



HDPTCAR/FICKR

## Perspectives from the Arab World

This bulletin is part of FRIDE's project "The gap between narratives and practices. Darfur: Responses from the Arab world", funded by the Ford Foundation.

### Main issues during May 2009

1. Relations between Sudan and Chad.
2. International efforts to reach a peace agreement.
3. Sudan and the ICC

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A monthly selection of Arab official, journalistic and academic sources is compiled to give an overview of the main events, opinions and documents from the perspective of the Arab world.

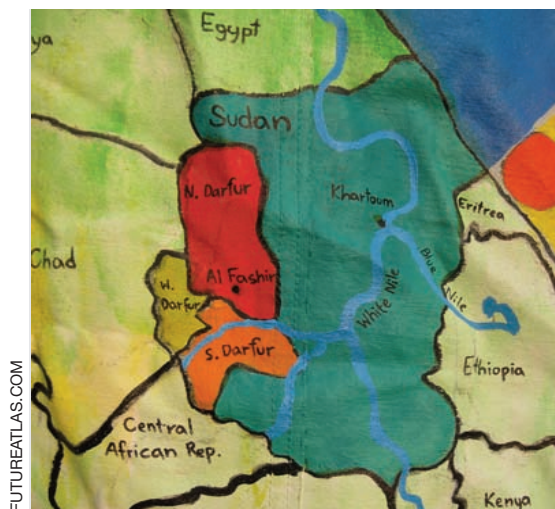
### Introduction

**The main issues** regarding Darfur during the month of May 2009 have been related to the international efforts to reach a peace agreement in Doha; relations between Sudan and Chad; and the events following the ICC's arrest warrant against President Bashir and some rebel leaders.

May 2009 bore witness, on the one hand, to an escalation of the conflict in Darfur, with 64 casualties as a result of violent clashes between rebel forces of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and government troops over the Sudanese army base close to the Sudan-Chad border in the north of Darfur. These particular clashes and other violent confrontations in the area have forced 160 people to leave their homes. On the other hand, various international meetings and relevant official visits to Khartoum have been taking place to explore ways out of the crisis, including several meetings of

government officials and JEM rebel representatives in Doha. The latest of these included presidential envoys from China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. The European Union officially backed this initiative through a letter from Javier Solana to the Qatari Minister for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Ahmed bin Abdullah al Mahmoud.

An agreement was reached between Sudan and Chad on 4 May under Qatari and Libyan mediation. The Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council welcomed this agreement, but tensions between the two states mounted again later in the month when Sudan accused Chad of carrying out three air strikes on its territory immediately after the agreement had been signed. Although Sudan called the raids “acts of war”, a government representative said Sudan was willing to look for a political rather than military solution to this conflict.



The third issue attracting international attention to Darfur has been the voluntary appearance of rebel leader Bahr Idriss Abu Garda, who is charged with war crimes for taking part in an attack on North Darfur in 2007, during which 12 African Union (AU) peacekeepers were killed. Abu Garda is the first person from the Darfur conflict to appear before the tribunal and has repeatedly denied the charges against him.

With regard to other ICC charges, Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo has stated that he is confident that the court's judges will soon charge Sudan's president with genocide and three Darfur rebels with war crimes once the cases have been substantiated to meet the judges' high evidence threshold.

Darfur's political and humanitarian situation has remained stagnant throughout May despite growing international diplomatic efforts to find ways to end the conflict. On the humanitarian front, the news has referred to the fact that, after the expulsion of 13 international aid agencies from Sudan in March, the government has now promised to allow NGOs still present in the country and UN agencies to expand their operations and fill the gap left by the expelled organisations. Still, aid agencies are not as ready as they could be for the rainy season in Darfur and the UN has repeatedly warned them about the need to expand aid programs before it is too late.

## Methodology

The main objective of this newsletter is to fill the language gap between Arab media and western audiences. In order to obtain a complete picture of the information published in Arabic, five different sources have been analysed: the web pages of regional organisations, Ministries of Foreign Affairs, official news agencies, Arab think tanks and, finally, Arabic Newspapers.<sup>(1)</sup>

Our intention has not been to cover all the news published about Sudan and the ongoing humanitarian crisis but to take those pieces of news, editorials and opinion articles that reflect the main trends in the Arab media's perception of the Sudanese issue.

(1) See the list of sources monitored at the end of this newsletter.

## Trends

- The majority of the news throughout this month has come from official sources (mainly Ministries of Foreign Affairs, followed by regional organisations). This suggests that even though the Sudan conflict no longer has the same media appeal as it did in March (when the ICC issued the arrest warrant against Bashir), it remains an issue of concern for the governments that are actively involved in finding a diplomatic solution.
- The agreement between Sudan and Chad under the auspices of Qatar and Libya (Ghadafi is president of the AU) has obtained the support of the main regional organisations (OIC, GCC and Arab League) as well as the UN.
- Qatar is leading the Arab efforts to bring peace to Sudan and its position is recognised among the other

Arab states. Egypt is the only country voicing concerns about this growing Qatari position; the Saudi side is silent on the issue.

- Even though the United States, the United Nations and the European Union remain engaged in the Darfur peace process, the Arab media tend to present this issue as an Arab effort headed by regional actors.
- The decision of the ICC issued in March regarding Bashir is not recognised by the Arab states or the main regional organisations. They fail to cooperate with the ICC by arguing that Arab states are not part of the Rome treaty.
- One of the three rebel leaders accused by the ICC in November 2008 has appeared before an international court to face war crimes charges over an attack on African Union peacekeepers in Darfur. This is a real advance that could influence the future situation of Bashir.

## May 2009 Arabic News Report

### 1. Relations between Sudan and Chad

#### Egypt calls upon Sudan and Chad to avoid military confrontation

The Egyptian Foreign Minister has called upon Sudan and Chad to exercise self-restraint and avoid anticipated military confrontations that would only serve to complicate relations between both countries and create new obstacles to the political settlement of the Darfur crisis. This came in response to news of the air raids carried out by the Chadian air force in East Darfur. Chad accuses Sudan of supporting and hosting Chadian rebels.

Date: 17/MAY/2009

Source: Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website (Arabic)

[http://www.mfa.gov.eg/MFA\\_Portal/ar-EG/MFA\\_News/Press\\_Releases/1752009sudanchad.htm](http://www.mfa.gov.eg/MFA_Portal/ar-EG/MFA_News/Press_Releases/1752009sudanchad.htm)

#### New success in Qatar

The agreement signed by Sudan and Chad in Doha is a new success of Qatari diplomacy and an example of the growing influence of Qatar. This agreement is important not only on account of its regional characteristics but also given its influence on the Darfur conflict.

Date: 04/MAY/2009

Source: Qatar News Agency Website (Arabic)

<http://www.qnaol.net/QNAAr/editorials/Pages/watan918552009.aspx>





مجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية  
الأمانة العامة

الرئيسية | أخبار التعاون | الدول الأعضاء | الأمين العام | المكتبة الرقمية | إصدارات حديثة | روابط

5:25:16PM  
ض اليوم الاثنين 8/6/2009م ، الدورة الحادية عشر بعد المائة للمجلس الوزاري لمجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية الأمين العام

الأخبار << التاريخ : 4-5-2009م

**الأمين العام لمجلس التعاون يرحب بالاتفاق السوداني التشاؤمي**

الأمانة العامة - الرياض :

رحب عبد الرحمن بن حمد العطية الأمين العام لمجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية اليوم الاثنين بالاتفاق الذي تم توقيعه في العاصمة القطرية الدوحة مساء أمس بين السودان وتشاد برعاية قطرية ليبية ، واصفاً هذا الاتفاق بالخطوة المهمة في حل جميع الصعوبات التي تشهدها العلاقات السودانية التشاؤمية ، والإسهام بشكل فاعل في استتباب الأمن والاستقرار في المنطقة ، كما ينمكس إيجاباً على حل الصراع الدائر في إقليم دارفور غرب السودان .

ونوه العطية بالدور الفاعل والمسئول الذي يطلع به حضرة صاحب السمو الشيخ حمد بن خليفة آل ثاني أمير دولة قطر حفظه الله ورعاه على كافة الأصعدة الإقليمية والدولية ، وسعيه المخلص للتواصل لتوفير كافة الأسباب لنجاح المبادرات الخيرة التي يطلع بها من منطلق تغليب العقل والمنطق واعتماد الحوار كمبدأ في كل الأحوال لتتعمق هذه الدول بالأمن والاستقرار ، والعمل على بناء مستقبل زاهر للشعوب والدول التي تعاني من هذه المصاعب .

وأعرب عن امله ان يكون هذا التوقيع بمثابة الانطلاقة الحقيقية للمصالحة بين البلدين تمهيدا لحل جميع القضايا العالقة بينهما ، وان يكون دعامة لتفعيل الآلية المنصوص عليها في اتفاق دكار الذي وقعه السودان وتشاد في العاصمة السنغالية عام 2008م ، من خلال نشر مراقبين وقوات حماية مشتركة بين البلدين .

عودة

Gulf Cooperation Council © 2007 2007

## The GCC Secretary General welcomes the Sudan – Chad agreement

Abdulrahman bin Hamad Al Attiyah welcomed the treaty that was signed in Doha under the auspices of Qatar and Libya, describing it as an important step to solve bilateral problems between Sudan and Chad and for the region itself.

Date: 04/MAY/2009

Source: GCC Website (Arabic)

<http://www.gcc-sg.org/index.php?action=News&Sub=ShowOne&ID=1221>

## The Arab League welcomes the Doha accord between Sudan and Chad

The Arab League General Secretariat has welcomed the signing by Sudan and Chad of the reconciliation accord in Doha under the joint mediation of Qatar and Libya, deeming such an accord to be a basic and key step towards peace and stability in Darfur.

Date: 04/MAY/2009

Source: Qatar News Agency Website (English)

[http://www.qnaol.net/QNAEn/News\\_bulletin/News/Pages/09-05-04-2102\\_41\\_0080.aspx](http://www.qnaol.net/QNAEn/News_bulletin/News/Pages/09-05-04-2102_41_0080.aspx)

## 2. International efforts to reach a peace agreement

### The EU supports Qatar's peace efforts in Darfur

The Qatari Minister of Foreign Affairs received a letter from Javier Solana expressing the European Union's support to the Qatari efforts and its role as mediator in the joint UN and African Union committee to bring peace to Darfur.

Date: 26/MAY/2009

Source: Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website (Arabic)

<http://www.mofa.gov.qa/newsPage.cfm?newsid=9654>

### Qatar Minister of Foreign Affairs arrives in Khartoum

H.E. Ahmed bin Abdullah al Mahmoud arrived in Khartoum on a two-day visit to Sudan to discuss bilateral issues and the ongoing efforts to reach an agreement on Darfur.

Date: 23/MAY/2009

Source: Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website (Arabic)

<http://www.mofa.gov.qa/newsPage.cfm?newsid=9604>

### Egyptian Foreign Minister receives UN Secretary-General Special Representative for Sudan

UN Secretary-General Special Representative for Sudan, Ashraf Qazi, visited Egypt in order to hold consultations with high officials regarding the situation in Sudan and Egypt's stance towards the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

The different projects that were established by the Egyptian government in the south of Sudan reflect Egypt's complete commitment to developing and constructing the region and its contribution to reinforcing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Date: 18/MAY/2009

Source: Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website (Arabic)

[http://www.mfa.gov.eg/MFA\\_Portal/ar-EG/MFA\\_News/Press\\_Releases/1852009UNSUDAN.htm](http://www.mfa.gov.eg/MFA_Portal/ar-EG/MFA_News/Press_Releases/1852009UNSUDAN.htm)

### Bashir says the "Great Powers" are responsible for the violence in the south of Sudan

In a speech in front of Arab and Muslim investors in Sudan, President Bashir criticised the arrogance of the "Great Powers" and declared them responsible for the situation in

Sudan. He also accused those states of the politicisation of justice and law and of using international institutions to implement a hidden agenda.

Date: 17/MAY/2009

Source: Al Jazeera News Agency Website (Arabic)

<http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/B280DA94-F333-47DB-A1B4-37F3FA04EA36.htm>

**OIC Secretary General visits Sudan**

The OIC Secretary General discussed the ICC arrest warrant and its consequences for Sudan with President Bashir during his visit to the country – the second he has made since the decision. Dr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu was in Khartoum on 14 March, when the crisis in Darfur was one of the main issues on the agenda. The Secretary General reiterated his organisation’s support to the Sudanese people and criticised the duplicity of the “Great Powers” regarding Bashir’s indictment. This position was also made public during the OIC Secretary General’s visit to the UN in New York on 27 March.

Date: 16/MAY/2009

Source: OIC Website (Arabic)

[http://www.oic-oci.org/topic\\_detail.asp?t\\_id=2260&x\\_key=](http://www.oic-oci.org/topic_detail.asp?t_id=2260&x_key=)

**United Nations: concerned about tribal violence in the south of Sudan**

United Nations officials said that the ongoing tribal violence in the south of Sudan could initiate a new civil war. John Holmes, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations for Humanitarian Affairs, shares these concerns owing to the increasing level of violence in the region in recent weeks.

Date: 14/MAY/2009

Source: Al Jazeera News Agency Website (Arabic)

<http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/66F7594A-6C82-4E19-AF92-91672657282F.htm>

**A JEM leader states: “We will attack Omdurman”**

(Note: Omdurman was the battle in which the British army defeated the Mahdi movement. Today the city is situated in modern Khartoum.)

According to Jalil Ibrahim, there are only two options to the Darfur problem: if the JEM does not govern, it will be the Khartoum government. The JEM leader has threatened the central government with another invasion

of Khartoum (the reference to Omdurman), as occurred in 2008, if an agreement is not reached.

Date: 12/MAY/2009

Source: Ash Sharq Al Awsat Website (Arabic)

<http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=1&issueno=11123&article=518886>

**Sudan and the European Union**

The Sudanese Presidential Advisor, Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, received the Special Envoy of the European Union to Sudan and discussed the current situation in the country, the ongoing efforts to achieving peace in Darfur and the implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Date: 06/MAY/2009

Source: Qatar News Agency Website (English)

[http://www.qnaol.net/QNAEn/News\\_bulletin/News/Pages/09-05-06-2307\\_524\\_0072.aspx](http://www.qnaol.net/QNAEn/News_bulletin/News/Pages/09-05-06-2307_524_0072.aspx)



**Meeting in Doha on the Darfur conflict**

The following participants met within the framework of the “Agreement of Good Will and Confidence Building for the Settlement of the Problem in Darfur”, which was signed in Doha on 17 February 2009: the Qatari Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ahmad bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud; the AU/UN Joint Chief Mediator, Djibrill Bassoile; the Special Envoy of the US President to Sudan, Scott Gration; the envoys and ambassadors of

the UN Security Council Permanent Member States; a delegation from Sudan's National Unity Government, led by Dr. Amin Hassan Omer, Minister of State at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports; and a JEM delegation, led by Ahmed Mohamed Togud.

Date: 06/MAY/2009

Source: Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website (Arabic)

<http://www.mofa.gov.qa/newsPage.cfm?newsid=9259>

### Qatari Foreign Minister meets a JEM delegation

The Qatari Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ahmad bin Abdalah Al Mahmud, met a JEM delegation headed by Ahmad Mohamed Togud to discuss the situation in Darfur.

Date: 04/MAY/2009

Source: Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website (Arabic)

<http://www.mofa.gov.qa/newsPage.cfm?newsid=9239>

situation between Sudan and Chad, which is currently the main impediment to stability in Darfur.

Date: 30/APRIL/2009

Source: Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website (Arabic)

[http://www.mfa.gov.eg/MFA\\_Portal/ar-EG/MFA\\_News/Press\\_Releases/usenvoy152009.htm](http://www.mfa.gov.eg/MFA_Portal/ar-EG/MFA_News/Press_Releases/usenvoy152009.htm)

## 3. Sudan and the ICC

### Darfur war crimes suspect in court

Bahar Idriss Abu Garda, a Sudanese rebel leader, has appeared before an international court to face war crimes charges over an attack that killed 12 African Union (AU) peacekeepers in Darfur. Abu Garda, the head of the United Resistance Front, is the first suspect to appear before the International Criminal Court in The Hague regarding the Darfur conflict.

Date: 14/MAY/2009

Source: Al Jazeera News Agency Website (English)

<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/europe/2009/05/2009518123424299272.html>

### President Bashir receives message from the President of Burkina Faso

President Bashir received a message from the President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, concerning the progress of bilateral relations, ways to consolidate such relations and issues of mutual concern. The message asserted the country's support to Sudan in its capacity as a current member of the Security Council.

Date: 13/MAY/2009

Source: Saudi Press Agency Website (English)

<http://www.spa.gov.sa/readsinglenews.php?id=663297>



### Foreign Minister and US Special Envoy to Sudan review Egyptian views on the situation in Sudan

The Egyptian Foreign Minister received the US Special Envoy to Sudan, Scott Gration, on his visit to Cairo, as part of the continuous consultation and coordination between Egypt and the US on the Sudanese issue. Both officials agreed upon the problematic nature of the

## ■ Chronology - May 2009

### 2 May

- Thabo Mbeki announces that an African Union (AU) panel will meet the ICC to discuss issues of justice.

### 4 May

- Sudan and Chad sign an agreement in Doha under Qatari and Libyan mediation.
- The Qatari Foreign Minister meets a JEM delegation.

### 6 May

- Meeting in Doha on the Darfur conflict within the framework of the agreement signed on 17 February 2009.
- The EU's Special Representative to Sudan meets the Sudanese Presidential Advisor, Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail.

### 7 May

- The Sudanese Humanitarian Assistance Minister, Haroun Lual Ruun, says Khartoum will "allow the remaining UN agencies and NGOs to expand their existing operations".
- UNAMID staff shot dead in Darfur.

### 8 May

- Khartoum appoints Ahmed Haroun, accused by the ICC for war crimes in Darfur, as the new governor for South Kordofan.

### 12 May

- JEM threatens the government with another invasion of Khartoum

### 13 May

- Bashir receives message from Burkina Faso's president, Blaisé Compaoré, dealing with bilateral issues.
- Bashir may soon be accused of genocide, following Moreno-Ocampo's declarations based on new found evidence.

### 14 May

- Rebel leader Bahar Idriss Abu Garda appears voluntarily before the ICC to face war crimes charges in Darfur. He is the first rebel to appear before the ICC and has denied involvement in the AU soldier deaths of which he is accused.

### 15 May

- The newly appointed governor of South Kordofan, Ahmed Haroun, launches an initiative for reconciliation and tolerance in the region.

### 17 May

- The OIC Secretary General visits Sudan.
- Bashir says to an audience of Arab and Muslim investors that the "Great Powers" are responsible for Darfur's violence.

- Sudan accuses Chad of bombing its territory for the third time.

### 18 MAY

- The UN Secretary General's Special Representative for Sudan visits Egypt to hold consultations with high officials regarding Sudan.
- Representatives of Sudan's government, the Arab League, the African Union and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference meet in Khartoum to discuss the Darfur conflict.
- Transport is reestablished in all Darfur to allow for the distribution of humanitarian aid.

### 20 May

- Sudan threatens to destroy any Chad forces that invade its territory.

### 23 May

- The Qatar Foreign Minister visits Khartoum to discuss bilateral issues and ongoing efforts to reach an agreement on Darfur.
- Scott Gration, US Special Envoy to Sudan, starts a trip that will take him to China, Qatar, UK and France to unite positions on the Darfur peace process.

### 24 May

- Around 160 people flee Sudan after violent clashes between JEM and government forces in North Darfur.

### 25 May

- At least 20 soldiers and 43 rebels dead after JEM and governmental forces clash over Sudanese army base close to the Sudan-Chad border in North Darfur.

### 26 May

- Javier Solana sends a letter to the Qatari Foreign Minister expressing the EU's official support to the Qatari Initiative for Peace in Darfur.

### 27 May

- New round of peace negotiations takes place in Doha with the presence of presidential envoys from China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and the United States.

### 31 May

- Tanzania receives weapons and other materials valued at 6 million US dollars from the USA and the UK to send forces to join UNAMID.



## List of Sources

### Regional organisations

Arab League	<a href="http://www.arableagueonline.org/">http://www.arableagueonline.org/</a>
African Union	<a href="http://www.africa-union.org/">http://www.africa-union.org/</a>
Organization of the Islamic Conference	<a href="http://www.oic-oci.org/">http://www.oic-oci.org/</a>
Gulf Cooperation Council	<a href="http://www.gcc-sg.org/">http://www.gcc-sg.org/</a>

### Ministries of Foreign Affairs

Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<a href="http://www.mofa.gov.qa">http://www.mofa.gov.qa</a>
Saudi Arabia - Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<a href="http://www.mofa.gov.sa/">http://www.mofa.gov.sa/</a>
Libya - Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<a href="http://www.foreign.gov.ly/">http://www.foreign.gov.ly/</a>
Egypt - Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<a href="http://www.mfa.gov.eg/">http://www.mfa.gov.eg/</a>
Sudan - Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<a href="http://www.mfa.gov.sd/">http://www.mfa.gov.sd/</a>

### News agencies

Al Jazeera	<a href="http://www.aljazeera.net/">http://www.aljazeera.net/</a>
Al Arabiya	<a href="http://www.alarabiya.net/">http://www.alarabiya.net/</a>
Qatar News Agency	<a href="http://www.qnaol.net/">http://www.qnaol.net/</a>
Saudi Press Agency	<a href="http://www.spa.gov.sa/">http://www.spa.gov.sa/</a>
Emirates News Agency-WAM	<a href="http://www.wam.org.ae/">http://www.wam.org.ae/</a>
Jamahiriya News Agency	<a href="http://www.jananews.ly/">http://www.jananews.ly/</a>
Middle East News Agency (MENA)	<a href="http://www.mena.org.eg/">http://www.mena.org.eg/</a>
Sudan News Agency	<a href="http://www.sunas-sd.net/">http://www.sunas-sd.net/</a>
Radio Dabanga	<a href="http://www.radiodabanga.org/">http://www.radiodabanga.org/</a>

### Arab think tanks and institutes

TTo understand Darfur	<a href="http://ifhamdarfur.net/">http://ifhamdarfur.net/</a>
Arab Program on Human Rights	<a href="http://www.aphra.org/pcd/">http://www.aphra.org/pcd/</a>
Arabic Network for Human Rights Information	<a href="http://www.anhri.net/">http://www.anhri.net/</a>
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies	<a href="http://www.cihrs.org/">http://www.cihrs.org/</a>
Al Academy for Graduate Studies	<a href="http://www.alacademia.edu.ly/">http://www.alacademia.edu.ly/</a>

### Newspapers

Ash sharq al awsat	<a href="http://www.asharqalawsat.com/">http://www.asharqalawsat.com/</a>
Al Hayat	<a href="http://www.alhayat.com/">http://www.alhayat.com/</a>
As Sahafa	<a href="http://www.alsahafa.sd/">http://www.alsahafa.sd/</a>
Sudan Tribune	<a href="http://www.sudantribune.com/">http://www.sudantribune.com/</a>
Al Ahram	<a href="http://www.ahram.org.eg/">http://www.ahram.org.eg/</a>
Al Watan Al Libi	<a href="http://www.alwatan-libya.com/">http://www.alwatan-libya.com/</a>
Tripoli Post	<a href="http://www.tripolipost.com/">http://www.tripolipost.com/</a>