



## PRESIDENT IMPOSES SANCTIONS AGAINST SUDAN TO STOP DARFUR VIOLENCE

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*Demanding that the government of Sudan stop the genocide in the troubled Darfur region, President Bush this week announced new U.S. economic sanctions against the African country.*

The sanctions will prevent 31 companies owned or controlled by the Sudanese government from having any dealings with U.S. banks and companies. Many of the companies are in the lucrative oil industry. The sanctions also target two high-level government officials, who are accused of fueling the violence in Darfur.

President Bush made his announcement at the White House Tuesday.

"For too long, the people of Darfur have suffered at the hands of a government that is complicit in the bombing, murder and rape of innocent civilians. My administration has called these actions by their rightful name: genocide. The world has a responsibility to put an end to it," Mr. Bush said.

### **Genocide in Darfur**

President Bush was referring to the violence in the western region of Sudan called Darfur, where attacks have killed more than 200,000 people and displaced nearly 2.5 million people since 2003.

In 2003 two groups of ethnic Africans from the region rebelled against the Arab-led central Sudanese government, demanding inclusion in new power-sharing arrangements.

To suppress the rebellion, the Sudanese government trained and armed militias of Arab nomads, called the Janjaweed, according to human rights groups. The Sudanese government denies it has trained, armed or helped these militia members.

The Janjaweed are accused of killing people from particular ethnic groups, especially many civilians who are not directly involved in the fighting. The United States officially called their actions genocide in 2004.

### **Will sanctions work?**

Many believe that U.S. economic sanctions alone are not strong enough to stop the violence in the region.

"Sudan has been quite adept at avoiding sanctions for the past decade, and this is not going to have a lot of bite," Philippe de Pontet, a political risk analyst at the Eurasia Group in Washington, told the International Herald Tribune.

Others say that a more united effort from the international community is necessary.

"We think there needs to be international mobilization rather than unilateral action at this stage," Amnesty International's Secretary-General Irene Khan told reporters in Cairo, Reuters reported.

Andrew Natsios, the U.S. special envoy for Sudan, acknowledged that the sanctions might not cripple the country's oil industry.

"The purpose of these sanctions is not sanctions," Natsios said. "The purpose of these sanctions is to send a message to the Sudanese government to start behaving differently when they deal with their own people."

Direct critics of the sanctions include China, the largest consumer of Sudanese oil.

"Persistent pressure and sanctions will not resolve these issues. They can only make the problems more complicated," said Liu Giujin, Chinese envoy to Darfur.

In addition to criticizing the U.S. sanctions, China, a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council with veto powers, has also prevented the United Nations from instituting broader international sanctions.

### **The United Nations' role**

China, along with Russia -- another permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, has so far blocked the international body from passing a resolution that would force the Sudanese government to allow a U.N. peacekeeping operation into the country.

The most recent effort called for a combination of African Union and U.N. peacekeeping troops numbering 22,000 to enter Sudan, but was derailed by other members of the council.

The government of Sudan, based in the capital of Khartoum, has insisted that there is no genocide and that it will not allow U.N. troops inside its borders, saying it is an internal matter under their control.

Currently there are 7,000 African Union troops in Sudan monitoring the situation there. But these troops are too few in number and ill-equipped to prevent the wide-spread killing of civilians. In addition, their mandate does not allow them to actively prevent the violence.

Neither China nor Russia, which is a major supplier of guns and other weapons to the Sudanese government, are in favor of allowing the international community to intervene in a sovereign state because of human rights abuses.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who in April had asked the United States to hold off sanctions, asked for more time to reach a diplomatic solution in Sudan.

### **Aid difficulties**

This diplomatic wrangling is occurring while international aid groups report a growing difficulty in getting food, medicine and other essential resources to the millions of displaced people in refugee camps in Darfur and neighboring Chad.

The new French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner has said he wants to establish a corridor in Chad for humanitarian aid.

"Obviously we are very concerned about the humanitarian situation and we want to work on that with our partners in the G8 and the EU," said Kouchner, who co-founded the aid agency Doctors Without Borders, Reuters reported.

*-- Compiled by Annie Schleicher for NewsHour Extra*

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