back to Contents](#)

Dr Ahmed Eltoun Salim, European & African Centre (EAC)

British Embassy, 12 August 2018

Dr Ahmed Eltoun Salim (AES) started the European & African Centre (EAC), which is a British voluntary human rights organisation in Sudan following several years' experience of working in the UK with African refugees and in particular those from Sudan. Dr Salim worked with the British Refugee Council for 10 years.

EAC concentrates mainly on the issues of human trafficking and smuggling. It seeks to create a migration link between Africa and Europe that will build a good relationship between the two nations. It has devised a model to tackle human trafficking.

AES/EAC works in a volunteer capacity as information sources at the airport assisting with safety and security in relation to the prevention of trafficking and smuggling. EAC has no permanent staff due to a lack of funding so those working for the organisation do so on a freelance or voluntary basis. Another function carried out by the organisation is to offer assistance to returnees, but this is generally with advice and the provision of useful information, such as phone numbers. EAC does not regularly monitor returnees due to its lack of resources but it can provide the assistance described above from time to time.

Returnees

AES had met with 7 returnees from Libya in May 2018 who had been enroute to Europe, and another person who had returned from Israel. Neither he, nor his organisation, had met with any returnees from Europe recently, but he was aware of 3 people who had returned from Holland, Belgium and Italy, from colleagues / civil society. All 3 returnees from Europe had experienced some level of administrative delay at the airport, but he had not heard of any issues for them since entering Sudan.

One of the returnees had been in Belgium for 1.5 years, returned to Sudan in December 2017. Heard that the individual was not happy but colleague met with him, had no problem on arrival.

AES heard about the returnee from Italy in January 2018, it took longer for the Sudanese authorities to find out about him, whether he is Sudanese or not, but released from the airport but not clear what happened – there is a gap.

There is a need for civil society to monitor returnees, if not interviewed by a neutral organisation get biased views from government and non-government organisations.

EAC was also aware of 4 returnees from Europe who claimed to have been detained and tortured, as documented by Patrick Kingsley in an article that appeared in the New York times newspaper on 23 April 2018.

AES said he personally had no experience of people having problems directly on return.

AES cited a case of an US-Sudanese who, when departing the airport in Khartoum, was assaulted by airport security. AES did not believe this was due to the person's Darfuri ethnicity, but because he had provoked the airport staff. NISS intervened and the matter was resolved. However, it appeared on social media and it was implied the assault was because of the man's ethnicity.

The 7 returnees from Libya claimed to have been ill-treated by the traffickers and kept as hostages. They were asked to join the Libyan militia, but wanted to continue to Europe, so were made to work to pay their way, having been told that they had only covered the cost of the journey from Darfur to El Fasher and that the cost from El Fasher to Libya was still to be met. The Sudanese government investigated at the border, contacted their family to confirm that they are Sudanese. They are now in Gezira where AES met them.

EAC are hoping to set up a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Sudanese authorities at the airport to allow them as a civil society organisation access to certain areas where they could meet with returnees to gather information to enable onward assistance.

AES commented that the security at the airport gates is not the national intelligence and security service (NISS), but provided by private contractors.

AES did not believe that security was strong at the airport or that there were thorough checks when going through immigration. For example, he implied that if one person handed over a number of passports for people within a group, each passport would not be thoroughly checked. This made it easier for traffickers to take people out of the country. Easy to pass through the airport, to smuggle people out. More difficult now to get to the UK as there are no direct flights.

It is possible to leave Sudan crossing the Libyan or Ethiopian borders without an exit visa.

In theory, there is a punishment for not having an exit visa but this is not a crime which is punished – people are generally ‘let through’ without the visa. For example, 273 returnees from Algeria and Jordan had left Sudan without an exit visa, but they suffered no consequences on return. Therefore, returning on an Emergency Travel Document (ETD) and having no evidence of exiting the country legally was not a big problem.

Immigration check people’s identity, then let NISS know who they may interfere with. Most immigration officers are from the Nuba; General Dahiya (the Sudanese government’s head of immigration) is from the Nuba.

The Gezira pilot project

Gezira is an agricultural area around 20km from Khartoum with a population of over 4 million, 25% of whom originally came from Darfur. Ethnically, many people are from marginalised non-Arab Darfuri (NAD) tribes such as the Tama, Bergo, Gimir, Tongor, Salamat, Fur and Zaghawa, and some smaller marginalised tribes as well as a number of Arab tribes. EAC interviewed 30 individuals and held focus groups - 200 people in total - between February and April 2018.

After the war in Darfur young people (Darfuris) living in Gezira compared their lives with those around them and became dissatisfied with their living conditions (temporary mud and grass huts which had to be replaced yearly) and the ‘Campos’ in which they lived. Campos are illegal villages built on land which is part of farms or the road at the side water channels, where Darfuri IDPs had lived from some 20-30 years, before and following the outbreak of war.

Some of the young Darfuris were educated graduates, but still forced by circumstance to live under these primitive conditions. They became angry and tensions grew at the injustice of their situation. There were tensions between young

and old, and between the Darfuris and the people of Gezira. Extreme violence broke out at the Gezira and White Nile Universities. The authorities did not recognise the plight of the Darfuris and did nothing to ease the tensions in the area. AES learnt about these issues during meetings with 14 villages and campos.

On the back of this dissatisfaction, traffickers have been recruiting young people in Gezira to fight with the Libyan armed factions, including Islamist groups and Da'esh.

Young men from the marginalised Darfuri tribes are wealthy after the harvest with time on their hands and are easily encouraged to travel to Europe with traffickers. Those that reach Europe are assisted, although made to pay, for help with asylum claims. Pressure is put upon the UK and other European countries by what appears to be asylum seekers from Darfur and a situation that is still bad there, when in fact these young men are from Gezira. There is more interest for the traffickers in men from Gezira as they have money, where as those in Darfur are poor and not such a good investment.

People who reach the UK have to pay to join a political party; they have to pay for accommodation (usually in Birmingham or London) before getting support from the UK government; they have to go to a demonstration in the UK and have photos taken to support their asylum claim; they have to pay for help with their asylum claim (often with money from family or friends); they may have to pay for a medical report to back up their claim - this is all part of the trafficking. Once a person has made a successful claim their letter / details of the claim can be sold to someone going through the process.

According to AES this migration can be seen in the UK's published asylum statistics: in the last 4 years, asylum applications from Iran and Iraq have decreased, but those from Sudan have increased; the number of Sudanese asylum grants is increasing; the ending of the harvest in Sudan correlates to an increase in asylum intake in the following quarter.

AES is aware of a campo (village) in Gezira whereby of 25 families, there are 13 people in Europe. In another instance, 52 people disappeared, 3 of whom had died in Libya and another in the Mediterranean. Some young men are forced to work as mercenaries in Libya. There is a very high increase in the number of people leaving Gezira to go to Europe: in the 3rd quarter of 2015, there were 1500 asylum applications from Sudan in the UK.

The 2013 demonstration in Sudan in which many people were killed also gave a reason for people to claim asylum. Lists of those involved/arrested were posted on social media and were an accessible source of evidence for asylum claims.

Non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum

AES is in daily contact with Darfuris in Khartoum, all the time in his normal life – in the market, the community, his neighbours. Darfuris mixed with other populations. Asked if Darfuris have problems from the government. AES said no.

There are also Darfuris from the Zaghawa, Massalit and Fur tribes involved in politics. The Minister for Health is a member of the Zaghawa tribe and there are other Darfuri Ministers. Others work for the police and for NISS. The situation for Darfuris in Khartoum is not the same as it is in Gezira. In Khartoum people are helped with employment – it doesn't matter where they are from.

AES had not witnessed any discrimination in Khartoum due to a person's ethnicity. There are human rights abuses, but Darfuris are not targeted. For example: 3 days ago, at the airport, the general secretary of the Umma Party was prevented from leaving Sudan and some newspapers were confiscated.

Permission is not always given for demonstrations to be held; there are no rights for the LGBT community and freedom of speech is restricted. It's the culture itself and a lack of understanding of the Sudanese people. Some members of political parties want to claim asylum in the UK and yet do not want to accept and recognise refugees in Sudan.

However, these human rights issues are not enough for people to leave Sudan and seek asylum elsewhere. Even those who want rid of the regime do not have a good human rights record themselves – at least on paper; they condemn LGBT persons and degrade politicians whose family migrated to Sudan more than 100 years ago. Everyone is talking now about corruption and this is being reported in the press; people are involved in demonstrations; people are voicing their opinions on a third term for the President. There are also more than 100 political parties – people can talk openly about politics. However, it is not so bad that someone should seek asylum in Europe compared to the situation in 1990s when there were presidential decrees denying political parties and freedom of gathering.

National ID numbers/cards

It is a very easy process to obtain a National ID number or an ID biometric card.

The National ID number is free, but there is a fee (was about 50 SDP) for the biometric card - which can be used to obtain other documents such as a passport.

All that is required is to prove nationality, regardless of ethnicity and be fingerprinted. The National ID number is key – it is necessary to get a job or to obtain healthcare, but the biometric card is optional. The government has encouraged everyone to get a card.

National Service

Although compulsory, it is possible to pay a bribe to avoid national service (NS) and to obtain a card that states you have undertaken national service. You can keep paying over the years in case you want to travel for a good reason such as getting a work contract abroad, so never have to do it.

The terms of service are one year for a graduate; two years for non-graduate. There are classes A- B - C for people not physically able to complete a lengthy term. Military training is for 45 days, it is for people over 18yrs. There is an upper age limit. If you get work abroad, you can be exempted from national service – or get it delayed.

It is not obstacle to leaving the country. NS can be delayed.

Migration from Sudan

Young people likely to leave because of the economic situation in Sudan.

AES also noted there are a lot of young people from wealthy Sudanese families, who have made their money in corruption who are taking the safe route to Europe, by travelling to Turkey (it is very easy to obtain a visa to travel to Turkey) and then

paying a smuggler to facilitate the journey to the UK. Others travel from Gezira to Libya, then onto Europe.

Next wave of asylum seekers will be the elderly. There are many Sudanese in the Middle East, who may look to go to Europe due to the new Saudi policies [making it difficult for Sudanese to remain in Saudi Arabia].

[Back to Contents](#)

A UK FCO official

British Embassy, 12 August 2018

Voluntary/enforced returns

The UK official mentioned 2 lots of Sudanese returnees from Europe in 2016/2017; the Frontex flight run by the Swiss/Norwegians and 2 enforced returns by the Dutch (in December 2017).

Khartoum

There is a poor economic situation across Sudan – rising inflation affecting food and fuel prices, and a drop in value of the Sudanese Pound (SDG) (it fell in April 2018 from US\$1: 22SDG to its present, unofficial, rate of US\$1: 40SDG). The agricultural/farming communities have been hit hard; the harvest in November [2018] will indicate how badly. Farmers are complaining to the government as there is no fuel and they can't afford pesticides, etc. It is estimated by aid agencies that 7.1 million (out of a population of 38million) will need humanitarian assistance this year. Remittances from Sudanese overseas are important.

Due to the economic crisis, many people are moving to Khartoum to find work – the population of Khartoum has increased significantly in recent years.

Security

While the security situation has generally improved in Darfur, the human rights situation in Khartoum has not changed. Some of the human rights issues in Khartoum include freedom of the press and arrests of political activists during times of protests.

Government expenditure on security is believed to be significant, some sources estimate up to 70% of the budget (the official referred, for example, to information cited in the 'Country Brief: Sudan'⁴⁶⁶ published on The Sentry website).

The police uniform is light blue; riot police travel in dark blue camouflage vehicles.

Human rights

The Embassy knows the political opposition and civil society well, who will raise an issue if they have a problem. The Embassy will raise with the government.

Sudan has a low crime rate although this has increased slightly owing to the economic conditions, e.g. burglaries and petty crime. There are no major security problems, i.e. terrorism, in the country.

There is a National Human Rights Commission, set up 3-4 years ago

⁴⁶⁶ The Sentry (an initiative of the [Enough Project](#)), Country Brief: Sudan, July 2015, <https://thesentry.org/reports/sudan/>

The EU Migration Coordination Group (MCG) (made up of representatives from 8 EU Member States in Khartoum - Spain, UK, France, Italy, Romania, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden - as well as the EU Delegation) discusses returns to Sudan regularly. Various countries have enforced return of failed asylum seekers in recent years, with none reporting verified incidents of mistreatment on return. Those MCG members who observed the arrival of the Frontex flight reported an orderly and calm process, with no concerns over treatment of returnees. However, the group recognise that post-return monitoring in this context is very difficult and there is a risk that they may not have visibility of such incidents.

[Back to Contents](#)

Second Secretary Political, British Embassy

British Embassy, 13 August 2018

The 2nd political secretary (PS) led on conflict areas – Darfur and the Two Areas, Sudanese peace process and across border issues; worked in Sudan for 4 years; speaks Arabic.

PS been to Darfur many times – north, south, central and west, in capitals and to smaller towns; Two Areas twice – to Kadugli, South Kordofan, working on assistance projects. Met Arab / non-Arab tribes.

Darfur

Provided analysis of situation in Darfur which has fed into the UN's decision to draw down its peace-keeping soldiers from 16,000 to 4,000 because of the improved security situation. UNAMID will pull out its peace-keepers in June 2020.

Three security issues in Darfur

- 1) Darfur has come a long way since the height of the war in the period 2003-2007. The rebel groups Sudan Liberation Movement – Mini Menawi (SLM-MM) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) have been pushed out of Darfur, while SLM-Abdul Wahid are still in the region but confined to the Jebel Marra area. They continue to be involved in some skirmishes with the government.
- 2) Until recently inter-tribal fighting between Arab tribes – Rizegeit and Ma'aliya - used to lead to 100s of fatalities every year. However, the government has effectively clamped down on this violence by imprisoning many of the tribal leaders. The Government has also taken a hard line for some other recurring inter-Arab conflicts, while it has pushed inter-tribal conciliation in other cases e.g. the Shattaya agreement in South Darfur in 2017 brought 7 tribes into a peace agreement.
- 3) Banditry / crime – there has been a reduction since 2015. Governors have been appointed, purely on security credentials, by the president to sort [out] the crime levels. As a result, conditions in urban areas have improved significantly. For example, UN are now able to drive around El Fasher without the risk of carjacking; previously a problem.

As a result, the FCO's view is that it is time for UNAMID to adapt its mission to the changing situation. It is currently capacity-building with the local police to allow this to happen.

Non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum

On the situation in Khartoum, PS was not aware of the size of the Darfuri population in Khartoum but his impression was that it is substantial. Much harder to get a sense of the population than other groups because they are so well integrated. PS likened the situation of Darfuris in Khartoum to those of Muslims in Britain: they are spread across society, there are poor Muslims but also doctors, lawyers, etc.

Being Nuba, Christian or South Sudanese who live in 'ghettos', and [are] poorer, are easy to identify, but cannot say this of Darfuris as they are so spread across society.

You see Darfuris in government, business, medicine, law – for example there is a Darfuri Bar Association – no such equivalent for the Nuba, for example. There are wealthy Darfuris but also poorer Darfuri working on farms. Does not consider there is marginalisation of Darfuris within Khartoum.

Asked whether the Arab / non-Arab [distinction] affects how Darfuris are treated, PS observed that traditionally 'African' Darfuris were sedentary farmers with better access to services such as health and education and there was little distinction between the groups. Arabs are more nomadic and it is less likely to find Arab [Darfuris] doctors, lawyers or engineers, for example.

Over the years, a wave of Darfuris have been forced to migrate to Khartoum because of the conflict in Darfur but also because of the huge 'centralisation' of Sudan in Khartoum. See migration of all groups to Khartoum, the city has expanded rapidly in the last 5 years, not just IDPs but people coming for economic reasons.

There has been no recent census but some reports put Khartoum's population at 10 million, up from around 5 million only 10-15 years ago. This can be seen in the growth of the shanty towns. In these you see 2 groups who are the poorest: South Sudanese and people from the Nuba mountains. Don't see many Darfuri ghettos as they are more integrated. PS has been to the shanty towns where people from the Nuba mountains live; but wouldn't know where to go to find the Darfuris. Darfuris are spread amongst various groups.

The only restive groups of Darfuris in Khartoum are university students. Some student groups are quite militant and quite active in politics, influenced by rebel groups; some are less active. There was a case a year or so ago where Darfuri students were involved in a big protest after a Darfuri student was put on trial for murder of a police officer. The students demonstrating against the charges were beaten by police. In protest, Darfuris students walked from Gezira (area just south of Khartoum) with their suitcases. When they came to the outskirts of Khartoum, the government stated that the students were over-reacting and bringing attention to themselves, but they were supported by the local people who got involved.

Throughout the PS's 4 years in Sudan, aware of a number of incidents involving Darfuri students – he has met student leaders. For example, met a delegation of Darfuri students who had complained that although they were exempt from paying fees under the Doha Peace agreement. They were being told to pay or else they would not receive their degrees.

When asked if there are many Darfuri students, PS said yes because they came to Khartoum/Omdurman for better quality education. Students are of mixed backgrounds, predominately Fur, then Massalit, Zaghawa, Berti.

PS had met the Darfuri Bar Association (DBA) as well as other Darfuri groups. However, Darfuris less likely to 'hang out' with other Darfuris (than other groups), they are more likely to integrate with people from Khartoum. Many claim that there is a Darfuri 'consciousness' but none existed prior to 2003 (when the conflict started in Darfur). Only since 2004/05 has there been something to be gained from identifying as Darfuri.

A lot of Darfuris are married to non-Darfuris, helps with upward mobility, looking for a family, a job. For example, the former head of the Darfur Regional Authority, Tigani Sisi, is married to a non-Darfuri. PS said the marital status of some other Darfuri politicians was similar.

Darfuris are imbedded in government, law, medicine and business. They are traditionally prominent in certain fields: religious teachers; teachers in schools; over represented in the army's lower ranks, but also included officers (he confirmed that he had met Darfuri officers in the army) including Zaghawa and Fur. Darfuris also in the security services. PS also observed that Darfuris are 'part and parcel' of Sudan, involved in the war against the south. PS gave example that having talked to southerners, that Darfuri interrogators had had a reputation for meting out some of the harshest treatment against southerners during the years of the southern civil war.

Darfur is a recent war, most Sudanese have not had a problem with Darfuris until recently. Most Khartoum Arabs talk badly of the rebel groups but not of Darfuri people. There is no overriding racism or discrimination against Darfuris. However, Arabs do look down upon other groups such as the Nuba and people from South Sudan. Nuba and South Sudanese face problems but the Darfuris are not a group apart from other Sudanese groups. The kind of person who looks down upon Darfuris, looks down upon other groups too.

On discrimination in accessing socio-economic rights (housing, education, etc), PS thought there might be but did not know for sure. He noted that there is a Darfur Bar Association, so there are enough Darfuri lawyers to have their own group but this is not the case for the Nuba. PS had met only one Nuba lawyer.

ID cards

PS noted re ID documentation, that all Sudanese need to have an ID card, to get a driving license, a job, to go to university, etc, but did not see that it is a problem. There was an issue for Darfuris who fled their villages (in Darfur) without ID documentation and then to get documents. There was a big campaign before the last elections in 2015 for people to get ID cards and there will be again before the 2020 elections. Individuals needed 2 people (male relatives or tribal leaders) to vouch for them.

PS did not know the proportion of people who have ID cards, thought the DBA might know. PS noted that problems with not having an ID card is not something that has been reported to him / FCO. PS had not heard of anyone not having ID; it was possible to pay a bribe for an ID card. PS noted that everyone in an IDP camp has UN card and probably government cards too. PS noted that nearly every Darfuri he has come across has a mobile phone, however poor they are, so he thought they would be able to pay for an ID card too.

There are problems for those without ID cards – can't go to university, or if they pass through a check point without one they will have to pay a bribe. PS noted that there are checkpoints all over Sudan. Many check points between Darfur and Khartoum –

in every major town. However, Sudanese able to travel, more of a problem for foreigners who need permits to travel internally. PS saw many checkpoints in Darfur, but rarely would someone stand-up to actually check.

Monitoring

There is general monitoring of all Sudanese by the government.

When asked if the government had an interest in Darfuris generally, PS thought that it was not interested in Darfuris unless they were in some way politically active or having ties to rebel groups. The government does not like demonstrators. The government does not monitor Darfuris in particular but if there is a gathering of Darfuris or other citizens, it will break this up because it fears protests snowballing into something big. The government doesn't like gatherings of any kind. PS not seen specifically Darfuri demonstrations other than those by students – the only restive group is students. PS did not consider that Darfuris were targeted for monitoring more so than other groups.

Round-ups of Non-Arab Dafuris

When asked if he was aware of round-ups as had happened in 2008 after the JEM attack in Omdurman, PS noted that was when the war in Darfur was still 'hot', there was a fear of militants/rebels and the government reacted by arresting people. Now the conflict has reduced in intensity, the civil war is increasingly distant and there is no need to lock up Darfuris. Darfuris do face issues with poverty, marginalisation but they are not affected any more than other groups. PS had not seen any 'round ups' of Darfuris in Khartoum.

When asked if all Darfuri students are at risk, PS noted that some are militant, some are not. Non-militant students think that the militant students are causing problems for them. Those not active are able to get on with their studies.

Darfuris in the army when conflict in Darfur started may have divided loyalties. Some may have defected to the rebel groups. Even today, many police and soldiers are Darfuri – Darfuris are in the security apparatus.

Identification of NAD

The non-Arab / Arab division amongst Darfuris does not really mean anything in the minds of other Sudanese. It may be possible for other Sudanese to identify a Darfuri by language but not by other factors, e.g., by name or facial features.

Returns

On returns, PS had not heard of returnees being ill-treated. When asked how he would know, he noted that the FCO obtained information about human rights incidents via several sources:

- Domestic press
- Social media – activists circulate information through these media. There was an example of US-Sudanese citizen who was documented being beaten at the airport.
- Embassy political officers pick up information through contacts (in civil society / human rights defenders). Likely to pick the issue of returns if it was a recurring issue

- UK is also one of the most approached Embassies by Sudanese on other issues, so people who returned might approach the Embassy directly

[The Sudanese] Government checks the background of returnees. If linked to a rebel group the person will have problems but if, in effect, they are economic migrants then the authorities will let him go. If just a failed asylum seeker, they'll get a 'shake down' to solicit money and then let go.

When asked if would be possible for a Darfuri who had not previously lived in Khartoum, who returned from Europe to Sudan, to integrate into Khartoum, PS thought so. Unless they were suspected of having ties to rebel groups, in which case the Government would want to investigate them and take further action. PS noted that most Sudanese look to go to Khartoum to improve their prospects, there are greater opportunities.

Diaspora

NISS do monitor the diaspora for rebel activities, many people in the UK report to the Sudanese. Sudan has a big monitoring / reporting culture – the regime is paranoid. However, as rebel influence diminishes, the government's interest in them declines.

The Sudanese government lobbies the UK, claiming that there are many rebels in the UK, ask the UK to kick them out. SLM-MM has members in London, MM's brother is in London. JEM also in London. The government is tapped into the diaspora.

In PS's view, the bulk of Sudanese going to the UK are seeking a better life, trying to make it as asylum seekers. If return Sudan, and they don't have links to rebels, they will not have a problem.

FCO monitoring of human rights situation

The FCO monitor the human rights situation using the same mechanisms outlined above: plugged into the human rights network, keeping in touch with NGOs, social media. The UK is one of the largest western Embassies – if we are not aware of issues, either the issue is not significant or we are not doing our job!

[Back to Contents](#)

An official of Western Embassy A

British Embassy, 13 August 2018

The official is first secretary at Western Embassy A. The official is a migration officer deployed to Sudan by their government and has been in the role for 2 years.

The biggest asylum issue for western country A with regards to eastern Africa and the Horn of Africa are Eritreans and this is the official's main focus. The number of Sudanese asylum claims in the western country is relatively low, Sudan does not feature in the top 10 of arrival countries.

The official receives details of asylum cases from the immigration authorities of the western country and attempts to establish the facts of these cases.

There is no specific focus, from the western country A's perspective, on non-Arab Darfuris.

The official has travelled to Darfur 3 times.

General situation of non-Arab Darfuris

The official gave a general impression of the treatment of Darfuris in Khartoum. The official observed that it is extremely difficult to determine what people actually experience.

From experience of seeing details of asylum claims, or from Sudanese nationals coming to the official's Embassy, it appears a person's perception of how they are treated may be worse than the reality, although officials can be harsh.

The official has spent time researching the Sudanese laws (such as the Sudanese Nationality Act 1994 with the amendment made 2011, Passport and Immigration Act 2015 and its previous version of 1994, the Sudan Civil Registry Act of 2011 and the Penal Code 1991) which do not distinguish between different groups of people based on ethnicity or origin and as such are not a legal base for discrimination against Darfuris. For example, some claim they have been treated unfairly but what has occurred to them is within the law. For example, they believe they have been overcharged for a service but the fee is the legal norm.

The official has heard that some people are stopped and questioned, and is aware that Darfuri tea ladies are at times frequently harassed and fined, this seems to happen periodically. It was particularly pronounced from February 2017 to October 2017. The western official read in the Sudanese press that a Darfuri Tea Ladies Union now exists [subsequent to the interview the official provided a link to a [blog post of August 2016](#) and a summary from Al Intibaha, online newspaper, dated 14 March 18 'The Ministry of Human Development signed an agreement with the Union of Tea Ladies to train and improve the well being of tea ladies. The ministry said there are 22,000 tea ladies in Khartoum State only. The Ministry confirmed that they will continue to work with the union of tea ladies to ensure their protection and improvement of well being.']

The official considered that the law – in theory – does not discriminate by ethnicity or tribe. Although the official also commented that the Embassy was aware there were some people who are being ill-treated and those who aren't.

Asked if Darfuris were in general at risk of arrest and detention, the official did not have impression that in general Darfuris are targeted although it may depend on their other characteristics. It is not one factor that puts someone at risk, but several factors. For example, being a Darfuri, a Christian and a student increases the risk that the person would receive greater attention from NISS.

Some people may be easy targets but whether that is due to ethnicity or social economic status was not clear, e.g. a rickshaw driver would be an easy target to harass and demand a bribe from. The police and other authorities may target any vulnerable group for money.

The official was not aware of any reliable statistics of the number of Darfuris living in Khartoum.

Similarly, the official did not know the number of South Sudanese or Eritreans living in the city.

The Sudanese are very mixed, mixed marriages; people change ethnicity. The official could not personally tell different tribes apart, even in the 3 areas of Darfur the official visited, although the official suggested some could be distinguished by their language. It is not clear either if Sudanese recognise other groups. Dinka,

though, are often assumed to have a darker skin tone, different bone structure and may have decorative scarring on their faces.

There are news reports – for example in Radio Dabanga and Sudan Tribune [media sites based in Europe] - of Darfuri students facing some problems. The official questioned the reliability of such news if they are only reported by one source, as with the reliability of many news stories. The issue is frequently that media might report about an incident, but the details in that report don't have to be accurate. A frequent example are numbers [statistics] which are often exaggerated and quotes, which can be freely invented.

The official made the assumption that everyone was monitored by NISS in some way but could not confirm this and did not know how well such monitoring worked. NISS have offices everywhere and have freedom under the law to act with impunity. Also true to a lesser extent for the police.

Asked if there were particular risk groups, the official believed that any high-level opposition members would be at risk. However, reasons would be required to arrest someone with a high profile as it would be reported in the media. For someone with a low profile, no reasons would be required as there would be less interest [in the media].

Some Sudanese asylum seekers in the western country claim they face the death penalty. It is the official's understanding that the death penalty is only handed down by a court ruling and in such cases the person would be detained. The official thought it highly unlikely that NISS would threaten someone with execution and then release them. It is more likely that if NISS found a person of interest they would arrest and detain them at the time.

Security forces' capabilities

The official was unsure how joined-up NISS (security) operatives were across Sudan. There is no standard recruitment process which applies to all security services.

Recruitment processes for various security forces including different armed forces and militia vary throughout time and location. Even some police stations and prisons do not have computers. Some members of the security forces are reportedly hostile to each other, e.g. the police and Rapid Support Force (RSF) in Darfur.

Arrest warrants

Arrest warrants are not published in newspapers. An Embassy colleague who has been monitoring the press for 25 years has found no evidence of such publications. However, if a person was in an area where they were wanted by the police or NISS they may be at risk of being seen or found.

National Service

Regarding national service (NS), the official had heard of one incident of army personnel in vehicles stopping young men and asking them if they had completed their NS in Khartoum. The official observed that it was explained to them that this was unlikely to happen outside of Khartoum. This practice may vary depending on the security situation of the country at the time.

Returns

The western country has undertaken few enforced removals to Sudan; only 2 in the last year and the official did not know if these individuals were Darfuri.

The western official was not made aware of the removals by their immigration authorities so did not meet the returnees at the airport. [The FFM team told the source that the IOM had informed them that there had been 25 assisted (voluntary) returns from the western country between January and June 2018 – source was not aware of these]. Of the 2 enforced removals, both travelled on a Sudanese laissez passer and boarded the plane voluntarily without being accompanied by officials.

The official received no feedback on the returnees. The western official's impression from another Embassy which had met returnees at the airport was that they faced no difficulties coming through immigration.

Following allegations of ill-treatment of a returnee from Belgium, the western official had attempted to investigate risks on return: spoke to the IOM and tried to contact by email the Tahir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP), which had originally reported the allegations about the returnees from Belgium, but received no response. An EU colleague also tried to contact the TIMEP, but also received no response.

The western official found no substantiated, verified example of returnees facing problems on arrival in Sudan. [The FCO official who covered migration issues present at the meeting observed that it was also the conclusion of the migration forum of EU+ states i.e. EU member states, including the UK, plus Norway and Switzerland in Khartoum that there was no verifiable case of ill-treatment on arrival of a returnee.]

Some asylum seekers have provided forms, allegedly from immigration police, which state the person is banned from leaving Sudan. The western official had attempted to verify the form existed but the immigration police said they were not aware of such a form. However, there are laws that can ban people from leaving Sudan. In these cases, the person is denied an exit visa, for example, because of criminal activity or drug-related charges and so the individual is aware they are unable to leave.

A NISS 'Black Control List' exists; people on the list may not be warned they cannot leave the country and on attempting to do so would be apprehended at the airport. As an example of a travel ban, an opposition member was banned from leaving Sudan to travel to a political event. However, the person, who held dual nationality with the US, was allowed to travel to the US to visit family. Travel bans may not necessarily be permanent.

Asked if not having an exit visa is likely to be a problem to return, in the official's experience having no evidence of an exit visa is unlikely to prevent return. This is evidenced by the number of returnees arriving in the country on Sudanese laissez passer (i.e. the person has no passport proving exit from Sudan was legal). The airport is not bothered by the lack of exit visa.

[Back to Contents](#)

International Organization for Migration (IOM) official

IOM offices, Khartoum, 12 August 2018

Background

The IOM official has been in role for 12 months, prior to that 8 months working in border management providing migrant assistance.

The team the official heads is involved in: migrant assistance; counter-trafficking; in-bound / out-bound Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) support to the Government of Sudan on migration management issues including the development of migration policy and migration governance structures. Particularly working with vulnerable people, for example Ethiopians.

The IOM official works closely with the government and is responsible for the management of a migrant 'drop in centre' in Khartoum – the Migrant Response and Resource Centre (MRRC).

Numbers and location of returns

Most returns are from Egypt and other countries in the region, some from Europe. In the year from January to June 2018 IOM assisted 210 Sudanese returns to Sudan [the official subsequent to the meeting provided returns statistics in a separate spreadsheet – see below].

The numbers reflect processes in countries from which people travelling which can be slightly ad hoc.

Traditionally most returns from Egypt but increasing numbers from Libya.

In 2017, IOM assisted 523 returns from Libya on 3 charter flights, including [1 on 8 August 2018 which returned 129](#). There were also 34 returned from Algeria on scheduled flights. Smaller number of returns from Europe in 2017 than returns from the region.

Returnees are mostly voluntary but included a small number of enforced returns. However, returning states do not tell IOM if a return is voluntary and IOM do not get involved on this side of the process.

Returnees are also of a mixture of migrants but include some failed asylum seekers. IOM is not informed of the immigration status of migrants returning from Europe.

IOM does not facilitate enforced returns as a matter of policy but may provide assistance after arrival.

IOM was involved in providing post arrival assistance to European Refugee Integration Network (ERIN) cases but this ceased in May 2018. IOM Sudan no longer handles new ERIN cases.

The entry / exit process at the airport

IOM do not meet all returnees. Will do so if the returning country requests IOM to be present, particularly for vulnerable individuals – old, young, medical reasons, etc.

IOM also has some issues in accessing immigration control due to limitations on the number of airport access passes issued by the Sudanese authorities. In general staff are able to access the baggage hall but are not able to enter the area where the

immigration officers' desks are located. This means IOM cannot always be present when returnees arrive at immigration control.

If a returnee is traveling on an emergency travel document (ETD), they may be taken for questioning at the point that it is seen and may not reach the visa / passport control. Also, some returnees are believed to choose not to identify themselves to the IOM. The IOM official supposed this may be because the person does not want to be seen as a returnee.

Most returnees travelled on ETDs and were likely to be questioned by NISS. For example, in August 2018, IOM were airside to meet 129 returnees from Libya; all had ETDs and all were interviewed first by NISS. Their ETDs were stamped, they were finger-printed, then allowed to pass through immigration. The whole process took 4-5 hours. On this occasion IOM staff were present in the area in front of the immigration desks and witnessed the clearance of the returnees by the Sudanese authorities.

The IOM official has never been told of, or observed, mistreatment of returnees on arrival in Sudan. There are no safety problems for returnees visiting the IOM office.

[On arrival] Persons first come to the immigration control (who are police, part of the Passport and Civil Registration Corporation), then there is a hand baggage security check before a second checking desk, operated by NISS. Once through this process passengers proceed into the baggage hall.

At the first desk, a check is undertaken of the person's personal details (name, etc), which are logged electronically by the Police officer. There is an alert list.

Persons leaving need exit permission to pass through airport (both for foreign nationals and Sudanese). The exit visa for the Sudanese is a piece of paper. The exit visas for foreign nationals is either contained in the original entry visa (for short term visitors) or is in the form of a separate entry/exit sticker for longer term residents.

When passengers enter the departure area of the airport there is a counter immediately inside the building. It is understood that this is operated by NISS. Ad hoc checks can be made here. The check is done to the right of the baggage area after having passed the security guard. The next stage is to check in at the airline desks. Once checked in passengers proceed to a NISS check point – look at passport and boarding pass (this check is done for all departing passengers) – then the embarkation area which includes an immigration check operated by the Police.

The IOM official explained that the exit visa process was the same for Sudanese. They need to go to an immigration office to get an exit visa, though it is also possible to obtain one from the airport. Local IOM staff need exit visas; never not got one to leave.

There is an electronic system for checking Sudanese exit visas at the airport. IOM is in discussion with the Sudanese government to upgrade their entry/exit electronic systems.

On the possibility of obtaining passports and exit visas by fraudulent means or obtaining forged documents, the IOM official said that there had been media reports of the selling passports / visas but the IOM had not seen evidence of this. However, it would not necessarily come across such documents in its work.

The IOM official, however, said that checks were based on a person's name, since this is checked when passing through the NISS check at the airport (in his experience).

No evidence, however, that NISS are interested in returnees; he agrees with the assessment of risks faced by returnees set out in the Home Office's [Sudan: Country Policy Information Note, Unsuccessful asylum seekers, July 2018](#).

IOM do not witness interviews by immigration or NISS at the airport, nor are they always present for small scale returns (of 1 or 2 people). Most returns are small scale. However, IOM is present at large scale returns, but not present when individuals are interviewed by the authorities. In the case of large scale arrivals by charter flight from Libya, IOM is present in the immigration control area when returnees are interviewed by NISS and the Police.

Profile of returnees

The IOM official was asked if he knew what profile of person NISS may be interested. The IOM official explained that IOM works closely with immigration, not NISS.

On the ethnic / tribal make-up of returnees, the IOM official observed that the Sudanese are very ethnically and physically diverse. He did not think there is a distinct African/non-Africa division, although Sudanese may be able to tell – not clear to him.

IOM do not generally collect data on where Sudanese are from. However, it has done some mapping of recent returns from Libya, most appear to be from Darfur.

No reason to believe that NISS have an interest in returnees because of where they are from or for their origin, but NISS do pick up on ETDs; no particular interest in people from Darfur.

The nature of NISS' likely priorities are not known but it is assumed to be in those who are suspected of being a threat to state security.

The IOM official noted that large numbers of Sudanese return from Saudi Arabia, but there is no evidence of interest taken in them by the authorities.

The IOM official had not seen targeting in the returns process.

Land borders

The IOM official observed that many Sudanese leave through Niger, pay smugglers to leave – does not cost much.

The IOM official noted that Sudan has 6-7,000km of border, not clear how many official border crossing points there are, but IOM estimate that there are 22. The borders are mostly unregulated. Many enter Sudan illegally and it is also easy to leave illegally. Sudanese are supposed to have exit visas for land borders too, but this does not seem to be enforced. Many communities straddle the borders, so cross borders all the time without documentation on a daily basis.

Sudanese can travel 'freely' within Sudan – do not need travel permits.

The IOM official thought that a main issue with the government's system is that there is limited consistency in how it operates – it can be difficult to put a finger on how the immigration process works. There is a degree of informality in the system, the rules are not always clear and there is evidence of local variations.

Also, quite difficult to generalise about the entry/exit system across the country. For example, at the Sudan/Ethiopia border, Ethiopians can come into Sudan without a visa if they are only going to make a local visit. If they intend to go beyond the local area, they are supposed to declare this but the onus is on them to declare this – not checked by immigration officials. The authorities have some capacity to manage emigration/immigration but Sudan has a huge border which is difficult to police.

Returnees from Europe

The IOM official noted that the majority of returnees from Europe are probably failed asylum seekers (FAS) but those from the region probably are not. The latter are generally stranded migrants, many of whom have failed to make a journey to Europe. He expanded that he would assume that many of the returnees from Europe are probably FAS, likely that the government also thinks so.

The IOM official was not aware of evidence that claiming asylum is an issue for the [Sudanese] authorities, nor was the IOM official aware of any evidence of ill-treatment which might be expected if claiming asylum was an issue

The IOM official not aware if returnees from Europe included those from Darfur but did know that a high proportion of those returning from Libya are Darfuris.

IOM support packages

On what packages returnees have, the IOM official noted most have entitlement to some sort of reintegration package and are likely to be seen by the IOM after their return but it depends on the project agreement IOM has with the country from which the person is returning.

The Libyan returns are being dealt with under the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in the Horn of Africa. They are entitled to an individual economic reintegration pack. In some cases, some of those returnees IOM was not able to contact. Not able to say what happened or why, some may have left, changed their phones, doing something else. No reason to believe it was because of persecution.

IOM will usually follow up with returnees once reintegration assistance has been given – this depends on the requirements of the specific [Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration] AVRR project. IOM is currently providing assistance under a number of projects. This includes the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in the Horn of Africa. The caseload includes migrants who have returned to their areas of origin on Darfur. In these cases, IOM may organise onward transportation from Khartoum to the returnees' place of origin, if they do not wish to remain in Khartoum. This includes arranging for the onward transportation of those wishing to travel to Darfur.

Most returnees from Europe have reintegration packages; some countries who are returning people asked that IOM follow-up with returnees. Normal process is that the IOM will have an initial meeting with a returnee within a month of the return, then another after 3 months. IOM has not been made aware or suspected ill-treatment of returnees.

Other matters

IOM does not assist in obtaining ID numbers or ID documentation.

IOM does not have any information on whether returnees who left without an exit visa and experienced problems because of this.

The IOM does not have any information about the treatment of non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum.

IOM Sudan In bound returns of Sudanese nationals				
Country of departure	2016	2017	2018 (up to August 2018)	Total by country
Algeria	0	0	43	43
Australia	2	0	1	3
Belgium	4	11	5	20
Bulgaria	1	1	0	2
Denmark	1	0	0	1
Djibouti	0	7	0	7
Egypt	133	159	156	448
Estonia	0	1	0	1
Ethiopia	0	3	0	3
Finland	0	5	0	5
Greece	3	3	0	6
Germany	0	32	27	59
Hungary	0	1	0	1
Indonesia	18	14	0	32
Italy	1	4	8	13
Jordan	5	0	12	17
Libya	2	607	158	767
Malta	1	2	1	4
Niger	0	0	41	41
Netherlands	12	9	7	28
Slovakia	0	0	0	0
South Sudan	0	0	3	3
Sweden	2	2	0	4
Switzerland	8	8	3	19
Tunisa	0	0	1	1

Turkey	0	0	3	3
United Kingdom	0	2	3	5
Yemen	0	0	0	0
Overall total	193	871	472	1536

[Back to Contents](#)

A civil society activist

British Embassy, 15 August 2018

The civil society activist (CSA) works for a civil and human rights organisation. It deals with issues relating to peace and human rights, and also recently the conflict areas of Darfur, the Blue Nile and Kordofan, and IDPs from the Nuba mountains. It reports on human rights violations; tells people their intrinsic rights and raises that awareness amongst women and students. It provides legal aid for activists and human rights defenders.

The organisation helps provide assistance for IDPs in Khartoum and South Kordofan. Its main focus is on youths and students as most active violations are committed against youths and there is much stigma against them as it is assumed they are supporting rebel groups.

Situation of non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum

There is a strong presence of Darfuri students in Khartoum and they are labelled as trouble due to their perceived rebel support. There is a lot of violence, including people being shot dead, on campus at the Universities. The targets are mainly the Darfuri and the Nuba.

Some students are affiliated to the security forces and are trained in the use of firearms. Darfuris are deliberately targeted. Darfuri students in the White Nile State were accused of killing 2 police officers – the organisation is providing them with assistance. These are the types of cases the organisation deals with.

The organisation is trying to reduce the level of violence amongst students, move towards more peaceful means and focus on the political process, but there is a lot of provocation from the regime. There are discussion gatherings in the universities - some students get aggressive. Most times they can't contain themselves and it ends in violence. Last week a student was injured suffering a broken nose and eye damage.

When asked if Darfuris were targeted based on ethnicity or due to their perceived support of the opposition, the organisation said that some student organisations are tribe affiliated, but there is a lot of stereotyping and Darfuris are accused of supporting the rebels.

The Nuba people and Darfuris are often associated with the SPLM-N, SLM-AW and JEM – they are seen as rebels. Most cases that the organisation deals with Darfuris and Nuba, to whom it provides legal aid. The organisation has a lot of contact with Darfuris in Khartoum, as well as those in Gezira, White Nile and Kordofan.

Most [Darfuris] (about 65%) are in the slums (shanty towns) of Khartoum (some 20 miles from the city centre).

The organisation estimated there are about 1 million Darfuris in Khartoum. This figure was from the 2008 census, but is not accurate. The census was conducted around election time, but the figures were inflated in areas where the NCP had strong support and the opposite in opposition supporting areas. Another census was ordered for 2010, in South Kordofan state, and the figures changed dramatically. Some (Nuba) families have 10 children, but the average is 7. The population is higher in South Kordofan and is double the number living in Northern state and the River Nile.

It is possible to recognise Darfuris by their facial features. For example, in May 2008 during JEM attack on Khartoum the security forces used to stop buses and ask certain people (Darfuris) to get off because they had been recognised and could be identified from others. The features of NADs, Nuba and Arab Darfuris are different.

It is also possible to identify a Darfuri by the way they speak – anyone who speaks a local language most likely speak Arabic with an accent. This is the same for other groups too, such as Nuba. People from the Berti tribe can be recognised by their features too, even though they have lost their language.

Inter-tribal marriages are common these days, it is not unusual to find a family where the grandmother belongs to one tribe and the grandfather to another. It was not the usual practice before the 1980s, but now it happens quite often.

Socio-economic situation

Darfuris do better than the Nuba in terms of socio economics. Darfuris and people from the Zaghawa tribe often work together (particularly students at university to fund their studies). One of the main features of the Zaghawa is their aptitude for trade and they help each other in business.

But since the conflict, Zaghawans have also been targeted by the government with huge tax bills. Everything in Sudan is money; but it is not a free market: 40-60% of the country is run by (government-backed) companies and individuals, although some Zaghawans are still in business.

In general Darfuris are better off than the Nuba people. Nuba IDP families rely on income generated by their children collecting re-cyclable items to sell from rubbish dumps. The Fur, who used to be farmers, make-up the majority of the people in IDP camps. They are not able to look after their children so well.

A person needs insurance to access healthcare. Even so, a contribution of 25% is needed towards the cost of medicines. The insurance used to cost around 500-800 Sudanese Pounds (SDG) per annum, before the economic problems – unaffordable for most Sudanese. Surgery may cost 4000 SDG and could be reduced to 2000 SDG, but still not within the reach of most Sudanese. There are some clinics, health centres in the shanty areas where the marginalised groups live, but they provide a very basic service. For example, you could attend if you had a cough or malaria (and have the test) – but you wouldn't be able to pay for the treatment.

In any case, the most common medicines have not been available in Sudan since the economic crisis, apart from a few supplies in expensive 'chemists' which are not affordable. Some people who have the means order medication from outside Sudan, for example from Egypt.

National ID number

It's not easy to obtain a National ID number. A person requires a male relative from their father's side, with the same name and with documents proving their ID, nationality etc. This requirement for documentary proof stops many people from getting the ID number, which is required for everything, including purchasing a phone; renewing a car licence; getting a passport; cashing a cheque; signing a contract; registering land.

Not having a National ID number creates a lot of problems. Not all Darfuris in Khartoum or Darfur have them. Most IDPs don't have National ID numbers. IDPs do have their own 'camp' registration, but this is for getting their rations of food provided in the camp.

Treatment of non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum

Having interviewed former detainees, the organisation said they were racially abused by the police and faced physical mistreatment in detention. If a person is arrested by NISS they are 'likely to be beaten', regardless of ethnicity. But if you are young and Darfuri, the risks of being beaten are higher.

About 1,000 students demonstrated in Bakhat Al Rwoda University, El Dewaim, White Nile, protesting because of irregularities in the students' union. Darfuri students were singled out and 15 students arrested and charged with the killing of two police officers and now the trial is going on in Kosti, White Nile state. In Khartoum, Darfuri students were demonstrating about the treatment of Darfuris. One student was arrested, detained and was physically abused by NISS, which resulted in his nose being broken.

Many people were arrested in the protests about fuel and the economic situation in January 2018 – students; people over 30 are not normally touched. If Darfuris are arrested they are more likely to be ill-treated – 'sliced'. All those arrested and detained were represented by lawyers and have been released now.

NISS are also responsible for the ill-treatment of activists in South Kordofan and Darfur, where people are burned and suffer bad torture. This abuse is also carried out by the military Intelligence and the Sudanese Army Forces (SAF), which are very active in conflict areas – Darfur and the Two Areas (there has been a state of emergency in operation since the beginning of the war in 2011 in South Kordofan).

NISS monitoring is not sophisticated enough to be able track people from one region to another. Apparently, it has tried phone tapping, including the use of an Italian system, but training of NISS operators was not possible. It does monitor social media and there is evidence that if NISS can obtain a person's phone, it will use it to gather information – either by accessing Facebook for example, or to set a trap for activists luring them to a 'safe place' where they are arrested.

The organisation did not believe a person's Facebook account could be hacked. Activists will change their mobile numbers if this happens. If a person has good anti-viral software that will offer good protection, so will regular awareness training. Email is ok. People who have fancy cameras will attract suspicion, but activists remove the memory cards for their mobile phones. The only way NISS will be able to access phone and computer systems is by physical infiltration or by a person acting as an informer passing on information.

Travel

It is easy to travel in the country. There are some road checkpoints but you will not be checked unless you're a particular target. The organisation was not aware of buses being pulled over at checkpoints.

It is not necessary to leave a copy of your ID when travelling via the airport. For domestic flights you need to show your ID card. Your baggage will be checked. You might be deemed suspicious if you're carrying 'fancy' equipment. A mobile phone can be the most incriminating evidence for an activist.

Returnees

The organisation was aware of returnees (failed asylum seekers) from Jordan whose passports were confiscated and destroyed by the authorities, and a couple who were deported from Israel who were detained and then released.

If a person travels on an emergency travel document they will be asked questions on arrival. In some cases, returning asylum seekers will have their passports confiscated. This is because the authorities will assume a person has talked about the human rights situation in Sudan (especially since International Criminal Court charges were brought against the President in 2009).

The source was aware of this through a conversation with a person who was with someone when this happened to. If the authorities are aware that a person has been deported (perhaps because the cabin crew tell them), even if they are allowed to leave the airport, they may be asked to return for questioning. If the authorities do not receive the right responses to the questioning, the person will be abused. The returnee will only be monitored if they have aroused suspicion. If there is no knowledge of a returnee having claimed asylum they will not face any problems.

Though not recently, the source had been summoned for questioning 10 - 12 times after returning from abroad and in the airport had faced 6-7 questions from NISS about the destination of travel and who they had met. It's possible NISS thought the source was working for a foreign intelligence agency.

If the source was arrested, as a high profile human rights activist, there would be media attention from the international human rights community, which would be unwanted by the Sudanese authorities. But for other Darfuris, when arrested there is no press release, no one to make a noise and intervene, this is what happens to Darfuri students. For example, one Darfuri student was detained for 9 months. He was tortured and has problems with his eye. He's now in Egypt. His name is Naser El Dein Mokhtar

[Back to Contents](#)

An official of Western Embassy B

Telephone interview, 13 September 2018

The original interview was scheduled to take place in Khartoum on Monday, 13 August, but had to be cancelled because of other commitments. A telephone interview was conducted by one of the FFM team after returning to the UK.

The western country B official has been in Sudan for 1 year. Focus is primarily migration from East Sudan and Eritrea. The official has not been to Darfur. Speaks some Arabic.

Western country B has expanded its interest in the situation in Darfur, including looking at returns of IDPs, and has recently part-funded research into the reasons Darfuris migrate from Darfur (see [Darfuri migration from Sudan: from displacement to despair](#)⁴⁶⁷). Western country B is also engaging more with the UN, including on topics such as the reasons for migration from Sudan, land rights and conflict resolution.

Western country B does not receive many Sudanese asylum claims; 260 in 2017, 167 in 2018 until August. The western country does not register ethnicity and therefore does not have figures on the number of non-Arab Darfuris (NAD) that claimed and/or were granted asylum. Figures for grant rates are somewhat misleading, as decisions in 2018 might relate to applications dating back to 2016 or even earlier. Nonetheless, in 2017 180 decisions were taken in total, of which 90 were positive. In 2018 so far, 60 decisions were taken, of which 20 were positive.

The official observed that the western country B's Embassy in Khartoum has a number of NAD staff, especially in supportive personnel (driver, guards) who he spoke to in preparing for the interview. The NAD staff had travelled to Darfur from Khartoum privately, but made no mention of problems during the journey or once in Darfur.

The western country B's Embassy does engage with civil society, some of which have Darfuri members or interests, specifically the Darfur Bar Association (DBA).

Returns from western country B to Sudan

The western country B started case-by-case enforced returns of Sudanese failed asylum seekers in 2017; a few enforced returns have taken place since then. Returns have been 'regular' Sudanese; not aware they have included Darfuris. The restart of enforced returns came about following an improvement in relations between western country B and the government of Sudan (GoS). The western country B's government is aware of 12 voluntary returns in 2017, and 10 voluntary returns in 2018 until September. These voluntary returns took place via IOM.

The official was not aware of substantiated evidence of problems on arrival or afterwards of returnees from western country B but observed there was no monitoring of returns on or following arrival. The official added that it is the policy of western country B not to monitor failed asylum seeker returnees because they have been found not to need protection, so would not be at risk on return; monitoring them would require additional expertise at embassies, and would risk undermining the decision-making process in western country B. (The FFM team member conducting the interview observed that the UK took the same approach: returnees are not monitored in general since returns would only take place where it was found that there was no protection need and it was safe to do so.)

Asked if the western country B represented Belgium (BE) interests in Khartoum, the official observed that the BE mission in Cairo covers Sudan and represents its interests in Sudan. With regard to the allegations of ill-treatment of returnees from BE made at the end of 2017, western country B was informed of these by the BE

⁴⁶⁷ School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London), Darfuri migration from Sudan to Europe: from displacement to despair, September 2018, <https://www.odi.org/publications/11186-darfuri-migration-sudan-europe-displacement-despair>

government. However, western country B had not seen reason or evidence to change its policy on returns to Sudan in light of these.

The official observed that the GoS is aware of EU concerns about returns.

Western country B assumes that the GoS does monitor returns; it is likely that the GoS knows who is moving into and out of the country.

The official had heard of the GoS 'telling people off' for having 'western habits'; knew of someone being 'talked' to by NISS for being westernised, 'pressured' then released. Asked if this included detention and ill-treatment, the official stated that he was not aware of such allegations for western country B returns and western country B had not investigated any cases in Sudan.

The official observed that following re-commencement of returns of failed asylum seekers to Sudan in 2017, the GoS, unprompted, had provided a report confirming the safe arrival of a Sudanese national returned.

Asked if civil society contacts, such as the DBA, had provided evidence of problems on return, the official stated he was not aware of any but added he was not sure how much these groups would know. Western country B talked about Darfur on general terms with civil society groups, not particularly on returns.

Asked if claiming asylum was considered a political act by the GoS, the official thought not really. Evidenced by the fact that some Sudanese had come back to Sudan, i.e. been returned. The GoS seems to understand that claiming asylum may be a means to get into Europe for economic reasons. How someone is treated on return may depend on who they are, how they are 'connected'; i.e. family, tribal ties.

The western country B's Embassy does not meet returnees on arrival at the airport in Khartoum, although it is informed of returns taking place by the western government B's repatriation and departure service.

All forced returns travel on a Sudanese-issued laissez passe.

Non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum

The official had consulted with the western government B Embassy's locally-employed Darfuri staff, who estimated that the Darfuri population in Khartoum was 750,000. Darfuris concentrated in areas of west Omdurman; in Umbada.

The official did not know whether the rate of Darfuri migration from Darfur to Khartoum was increasing, but it appeared to be ongoing.

Darfuris often end up in poor areas of Khartoum; selling tea and sugar cane.

The official was not aware if Darfuri migrants belonged to particular tribes or groups.

Asked if Darfuris are identifiable from other groups, the official said he had asked local staff who thought if someone is an 'expert', it is easy – by skin colour, scarring. But to those Sudanese not familiar with Darfuris, they could say they were 'non-Arab'. Some Darfuris have tribal scars.

The official was not aware of inter-marriage between Darfuri groups and other Sudanese tribes.

Access to services in Khartoum

Darfuris were generally discriminated against – found it difficult to access services but are well-documented, have ID cards.

Asked if Darfuris experienced difficulties in accessing healthcare, the official did not know.

Asked about access to education, the official observed that Darfuri children generally go to school.

Access to land was difficult generally, but the official was not sure of the extent. Darfuris that come to Khartoum generally can't afford to buy land.

Asked if the Darfuris were represented in different segments of society – for example, historically commonly found in the police and army – the official noted that yes, for example, Darfuris are still in the armed forces. Also observed that Darfuris are still required to do national service but they would find it difficult to get 'sensitive' jobs. But this is the same for all 'African' groups.

Darfuris would find it difficult to get into government, i.e. government jobs.

Targeting and discrimination

Asked if he was aware of Darfuri student numbers, the official observed that students are politically active and that there had been clashes with the government. For example, there were clashes in January 2018 – although not just Darfuris. There have been some incidents where Darfuris have been shot / detained.

The official was not aware of a specific profile of Darfuri who may be targeted by the GoS but noted it was a difficult topic to discuss with local staff at the western government B's Embassy.

Asked if the state might target groups linked with the rebels, the official was not aware of this but it is possible further noting that the GoS disliked activism which it viewed with suspicion. The official thought that students generally might be more of interest to the GoS, but not aware of specific profiling (for example, young people who have recently migrated from Darfuri to Khartoum as compared to those Darfuris who were settled in Khartoum). Not aware of large scale arrests of Darfuris but there may be individual arrests that go unreported.

The GoS has informers but not sure how it monitors Darfuris.

National Service (NS)

Everyone has to do NS, which is supposed to be compulsory and, depending on the person's level of education, is for 1 to 3 years. Some tribes, rich families pay to get a medical certificate to exempt them from NS.

Not sure of the penalties for not doing NS.

Anecdotally, NAD generally tend to end up in lower ranks and are sometimes not allowed to go to 'sensitive' places.

Exit process

An exit visa costs 150SDG (Sudanese pounds).

The police do a check for any outstanding debts, criminal record. The official noted that there is sometimes an issue with double-names; anecdotally if someone has a similar name to someone who is not allowed to leave the country this may cause a problem.

The FFM team member suggested this latter point might raise questions over the integrity of the data held by the government and asked how 'good' the government

databases are. The official observed that the GoS spends a lot on security and it has a large network but not sure how sophisticated it is.

The official was not aware of problems faced by persons who may have left Sudan without an exit visa and then returned.

Asked if it is possible to obtain forged Sudanese travel documents, the official did not know. However, anecdotally there were media stories that fraud and corruption is an issue.

[Back to Contents](#)

A Norwegian official

British Embassy, 13 August 2018

Background

In the past, the Norwegian official worked in Norway's Migration Directorate dealing with asylum cases. From 2010 until 2014 he was based in Kabul, working on migration (in particular returns) issues, and in 2016 he came to Khartoum.

His focus in Khartoum is to look at Eritrean asylum issues and Eritrean migration through Sudan to Europe (about 70-80% of his work). There is no Norwegian Embassy in Eritrea hence his posting to Khartoum.

The Norwegian official had been on one trip to Darfur in May 2018.

Darfuris in Khartoum

The Norwegian official gave his general impression of Darfuris in Khartoum, which he caveated that he suspected he did not have any more information than the FFM team had obtained from colleagues, media, etc.

The Norwegian official stated he had not noticed anything different about the treatment of Darfuris. Khartoum is a huge city and many people have migrated to it over the last 100 years.

Before the separation of Sudan and South Sudan there were conflicts in the West, South and East, more or less the same as those that exist between Arabs and non-Arabs, although the Darfur conflict was different from that with the South as all Darfuris are Muslim (so there was no religious dimension to the conflict).

He had no information on the situation of Darfuris in Khartoum in relation to other immigrant groups living in the city.

Asylum and returns from Norway

There are now only a small number of Sudanese asylum seekers in Norway.

[Subsequent to the meeting, The Norwegian official provided [published Norwegian asylum statistics](#) for Sudanese cases:

- As of July 2018: 26 applications; 6 granted asylum, 1 rejected, 9 were dealt with by the Dublin convention; and 2 had residence in safe 3rd country.
- In 2017, 55 applications; 15 granted asylum; 7 on humanitarian grounds; 7 rejected; and 21 handled under Dublin.
- In 2016, 458 applications, 349 granted asylum; 72 rejected and 28 withdrawn/dropped

- In 2015, 501 applications, 377 granted asylum; 59 rejected; 27 handled under Dublin; and 18 safe 3rd country
- In 2014, 369 applications, 136 granted asylum; 60 rejected; and 136 handled under Dublin.]

For Norway, Sudan is not one of the top asylum intake countries, but Eritrea is usually in the top 3. The grant rate, however, for Sudan cases, based on individual assessments, is quite high.

The return of unsuccessful asylum seekers is a smooth process. Returns to Sudan from Norway have been going on for many years. Although lobbying by activists has raised issues for other countries this has not occurred in Norway and returns continue to take place. There are about 20 forced returns of Sudanese asylum seekers from Norway to Khartoum a year and 1-2 assisted returns.

Where an individual does not have a travel document, the returns process is assisted by the Sudanese Embassy in Norway (who issue travel documents). The Sudanese Embassy introduced a new documentation process in the summer of 2018, but no returns have taken place since this was introduced. The last return took place in May/April 2018.

[Subsequent to the meeting, The Norwegian official provided [Norway's published statistics for forced returns](#) to Sudan, including unsuccessful asylum seekers:

- First half of 2018: 1
- 2017: 21
- 2016: 18
- 2015: 22]

Enforced returnees are may be escorted to Khartoum international Airport by Norway's Immigration police, accompanied on the flight and handed over to the Sudanese authorities in Khartoum. These flights are usually commercial – not chartered flights.

When people are returned it is on a Sudanese travel document (laissez passe) or a Sudanese passport. Norwegian laissez passé are not accepted by the Sudanese authorities. There has been one flight in the last 2 years. The Norwegian official was not at the airport to witness returns, but he is not aware of any reports of ill treatment following the returns in his 2 years in Khartoum.

He was under the impression that most returnees were failed asylum seekers or foreign national offenders. The Norwegian official suggested that many Sudanese asylum seekers abscond if their (asylum) cases are rejected and may come to the police's attention if they commit a crime in Norway or through other police activities.

When asked how a returnee would contact the Norwegian Embassy if they faced a problem after return, the Norwegian official said that the Norwegian immigration police may give the contact details of the Embassy to the returnees, it is up to the head of the escorting team. The Embassy is easily accessible however an appointment is needed to meet Embassy staff; if someone turned up without an appointment guards would inform Embassy staff who would then decide whether to the meet the person. There is also a visa section (for public access).

Asked if the Norwegian Embassy had contacts with civil society in Sudan, the Norwegian official noted that had been another official who worked on human rights and had contacts but that person had left the post in spring 2018.

The only case that he had been specifically aware was that of a person who was mentally ill, receiving psychiatric treatment. The Embassy contacted the individual's brother advising that medical treatment was maintained, the person was returned – heard nothing since.

Not having an exit visa is not a problem – either the person returns with their passport (but this was rare and the Norwegian official had not heard of any returns on passports) or on a laissez passé – it is not an issue. Some asylum applicants may have previously obtained Schengen visas, copies of which may be obtained by the Norwegian police from a Norwegian Embassy or the authorities of the European third country from which the visa was originally obtained (under the Dublin process) and the visas makes it possible to confirm the applicant's identity and nationality.

The Norwegian official did not know whether the returnees were from Darfur or Khartoum but added that Darfuri people do claim asylum in Norway.

ID Cards

The Norwegian official did not have any information.

Check points

The Norwegian official stated that he travelled a lot in Khartoum but he was not aware of checkpoints in the city (although he added he travels as a diplomat, always in a diplomatic vehicle). There are checkpoints at the State borders, although vehicles are not always stopped.

Corruption

According to the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, Sudan is one of the most corrupt countries in the world. It starts at the top and filters down through all levels. The Norwegian official noted that he did not have concrete evidence of corruption, but the conditions were in place for it to occur.

[Back to Contents](#)

Siddig Yousef

Member of the central committee of the Communist Party and head of Sudanese Solidarity Committee

British Embassy, 15 August 2018

The Sudanese Solidarity Committee was formed in 2013 after protests in September of that year against the rise in fuel prices – 150 people were killed, others detained, some for 3 months.

Only 1 case of a NISS officer was brought before a court as a result. Though in order to do so the NISS had to agree that the case could be heard, as NISS is immune from prosecution. The officer received the death penalty but this was later overturned. Other cases did not go to court.

Asked if NISS influence the judiciary, Siddig Yousef (SY) thought most cases were influenced and that there is no justice in the judiciary system.

SY also mentioned a case of a student who was sentenced to death (14/08/2018) for his involvement in the death of a policeman during a demonstration in 2016. The student was sentenced to death but managed to get a re-trial. SY hoped he will be acquitted; the case has become quite high profile and has drawn a lot of international attention.

The Darfuri people in the Three Towns (Khartoum, Khartoum North and Omdurman) are split into 2 groups:

- 1) the financially able people, for example, in Libya Market, who have lived and traded in Khartoum for a long-time. Trade with Libya: mostly traders in clothes and electronic equipment in the west part of Omdurman.
- 2) The other people are affected by war, live in bad conditions around the Three Towns, lack services – water, electricity, etc. Usually work in menial jobs, building industry; children polish shoes, wash cars, etc.

The other segment who are also affected are students from Darfur. Following the Doha Peace Agreement, the government agreed to pay the fees of Darfuri students from the IDP camps. However, the government has stopped paying, and Darfuri students have protested. Darfuri students when detained are ill-treated. SY explained that there are 2 cases against students still running in the courts. One for 8 students at Al Azhary university who are charged for protesting about killing of 3 students at the Islamic university which took place in September 2017. The second trial is for 14 students accused of killing 2 policemen during the riots which took place at Bakht Aroda university in May 2017 and they are kept since that time at Kosti town prison.

Non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum

SY did not have an idea about the size of the Darfuri population in Khartoum. He noted that Darfuris are concentrated, outside of Darfur, in Khartoum, Gezira and Gedaref. The Darfuris are in Gezira for work, as farm labourers.

SY thought that it was possible to identify some Darfuris as Darfuris, but not everyone. Non-Arabs and Arab Darfuris look the same, as lots of inter-marriage. When asked if there are other ways to identify a Darfuri, SY noted that many Darfuris are illiterate and by their Arabic, they speak other languages.

SY observed that Darfuri students may be treated more severely, accused of supporting the Sudan Liberation Movement – Abdul Wahid.

Asked about access to services (health and education), SY considered that it depended on where the person lived. In the periphery of Khartoum there are no facilities, so have to come into the city.

Most government facilities / services are very bad. No free health treatment, people have to pay for treatment in government health facilities; the price may depend on the hospital director. But civil societies - youth organisations - stay near the hospitals and try to help. One organisation is called 'Hospital Casualty Street' which is comprised mostly of students, help any poor person, for example by calling relatives by phone and helping the person access health services.

When asked about access to employment for Darfuris, SY noted that permanent jobs are rare, most graduates don't find work and if they find work they do not work in areas of their studies. This is an outcome of the financial / economic situation in

Sudan: most factories have closed down in Khartoum North – which were mostly for processing vegetables (peanut and sesame oil production for example) and making textiles. Gezira (south of Khartoum) used to be planted with cotton – but has stopped producing. Decline in agriculture has also affected factory production. Warzone areas used to produce peanuts, but this production has declined. The economic situation has affected everyone. All sectors of the economy have been affected – so high (general) unemployment.

Asked if it is more difficult for Darfuris to find work, SY said yes. In Darfur services are poor, so children [young people] have to migrate to Khartoum. Difficult to attend university because people are poor and can't afford to live, to pay the fees.

SY did not consider Darfuris would have difficulties obtaining ID cards; people of mixed parentage, e.g. from Sudan and South Sudan, have difficulty getting cards – by law they have a right to a card but the issuance of cards affected by politics.

National Service

Everyone has to do national service (NS) for 2 years, military service is for 6 months. Military service continues [despite the end of conflict] however because the government hasn't got the facilities to accommodate all the NS conscripts, it concentrates on students. The punishment for not doing NS is that students do not get a degree and therefore not a (good) job, but they are not sent to prison.

State and societal treatment

Asked about day-to-day life for Darfuris in Khartoum and how they are treated by other Sudanese, SY thought they were treated like everyone else, no special treatment, day to day life goes on.

Asked how they were treated by the government, SY considered that if there was no link with rebel groups then there would be no problem. However, the government accuses / suspects Darfuris are linked with rebels, so discriminates against Darfuris in accessing jobs, e.g. if in competition with a different tribe. Darfuris would be targeted if they took part in demonstrations.

Asked if the government undertakes widespread arrests of Darfuris, SY said no. However, SY noted that if arrested, Darfuris are treated worse than other Sudanese prisoners, their hands are chained and they are blindfolded. SY added that there were widescale arrests in January 2018 – 17 and 18, and 31 January – during protests against the economic situation attended mostly by the political opposition; leaders were arrested. SY was arrested and detained in Kober prison. He was not physically mistreated, but he was denied books, not allowed visitors and kept in solitary confinement. He was held for 45 days and didn't leave his cell in all that time, (and added that he has spent in total around 10 years in prison for opposing the government, mostly under the previous regime, apart from the last 45 days).

SY was asked whether the decline in violence in Darfur meant that the government had less interest in Darfuris. SY noted that the fighting groups – the rebels – had lost capacity and most incidents were now in the Jebel Marra, which they are able to defend as they had the protection of the mountains. Asked if this influenced the government's attitude to Darfuris in Khartoum, SY said he did not think it was a matter of the level of threat. All people in IDP camps are perceived to be against the government as they think the government is the cause of their misery. Grievances

remain due to the atrocities in the conflict. While this government remains, reconciliation with Darfuris is not possible.

Asked about the treatment of Darfuris by society generally, SY noted that the Nuba are treated badly, but face less societal discrimination than the Darfuris. But society generally does not treat the Darfuris and people from South Kordofan differently from other groups. But the government and NISS treat them badly, considering them supporters of the armed groups.

Also asked whether different Darfuri groups are treated differently, SY noted that the Fur and Zaghawa are accused of links with the rebel groups. However, SY noted that Darfuris are also in the political opposition: Salih Mahmoud of the Communist Party is a Darfuri and activist, while the vice-chair of the Umma Party is Darfuri. The government also has Darfuri members.

Monitoring and tracking

Asked if NISS is able to track people, SY noted that most of the time NISS track people using their (mobile) phones – these are tapped. If NISS arrest you the first thing they do is take your phone – that's one way of tracking people. People are traced by their phones. All phone providers are under the government. It is difficult to know a person's phone number but if the government has information about a relative, it could track the person. A person can't be traced / tracked without NISS knowing their phone number.

Treatment of family members

Sometimes if the authorities are interested in an individual but cannot find them they will arrest a family member. SY recounted the example of the chair of a farmer's union in Gezira which occurred in July 2018. The chairman was wanted by the authorities, who went to his home but finding that he was not there arrested his son instead. They released the son when his father, the chair, returned. The chairman was detained for 24 hours and then released

Freedom of movement

On the subject of freedom of movement, SY noted security is an issue but a Sudanese can travel anywhere in the country. But parts of Darfur aren't safe, there are armed militias in Darfur – bandits. SY did not think there were problems in travelling between Darfur and Khartoum. Sometimes bandits stop cars, so people try to travel in the day time. SY did not think there were problems at police checkpoints. SY didn't consider an ID card was necessary to travel, unless on a domestic flight and then you were required to have a copy of your ID number, although this wasn't retained by the airport.

SY added that opposition leaders and human rights activist are sometimes banned from traveling outside the country and NISS confiscates their passports. They may also sometimes be detained specially if they travelled abroad and participated in activities outside of Sudan.

Returnees

Asked if people faced problems on return to Sudan, SY stated any activist outside of Sudan, regardless of tribe, may face problems. On specific examples, SY said people are sometimes taken from the airport, detained for 2 days and then released.

Eg a British citizen (of Sudanese origin) – teacher of economics now at the University of Khartoum, and taken by NISS.

Asked if a Darfuri who had made an asylum claim, but was rejected and returned to Sudan, would be of interest / at risk, SY said he had no idea.

Profiles

Whole areas of South Kordofan are not under government control whereas all of Darfur is under government control. Nuba are ill-treated by the government [in South Kordofan], also in Khartoum.

Asked if the government was interested in a particular profile of person, SY noted that the government is facing opposition from everyone – because of the lack of fuel, increase in prices. There is a state of emergency in 9 out of 18 states / provinces, including 5 in Darfur, 3 in South Kordofan and one in Kassala.

Asked who was at risk, SY noted that the public order laws are against women. If a woman is not covering her head, may be oppressed, arrested and lashed – only in Khartoum state. SY thought many women are affected every day – 1000s – all women of different groups.

[Back to Contents](#)

A human rights defender

British Embassy, 14 August 2018

The source is a human rights defender and monitor (HRD). His organisation, the Sudan Social Development Organisation (SUDO) was closed, by the government in 2009 following to the International Criminal Court indictment of President Bashir.

Before closure the SUDO was a rights-based organisation working in different areas across Sudan including Darfur. It provided human rights monitoring and training in human rights awareness as well as documenting human rights violations. After the forced closure, the SUDO challenged the decision of the Humanitarian Assistance Commission (HAC) in the courts which ruled the closure was illegal. However, the government refused to change its position and the SUDO remains closed. The group has continued to document human rights violations in the conflict areas of Darfur, the Two Areas.

The HRD was arrested and detained between December 2016 and August 2017. He was charged under 9 articles of the penal code, 5 of which led to the death penalty. Whilst awaiting trial he was pardoned by the President and released as there was no court case to answer. The HRD's defence was that defending human rights is not a crime and he continues to take this stance.

Non-Arab Darfuris in Khartoum

The HRD was not aware of the number of Darfuris in Khartoum, but they are the majority of the city. There are no credible statistics and the total population of Khartoum is not known. The city has expanded in recent years, since the drought in 1984 people have moved to Khartoum.

When the current regime took power in 1989 the government encouraged people to stay in Khartoum by allocating plots of land to them, and hence others were therefore encouraged to come and find work (as labourers, factory workers, etc.) and acquire a plot of land for housing. The HRD believed this was because the

government wanted to 'dilute' the demography of the city – the educated, middle classes and wealthy elite who could potentially cause problems for the government.

The HRD described how migrants living in shanty towns were given land, which they sold to property developers, and thus the city expanded. Those migrants then instead of being destitute acquired plots of land which they sold and got money. And then moved and settled in other shanty areas to be given another plot of land by the government and it became a way of making money. Many people come from rural areas, mostly from west of the Nile, including Kordofan and Darfur, which were the most populated areas.

The HRD said that the perception of non-Arab Darfuri (NAD) and Arab Darfuri was a misnomer and 'nonsense', and these terms were being used to create differences between tribes. In HRD's view, all Sudanese were African; there were no Arabs per se, and referred to them as Nomads (who are traditionally called Arab tribes).

The HRD did not believe that the state or general society could identify a so-called NAD purely on their appearance. Different tribes (not just NADs) speak with different accents and/or use different Arabic dialects.

The HRD gave some historical background of the movement of people in Sudan over generations and how, as a result of this movement, many Sudanese spoke Arabic (in different dialects depending on area of origin) above their native language.

Asked about the socio-economic situation of Darfuris, HRD couldn't say. When the current regime took power in 1989, Darfuris were in privileged positions. Today, if any Sudanese person is not aligned to, or agreeing with, the government, the National Congress Party, then the state is against you, treated differently. There are more ministers from Darfur than from other parts of the country. From the Fur and Zaghawa; the minister of health is Zaghawa.

People living in shanty towns face difficulties in accessing healthcare, have no services. This affects all tribes living in such conditions. In Khartoum, don't feel the divisions caused by insecurity as in Darfur. The situation in Darfur is not as it was, but not good. 2 or 3 years ago it was very bad, now some people are going back to farms but nomads will still attack.

National Service

National service is compulsory for all Sudanese men and women, under a certain age, who have completed schooling/university, but generally, not served in the military.

The military do not get people; they go into government institutions. People are supposed to do it, but some do not. Some Nomads, farmers and uneducated men may avoid undertaking national service.

Penalties include not being able to obtain a passport or leave the country (by legal channels) without proving you've completed national service or have got an exemption.

State treatment of Darfuris

Asked if Darfuris are treated differently by the state than other tribes, the HRD said perhaps more beaten, when arrested, if a Darfuri but the level of ill-treatment would depend on which organisation arrested and detained you.

NISS personnel are generally from the Nile State and Khartoum, and do not treat Darfuris well. NISS are taught that all Darfuris are rebels, hence the poor treatment.

If a person is arrested by the police, made up of all tribes, they would treat all people the same, regardless of tribe.

Rapid Support Force personnel were from specific tribes when the group was first inaugurated, but now it included NADs and many from other non-Darfuri tribes. The HRD observed that in the first ten years when this regime came to power Darfuris were the militant members of NISS who performed the torture and ill-treatment of detainees and other people. Darfuris were known to be the majority of foot soldiers in the army in the past and were the ones who were seen by South Sudanese as the 'strong fist' in battling the South Sudanese.

A recognized number of the rebel leaders were part of the NISS and the PDF (Popular Defence Force) which was used to fight the SPLA before 2005. Some of those leaders assumed the command of the Mujahideen battalions in South Sudan and the 'Two Areas'.

Some Darfuri university students claim they are members of rebel groups and this causes more tensions and difficulties for all Darfuri students, makes NISS more aggressive. The HRD did not know why some students claimed this but found it a strange phenomenon as it put students at risk without reason. One doesn't need to call oneself a rebel to oppose the government or to express one's demands. If NISS take an interest it is because of such a claimed link with rebel groups.

In Darfur itself, the rebel groups SLM-MM and JEM are no longer there; the SLM-AW are still active. The HRD said that some nomads in Darfur are working with the Fur against the government. Some members of the rebel groups who have signed the peace agreement are now passing on intelligence information to the state about people who assisted the rebels in 2004-2008. These people were arrested for their involvement at that time.

Monitoring

NISS and military intelligence have informants across Sudan which allow them to track the whereabouts of individuals. This is how the rebel movement in Darfur was crushed – because informers reported on them. NISS have the ability to tap phones and monitor social media; this monitoring affects everyone, not just Darfuris.

Asked if NISS monitor all Darfuris, the HRD said no, those who are suspected as having links to the rebel groups or known to oppose the government but true for all Sudanese.

The poor treatment of Darfuris in prisons is aimed at sending a message to all Darfuris to stop supporting the rebels. However, not all Darfuris are suspected of supporting rebels; just those that are suspected of opposing the government, it is a well-known fact that there are many Darfuris who are members of the ruling party and some assume high ranks within the party and the government.

The last wave of large-scale arrests took place last year (2017) when students in the White Nile area resigned from university – in protest at having to pay fees – and large groups of students marched on Khartoum. The HRD believes that students, being young, are being ill-advised by certain political groups, and that causes their real demands [to] fade away.

In general, families of people who are wanted by NISS would not be at risk unless there are personal issues between NISS and the family concerned. It is very rare that families would be targeted – HRD said this wasn't the way things worked in Sudan. This applies to all ethnic groups.

Opposition politicians, human rights defenders, activists and journalists have sometimes been told to report to a NISS office or the police, sometimes on a daily basis. For example, they would attend at 8am and then be forced to stay until 11pm – this is a form of detention, intimidation, and a way of curbing people's activities. But the HRD had not heard of this occurring in the last 2-3 months.

ID numbers and cards

Asked if it is possible to get an ID card in Khartoum, the HRD did not know. He had not heard of any difficulties for people getting ID.

To obtain a national ID number, which is issued on an A4 sized document and is free, the person needs a male relative to witness they are Sudanese. If a person does not have the necessary documentary evidence or witness they would have to go back to their home area to obtain it. IDs are issued in all major towns and cities, including in Darfur.

Most people have an identity card as it is required for voting (in upcoming elections).

If you don't have a National ID number you cannot have a bank account, cash money, go to university or access any government services.

Travel between Darfur and Khartoum

It is possible to travel between Khartoum and Darfur by bus, sometimes by train, and by plane from Khartoum airport. There is a regular bus service from Khartoum to El Fasher in Darfur. However, the cost is not always within the means of people who want to travel so for a fee they may travel on top of lorries. No identity documents are required to travel within the country. However, if taking an internal flight, all passengers must provide a photocopy of their ID.

Between Darfur and Khartoum, there are road checkpoints and these affect all travellers. In conflict areas, there are checkpoints at city entrances. There are checkpoints going into Darfur; some people may be searched; affects all groups. ID numbers are not checked. Checks are made by different groups, looking for different things – drugs, weapons. Checks are arbitrary.

Checkpoints have reduced since the conflict ended in Darfur – checkpoints are now government-run, not run by militia. The HRD gave the example of the road between El Fasher and Nyala in Darfur: during the war there were 15 checkpoints, now 3.

There are no restrictions for travelling around Khartoum. There may be checkpoints in the city late at night (after midnight) in certain locations, which affect all people. These may be a deterrent against crime and coups, for example.

Leaving and returning to Sudan

If someone attempted to travel out of the country on a forged passport, this would likely be detected at the airport and the person detained.

Regarding returnees – Darfuris or anybody else; heard of the returns from Israel, interrogated by NISS then released.

Returnees may be questioned by NISS at the airport, or at a NISS office. Some may be asked to report at a NISS office for a couple of days following their return. This affects all people, not just Darfuris. If it is identified you have been deported, you may face more in-depth questioning.

The HRD was aware of people who have returned from Egypt but they faced no problems. A person is only detained if they are deemed suspicious.

NISS can detain people for lengthy periods. If NISS wish to charge a person, they are sent to the police. NISS do not have authority to 'stand in the Court' – to bring charges. The last group of people detained are in prison awaiting trial. If NISS believe you have information they want and you are not providing it you will be detained for a long time.

Asked if claiming asylum would cause someone to be of interest, the HRD thought not, there has to be a reason. Government has to have information or the person has been involved in some activity.

Darfuris face discrimination but not more so than other poor people in Khartoum.

[Back to Contents](#)

A Swiss official

British Embassy, 13 August 2018

The Swiss official has been based at the Swiss Embassy for 1 year, seconded from the State Secretariat for Migration.

The official's role includes analysing migration risks in Sudan, monitoring migration and human rights. Main focus is Eritrean migrants in Sudan. The official has migration contacts with the EU plus states (EU members plus Switzerland and Norway) – which is a platform for sharing information about migration and human rights in Sudan. Also has contact with local partners and the UN.

General situation for Darfuris

Darfuri issues are not a major focus for the Swiss Embassy. Last year there were approximately 87 asylum claims from Sudanese nationals in Switzerland and that number is decreasing: 17% of Sudanese claims were granted asylum. Swiss interest in Sudan is mainly as a transit country for migrants from other countries.

As far as the Swiss official is aware, Sudanese nationals claiming asylum in Switzerland are mostly not from Darfur, the majority come from Khartoum. Some might claim to come from Darfur.

The Swiss official has no specific knowledge of Darfuris but has met some Darfuris and is aware of the Darfur Bar Association that lobbies foreign embassies.

From a general point of view, based on information from other sources, the Swiss Official is aware of some discrimination of non-Arab Darfuris (NADs) but does not know how this manifests itself in day-to-day life.

A NAD is employed at the Swiss Embassy and has indicated they have no problems securing work but has faced some discrimination, for example, being pushed out of a queue for fuel during the recent fuel crisis. The Darfuri at the Embassy says he has a different accent; as he was educated in Chad and speaks French.

Asked if aware of particular troubles – arrests and detentions - faced by Darfuris in general, the Swiss Official said no.

Eritreans

Main focus is Eritreans, who are sometimes arrested. There are around, officially, 80,000 Eritreans in Sudan but reliable statistics are difficult to obtain. Half of Eritreans are in Khartoum, the remainder in camps in the east of Sudan. Eritreans in Khartoum are de facto illegals as they are supposed to stay in refugee camps.

Some Eritreans have lived in Sudan a long time. They go to Khartoum to work or as a transit city, before moving elsewhere. They obtain ID cards but work in the black market. Most Eritreans in Khartoum live in El Jaraf neighbourhood, east part of the city.

Eritrea refugee resettlement programmes were temporarily stopped in May 2018 because of allegations of fraud in the UNHCR.

Returns

In 2017 Switzerland forcibly removed 4 Sudanese in an irregular [immigration] situation in Switzerland on a charter flight. This year so far, a further 5 have been removed. All those Sudanese were escorted back by the Swiss police to Sudan. There were 9 controlled voluntary returns in 2017, but Switzerland does not track these.

A team of Swiss representatives were at Khartoum airport when the returnees arrived in 2018, and waited until the returnees had gone through the immigration process, but were not present during interviews by immigration and NISS.

The Swiss official has not received any reports of mistreatment whilst returnees go through immigration.

The returnees travel on a Sudanese laissez passer, issued by the Sudanese Embassy in Switzerland.

The Embassy hears a lot from civil society groups, who are quick to raise issues. Though not well organised, civil society are quite active; they are quick to make declarations about human rights issues and have been known to repeatedly attempt to get permission have public gatherings. Since arrival, the Swiss official has not received reports of mistreatment of returnees and believed the Embassy would be informed if that was the case.

The Swiss official observed that every now and then there is government oppression of civil society. In January 2018, there were protests due to the economic crisis, the government came down on the activists, and people were arrested. There have been less protests since then; people are more concerned and focussed on obtaining food and fuel than protesting.

ID cards

The Swiss official had no information on Sudanese identity cards and how to obtain them for Sudanese but noted it is hard for Eritreans to obtain identity papers.

[Back to Contents](#)

Lieutenant-General Awad Dahiya

**Head of Passports and Civil Registration Corporation, Ministry of Interior,
Ministry of Interior offices, 16 August 2018**

The FFM delegation met General Dahiya (GD) at his office at the Ministry of Interior (MoI). The General was accompanied by other MoI officers, including Gen. Balawi, Director of Passports and Immigration; Gen. Omesh, of the State of Khartoum police – emergency and anti-riot operations; Gen. Mahmood, of the National Corporation for bilateral relations with the UK; Hamid Amir, of Operations Unit – Anti-riots (under the Khartoum State Dept.); Head of the General Department of Civil Registry; Gen. Jamal, Counter-trafficking; Dafala, General Division for International Cooperation.

GD and the Director of Passports and Immigration described the process for exiting Sudan. An entry visa is required for Europe. Exit visas are also required and can be applied for at passport offices all over Sudan – there are 5 main offices in Khartoum. The applicant must provide their valid passport, evidence they have completed national service, and their reason for travel. For example, they would need evidence of where they were going to study or access healthcare. The cost for an exit visa was 105 Sudanese pounds (around US\$2). You must not be banned from travelling, for example, if you have a pending criminal case. There is also some political banning and information of people banned from travel is stored on a electronic database – a national alert/watchlist.

A person does not have to purchase flights until your exit visa is issued. Exit visas are required for all border crossings. No entry visas are required for Eritrea or Libya – there is a small fee of US\$10 at the entry point. Visas for Egypt are required for men under age 50, but not required for women.

To obtain a passport a national number is required. We have biometric data for 90-95% of Sudanese recorded on the civil registration database. When someone applies for a passport, the data is retrieved from the system, or obtained from taking a fingerprint. Fingerprints are taken for everyone over the age of 12.

Asked how many on the civil registration database, GD said more than 29 million citizens are registered with a national number, 9 million of them children (under 12). These figures are based on the 2008 census. The FFM team observed that they had heard that the population has been estimated at 40 million – so how did GD know the census was accurate. GD noted that the accuracy of the census cannot be guaranteed.

The registration of national numbers for everyone began in 2011. There are 73 fixed centres for registration across the country; 1,400 mobile units were sent across the 18 states to ensure registration.

There are certain regions where registration has not been fully completed but overall indicators suggest 80% of the country has been covered. Some regions have lower rates of registration than others. As the security situation in Darfur and South Kordofan improves, more mobile units will be sent out to gather additional data to complete the process begun in these areas.

A national ID number is required to access services, including bank accounts and schooling; government services.

Asked what are requirements to obtaining a national number, GD noted that conditions of citizenship include birth to Sudanese parents who were born in Sudan. Citizens of other countries can get citizenship under certain conditions, for example, naturalisation. When issuing national ID cards, the civil registration database is checked to ensure the applicant is Sudanese.

Statements will be taken to establish nationality before a national number is issued; 2 male witnesses (relatives or tribal elders) may be required to verify identity. Four witnesses may be required if no close relatives are available.

National ID numbers are free so accessible to all citizens. Most government services are free.

When departing the country via the airport a person's passport is checked by immigration and security. The validity of travel documents are checked as well as personal belongings. The exit visa is checked on the database and verification that the person is not banned from travel or wanted by the state.

Forged passports were reportedly not a problem, especially since electronic, biometric passports had been introduced.

Some entry visas to Europe have been found to be false and sometimes detected by the airline.

No trafficking of groups through the airport had been heard of.

Regarding the checks made for returnees, the person's passport is stamped on arrival. If it is found a person is wanted, i.e. on the watchlist, they would be handed to security. If there was no evidence of an exit visa the person would be interviewed to establish how and why they left Sudan illegally. There is no penalty for leaving the country without an exit visa (although there may be a temporary travel ban) but the authorities would need to establish the returnee was Sudanese.

The MoI had heard of allegations of returned failed asylum seekers (FAS) being arrested. GD cited cases of 495 Sudanese nationals forcibly returned from Jordan (in 2015) and 40 from Italy (in 2017). All were well received and supported on return. Most were economic migrants. Unless there is a criminal case pending against a returnee they do not face any problems on return. Of the 500+ returnees, and 129 from Libya in 2018 – the Sudanese authorities have to verify their identity. GD was not aware of any arrests. Returnees are interviewed to establish nationality.

GD had heard of the FAS returned from Belgium who claimed he was mistreated. The Sudanese government supported Belgium by verifying the identity of more than 60 asylum seekers; 40 were found to be Sudanese and 6 have been returned. Some FAS have also been returned from Switzerland and the USA. If the returnee doesn't have a passport they are returned on a Sudanese issued emergency travel document (*laissez passer*) obtained from a Sudanese Embassy in the country of return. The government only accepts Sudanese *laissez passer*, not documents issued by the country from which the person is returning.

Claiming asylum abroad is not seen as a crime.

Sudanese nationals returned from Israel have been interviewed and released. As law enforcement agents, the interest is not from where a person is from, e.g. Darfur, but what they are doing.

There are non-Arabs in the police; GD is a Nuba.

Trafficking of people is a problem. The US Trafficking in Person's report has ranked Sudan as Tier 3 country. There was a failure to reflect on what the government had been doing to improve the situation. Trafficking was not widely known about until 2014 when the anti-trafficking law came into force. There is a CID counter-trafficking unit. The government of Sudan is reviewing its laws to ensure consistency: there are regional (state) laws but there is a need federal laws too. Human rights groups say anti-trafficking laws are not clear or wide enough. The government has new anti-trafficking laws passing through parliament now.

Immigration / police receiving more training, aim to improve capabilities. Now there is more training and international support allowing for better migration management.

A new phenomenon is organised begging. Police have found organised groups do this. Begging is not a crime but exploiting people by forcing them to beg is.

[Back to Contents](#)

King of the Berti

British Embassy, 15 August 2018

NB FCO 2nd political secretary and 2nd political officer translated from Arabic into English

King of the Berti (KB), is part of the tribal administration in Darfur. His role used to be a formal position, established in the 1970s, now informal – not statutory. Responsible for looking after the Berti community – their rights and demands and requests for support and resolving problems - in Darfur, Khartoum, elsewhere in Sudan and overseas. For example, recently resolved an issue of harassment in Cairo.

Principal role in Darfur is to prevent inter and intra tribal conflict and if / when it does happen to sort this out [2nd pol sec note: disputes usually occur over resources, theft of animals, water, etc]. KB spent his time between Darfur and Khartoum.

KB has no official role in government but is a member of the national assembly for Darfur, having been elected in 2010 and 2015. He is also a member of the National Congress Party which he joined on the advice of his family.

KB estimated that there are 2-3 million Berti in Darfur, half of whom were in North Darfur (over 50% of the population in that area were Berti). Berti are smaller in number than the Fur in Darfur, but larger than other groups. While in Khartoum there are more than 200,000 Berti – this figure is based on members of the community undertaking a rough census by splitting the capital into 6 districts. Berti live in the districts of Hadj Yusuf (Bari), Umbada, which is quite poor and where there are also lot of Nuba (Omdurman), Kalakala (Khartoum), Thawar (Omdurman) and Mayo (Khartoum). Also live in the shanty towns outside of the city. Berti have 'mayors' – 'umda' – who lead communities. There are 24 in North Darfur, similar roles in North and South Darfur but less than North Darfur. Also have 'umda' in Greater Khartoum in Hadj Yusuf and Umbada [FCO official observed that these districts are quite poor areas].

Hard to distinguish Berti from other Sudanese / Darfuris, which is why it is hard to give an estimate of the size of the tribe. They don't have their own language, often inter-marry with other groups and are prone to integrate with other groups. Their features are less markedly 'African' [2nd pol sec noted that they are from North Darfur, tend to be less 'African' – having similar features to the Zaghawa, both being

the most Northern tribes]. Inter-marriage with Arabs less common than it is with other Darfuri tribes.

Berti are noted by their neutrality in the civil conflict in Darfur. They were not with the Janjaweed nor with the government or the rebels; they stayed out of fighting. But that doesn't mean they are not affected by the situation. There was an inter-tribal conflict with the Ziadiya (Arab tribe) between 2012 and 2015. Calmed down now as government is stricter, law and order generally better. The government has had a weapons collection campaign for the last 1.5 years. To demonstrate their commitment [to peace] the Berti gave up their weapons.

In regard to access of Berti / Darfuris to public services (health, education, employment, etc) in Khartoum, KB noted that the Berti have been coming to Khartoum for 100 years, to work as labourers, on farms. They face some discrimination in the labour market, have some difficulties.

Darfuri Arabs experience less discrimination: they speak Arabic (as compared to other languages spoken by non-Arab Darfuri groups [although Berti also only speak Arabic]). The experience of Berti is not particularly different from other Darfuri tribes. Problems in accessing education and health - KB helps Berti with accessing health and education.

When asked if there Berti across different segments and sectors in Sudanese society (government, civil service, medicine, academia, business, police, army, etc), KB agreed with this but noted that there are very few officers in the police and army, but many are successful in business. He doesn't see the situation changing soon, e.g. the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Darfur are hiring people from the same tribes as themselves, as fear situation might flare up.

In accessing ID cards, KB noted that the government used to consider the Berti a border tribe, which meant a person needed 4 witnesses who were elderly (and male) to confirm their identity. However, more recently the Berti have been able to demonstrate that they are only in Sudan [and not a tribe that straddles the border with a neighbouring country], so only need 2 witnesses. Asked if it would be possible for someone to migrate to Khartoum to obtain an ID number /card even if they had no family to authenticate their identity, KB agreed it was possible. There are 'tribal' witnesses who can testify even if not the person's blood relatives. KB can do this, but has also appointed a delegate to do so on his behalf.

Asked if the Berti must do national service (NS), KB said it was the same rules for everyone. 1 year for graduates, 2 years for non-graduates. In general, NS done before university, but if accepted at university persons may be able to postpone. If a person did not do NS, then not able to go to university, won't get (formal) employment and technically not allowed to travel although there are exceptions to this which cost money.

When asked about the government's attitude towards to the Berti – was it suspicious of them - KB would not say that there is discrimination compared to other Darfuri tribes but difficulties in accessing health and education (which are problems for all tribes). One area where there is discrimination is that the Berti are not incorporated into the regular security forces – police, army, RSF – across Sudan. Representation in these groups may help improve relationships with them.

When asked if the Berti had problems with the police / security services, KB said no – Berti are generally considered a peaceful tribe.

KB thought there was no issue travelling from Darfur to Khartoum.

KB was not aware of cases (or subsequent ii-treatment) of Berti travelling to Europe, claiming asylum, being denied asylum and then returning to Sudan.

KB, however, was concerned that asylum seekers from Sudan claimed to be Berti when they were not (because there is little to distinguish the Berti from other tribes that cannot be learnt), and wanted to help put a stop to this which would help prevent illegal migration. KB is able to help identify and confirm individuals as members of the Berti and has written letters confirming this a number of times.

[Back to Contents](#)

An activist

Meeting with an activist, 14 August 2018, the British Embassy, Khartoum

The source is a practising lawyer and activist. They are part of the women's taskforce whose aim is to increase women's engagement in peace, public life and politics; getting the agenda of women into the public arena.

Source co-founded in 1990 an organisation named Mutawinat (Arabic = women partners working together with a view to achieve certain objectives). The organisation provides legal aid to women, helps them get access to their rights. The organisation has worked on a project with the UNHCR to help refugee women.

It also works as a legal advisor for a number of western embassies, verifying documents such as birth and marriage certificates (with the Ministry of Interior), university certificates with the place of issue. Generally, most are genuine, some are not.

Non-Arab Darfuris

Source was surprised by interest in non-Arab Darfuris (NAD). Sudan does not have pure 'Arab' tribes. Arab vs African was not an issue until the last 10 years, but not before that – the terminology (Arab, non-Arab) is quite new in the sense it is now is being used. Tribe only matters in marriage – a girl's family will ask what the husband-to-be's tribe is. Inter-tribal marriage did cause a problem in the past except a few tribes, but not now. Mixed marriages are common. Many Darfuris marry Arabs from the centre – mostly men marrying Arab women, especially those Darfuris with money including tribes such as Zagawa and Fur.

The source has contact with NAD; she had been to Darfur the previous week to attend a UN-sponsored workshop on women's rights to discuss international standards for fair trials.

Asked about state treatment / targeting of NAD, source could not say every Darfuri has a problem. If he is a politician, an activist... you can't generalise each case should be considered/dealt with on its merits.

There are many NADs in Khartoum. After the conflict of 2003 – 2008, many moved to the city. Khartoum is not good, but better than other places. Many move to the city now for the services, many from the different Darfuri groups come to work, including women, such as selling tea, water, air time for mobiles and other petty and informal job opportunities.

Some NADs live in the shanty towns around Khartoum. People like to stay together, sometimes with those from the same geographical area of their origin. For example,

those from El Fasher stay with each other. Darfuris gather in Fateh, part of Omdurman. People who have moved to Khartoum contact their families and bring them to join them.

Darfuris (Arabs and non-Arabs) are easily identifiable by skin colour, language; but mainly by their accent. People who have grown up in Khartoum, have an accent they have picked up from their parents. However, features are the same as other Sudanese.

As to Darfuri community groups, the source noted that there is the Darfur Bar Association (DBA) (observed that the translation from Arabic is actually Darfur Lawyers' Association, the 'bar' is inclusive for all lawyers in Sudan). The DBA is less active now than in the past but if big clashes occur, e.g. at a university, they would become involved. The source also knows of Safaa Elagip, a Darfurian women's activist, who provides support for and development of women, travels between Khartoum and Darfur.

Socio-economic situation of non-Arab Darfuris

On Darfuris socio-economic situation in Khartoum, the source noted that Darfuris have access to healthcare, treated the same as other tribes.

Enrolment in the military and police forces may be a problem, unless the individual supports the (ruling) National Congress Party (NCP). In the army and police, there are many Darfuris, including officers in lower ranks.

In terms of education, following the Doha Peace Agreement, Darfuris are entitled to free university education. But the source thought that once the funds ran out of the process, the government declined to give money to students to cover student fees.

For jobs, many prefer to go abroad like every other young person. For work, Sudan is a kind of hell for everyone. There is no clear plan of enrolment for graduates. Thousands are applying for 10-15 positions. When asked if Darfuris faced discrimination in getting jobs, the source considered it was more about political affiliation, whether a member of the NCP or not. Maybe someone (fellow tribe members) inside an organisation could help a person get a job. Some people of one tribe employ people others of same tribe in an organisation, e.g. in the oil industry, where most employees are of the same tribe of the Minister for oil.

ID cards

In order to obtain an ID card a person needs to get a male relative on the father's side to confirm their identity. When asked if difficult for Darfuris to get cards, particularly those who have moved to Khartoum without family, source said that if there is a problem it is not necessarily because the person is from Darfur.

Problems faced by Darfuris are similar to those faced by other Sudanese tribes. Sometimes a person will pay to get an ID card if they don't have any relatives to confirm/give a hand.

Students

When asked about the cost of student fees, the source commented that this depends on which university and which subject, for example the faculties of medicine and

engineering were the most expensive. There is also a problem in affording / staying in accommodation.

National Service

Darfuris have to do national service (NS) – there are no exceptions. They have military training, sent to a camp (but this is not for firearms training). After this, they are attached to a government ministry to complete NS.

NS is one year for a graduate, 2 years for non-graduates. Most students go after they have completed university.

Asked if government round-ups people for NS, the source thought that this used to be the case in the past but this has stopped in the last 5 years. The FFM team had heard it suggested that it might be possible to pay money to avoid NS, the source had heard about this but did not have evidence of it occurring.

The source noted that once NS is completed a person was given a certificate / letter. They then got a card showing they had done NS, which had to be renewed every 2 to 3 years to maintain proof of having completed NS, which costs around 200 Sudanese Pounds each time.

Asked about the penalty for not doing NS, the source said that it would prevent a future career and gave the example of a lawyer, they would not be able to enrol at the bar. Nor would a graduate be able to apply for a masters degree without showing the NS card. When asked if there are other penalties – for example prison or fine – the response was no.

NS is for both men and women, but the government does not 'insist' that women undertake NS.

State discrimination of non-Arab Darfuris

The source was asked if the state discriminates against non-Arab Darfuris, in their experience they were not discriminated before the courts. If a defendant in a civil or criminal case, treated the same as other groups.

Source did not have the impression that Darfuris are discriminated generally. She observed that she had many Darfuri friends – not their experience.

Asked what profiles of people who are of interest to the state, the source thought it would be any opposition, anyone not affiliated to the NCP.

The source stated that in 2011 the government (NISS) monitored social media heavily. For example, some activists attempted to co-ordinate assistance / support for South Sudanese in camps in South Khartoum. The source described going in a convoy of cars to South Khartoum, the people in the first car were arrested but source was not arrested. However, the following day the source noticed a car outside their home and they were followed for 2 days, to see if they were going to report the incident.

The state targets human rights defenders, politicians. They don't want people to help the South Sudanese in IDP/refugee camps. There are no IDP camps for Darfuris or those from South Kordofan in Khartoum but many live in shanty towns.

The source observed that the people of South Sudan did not want separation from Sudan; had spoken to 'others' about this. Some people, are including all walks of life talking about reunion of the 2 countries.

It was noted by the fact-finding team that there were large scale arrests of Darfuris in the past. Was this the case now? The source noted that there was a demonstration in January 2018 following the government's reduction of subsidies and lack of fuel, at which time many people, from all tribes, were arrested. The government kept those arrested for a 'long time'. Some of the cases were taken to the constitutional court – court responded that NISS is able to arrest people without justification and hold them without trial for 3 months, part of their job. Some people were arrested at their houses – think they were probably the leaders of the protests. Now been released after 2, 3, 4 months without trial. People i.e. relative and lawyers not allowed to see them when arrested by NISS. The source was not aware of visible physical violence against those arrested but they were exhausted through continual interrogation. Women who were arrested were sent to a prison in Omdurman; while the men were sent to NISS facilities.

When asked whether ghost houses still exist, it was noted that they do. However, while they used to be normal houses, now in NISS offices. It's not possible to find NISS detention centres, i.e. formal detention centres run by NISS do not exist.

The source noted that more than 500 people were arrested in Jan 2018 at the demonstrations. Ordinary people were released, but those believed to be leaders / activists / politicians were kept – didn't know the exact numbers of these categories.

Tracing / tracking by state

Asked if NISS / security forces can track or trace someone, the source noted that when travelling from Khartoum to Darfur have to report to NISS and fill a form but also explained that this was for travelling on a UN plane. Activists have travel restrictions, but for ordinary people there are none. However, there are many checkpoints between Khartoum and Darfur. There are NISS at the airport.

When questioned about NISS' abilities to track someone, the source noted that NISS is very advanced. It has technology – across the whole of Sudan databases and employs a number of IT people. It is funded by international bodies to deal with illegal immigration, but uses the resources on its own (Sudanese nationals) people too.

Returns

Asked about returns of failed asylum seekers (FAS) from Europe having problems, the response was, yes – if returned by force - the authorities will know about their status, they will face problems, definitely face arrest. Having a Western Embassy person at the airport to greet returnees would identify FAS. The authorities will interrogate them to see how dangerous they are and to find out the reason for claiming asylum. Had heard of one case on social media who was arrested at the place where he has staying and surrendered to the NISS in Khartoum.

However, when asked if the source personally knew of a case, the source had not.

The source went on to add that the government will arrest and detain at the airport to find out why the person claimed asylum, to connect it to other activity – political or opposition related reasons. This would happen for political activists.

The FFM delegation explained that European governments return only those they consider not at risk. The source then observed that the authorities are likely to interrogate someone and if they have no connections with the political opposition, then release them. But if they have a connection, they will arrest them.

State monitoring overseas

Asked whether someone who was active in Europe would be monitored by NISS and then detained on return, the source thought this would be dangerous. Knew of women activists in the UK, with family in Sudan, have to be careful and try not to be visible, but added that NISS would not arrest family members. Families of wanted persons might be harassed or have their phones bugged, to try and identify persons whereabouts, but families normally would not face arrest.

Human rights generally

Generally, freedom of movement and expression are restricted, and this has got worse in the last 5 to 6 years. Anyone who speaks 'loudly' will be arrested. The source said they had been arrested after petitioning the Ministry of Interior. Because the source is well known, the NISS were not as aggressive with them as they used to be in the past. Last arrested 2 years ago. However, some people are beaten.

Source is afraid for their [family]... might face problems. Also, spouse, who is a member of a political party, actively involved in the political opposition has been arrested 3 times.

[Back to Contents](#)

Annex F: Fact finding team's observations

Arrival

Khartoum International Airport, 11 August 2018

After alighting plane, it was around 5 to 10 minutes bus ride from plane to the terminal.

Upon entry to terminal was passport control consisting of numerous immigration control desks for:

- Arab visitors x 1
- Non-Sudanese x 1
- Diplomats and organisations x 1
- Passports (for Sudanese nationals) x 5-6
- Entry visa section x 1

The immigration control, security (and baggage) checks, baggage claim and customs checks are in a single large hall. The airport was busy, with many people who were not passengers but not always clear what their role and identity was.

Stage 1:

Passport and visa checked by an immigration officer (both male and female officers were present at desks – light blue shirt). No obvious prolonged questioning of persons entering the country. A diverse range of people entering the country, the majority appeared to be Sudanese (waiting for checks at Sudanese national's desks).

Many Arab passengers too, but this may have been a larger number than usual – re upcoming Hajj. Arab 'tourists' were given priority over other passengers when passing through immigration.. No obvious security people in this waiting area, although some men in beige uniforms, so difficult to tell.

Stage 2:

A few feet beyond the immigration desk was the security check.. Both in large area with only minimal low partition. Hand luggage checked through a scanner

Stage 3:

Further passport check by, the FFM assumed, were NISS (plain-clothed) officers. Some passengers individuals waved through without checks; FFM team given cursory checks.

Stage 4:

Baggage control. This was in a second large area - separated from non-passengers (i.e. in the public area where) by a simple cordon.

Stage 5:

Customs (still in large area with baggage collect) – no signage, nothing looking official – just three female staff. At this point our luggage labels were checked against labels received on departure at Gatwick.

Stage 6:

Arrivals hall and exit. No obvious signs of airport police or other security.

[Back to Contents](#)

Departure

Khartoum International Airport, 17 August 2018

The FFM team's flight was at 4.10pm to Doha from Khartoum International Airport (KIA). The FFM team arrived at KIA at around 2.20pm.

Entry to the terminal was only permitted for those travelling. At the entrance to the building, there was a desk and uniformed security guards checked travellers' documents, who asked for passports and tickets. However, one member was not stopped by guards and walked through unchecked.

After this check, there was security point where bags and the travellers were scanned.

The main arrivals hall is relatively small – perhaps 10-15 check-in desks. It was busy and it was difficult to identify if the people present were travellers, airport staff (as they were not always identified with badges), immigration police (although most were identifiable in light blue uniforms), other officials (including the security services) or others.

The FFM team proceeded to the check-in desk, at which all passengers – Sudanese and foreign nationals – were required to collect and complete a departure / exit form (hereafter exit form). The document for Sudanese was in black / dark-blue font; for non-Sudanese nationals light blue font. The form appeared to be the same form completed by FFM team when entering Sudan (handed out on flight before landing). The forms for both the Sudanese and non-Sudanese nationals required personal details such name, date of birth, passport details, profession, destination, etc.

Following check-in, all travellers had to queue and pass a desk manned by 1 or 2 non-uniformed staff who checked passport and exit form, then stamped the exit form. After the form had been stamped, all travellers had to go an adjoining hall to pass through immigration control, on the way showing the stamped exit form to an official standing at desk at the 'narrow' entrance of the hall. The FFM team saw a number of people - some identifiable as airline staff, immigration police, others without identification – pass back and forth between the check-in and immigration halls without being checked or challenged by this official.

Immigration control consisted of around 8 booths, although only 4 were in use. In the corner of the room was an immigration police office. The FFM were told to change booths without explanation but, on observing the immigration police officers once through immigration control, this appeared to be because there were 2 separate databases / electronic systems for Sudanese and non-Sudanese nationals in operation. The desk they were channelled to was for foreign nationals only.

The FFM team each submitted their passport, including exit visas, and exit form (the FFM team had already obtained exit visas in advance of attending the airport). The

immigration process for the FFM delegation was slow, perhaps 5 to 10 minutes for each person, as passport details and other data were entered. The delays between entering data suggested a slow operating system. The FFM team were not asked questions by the immigration police officer at the desk.

Sudanese nationals were processed more quickly than foreign nationals. On observing the immigration process once through immigration control, each Sudanese passport was scanned and the data from the passport then appeared on the officer's computer screen – it is possible the passports contained biometric data, hence the scanning process. If a Sudanese passport was bona fide, two green ticks appeared on the immigration police officer's computer screen. Occasionally a red cross appeared, but this changed to a green cross on re-scanning in all cases (less than 10) observed by the FFM team.

The FFM then proceeded to a security check, where bags and persons were scanned, and asked to show their passports and boarding passes. One of the team was separated from the other 2 members. On completing the security scan, the separated FFM team member was asked how much money he had by an official dressed in green/kharki uniform. He showed the official (a roll of perhaps US\$200 in various denominated notes), was asked if he had any more to which he said no, and was then allowed to proceed to the departure gates.

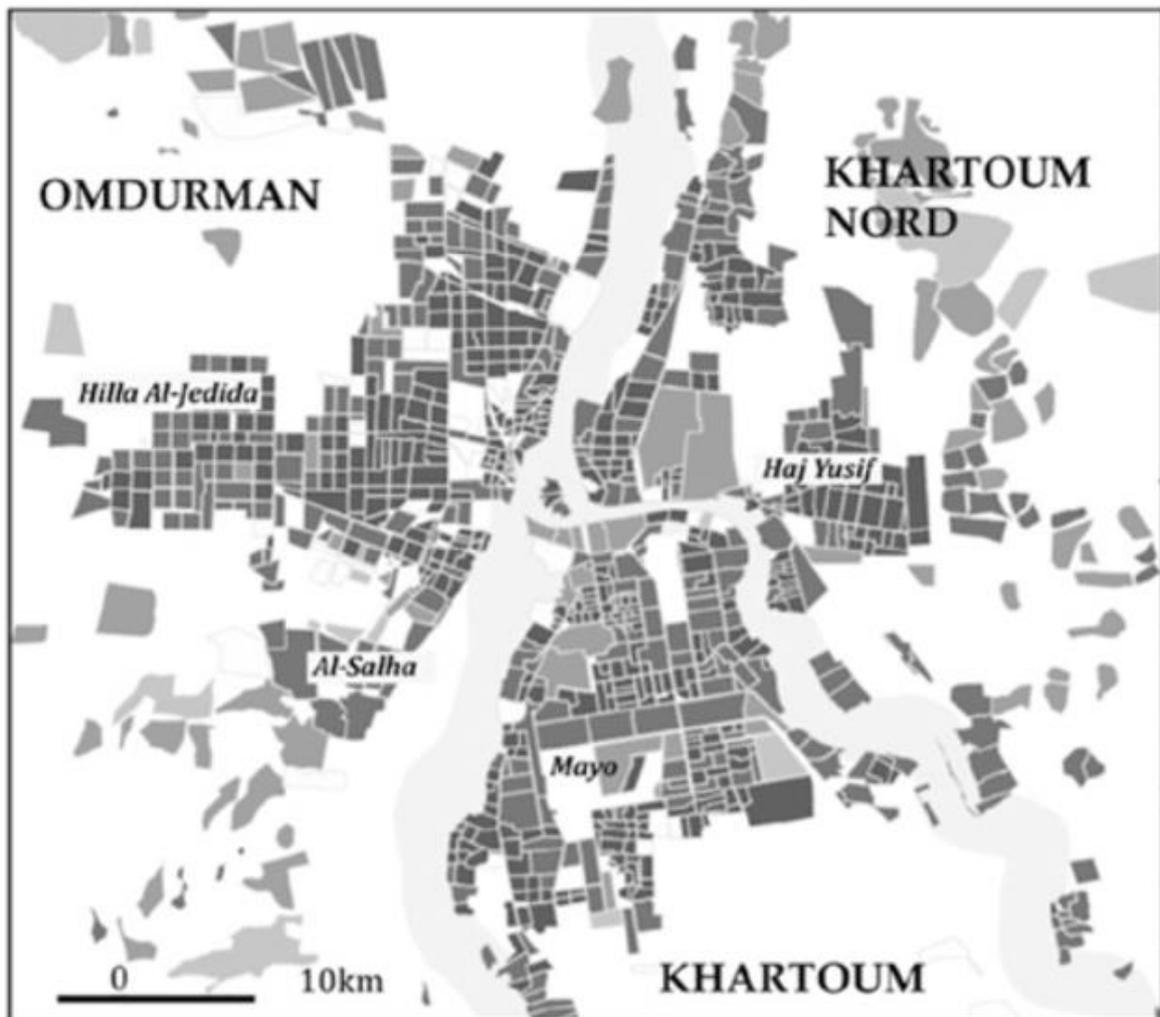
At the check-in gates, the FFM team were required to show their passports and boarding passes before entering the waiting area and were then asked to show these again before being allowed to walk to the bus collection point. Boarding passes were requested to be shown before boarding the bus which then took them to their aeroplane.

Throughout the departure process, the FFM team did not observe any individual being stopped or taken aside for further questioning by the immigration police or other individuals.

[Back to Contents](#)

Annex G: Maps

Map of Greater Khartoum



 Urban area with density of population
[from 0 to 50 000 hab/km²]

 Nile

Mayo Case studies

© A. Franck et C. Gillette
Source: National Census 2008

468

⁴⁶⁸ A Frank and C Gillete based on National Census 2008 data, Map of Greater Khartoum, no date, accessed via brill.com, [url](#)

Map of Sudan



470

[Back to Contents](#)