

Saturday 30 June 2018 – [Add your name or organisation to this letter](#)

Dear Prime Minister,

We, the undersigned, object to the UK Government seeking to promote positive relations with the Government of Sudan, which consistently ignores the human rights and democratic voices of an equal citizenry, creating a society where its people are driven to emigrate or seek asylum abroad.

We urge you to hear the cries of the Sudanese people – here in the United Kingdom and in Sudan – who are asking for your help. As of today, President Omar al-Bashir has been in power for 29 years, and in that time the people of Sudan have greatly suffered from violations of their human rights; genocidal policies in Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile; and poor governance, reducing the likelihood of democratic transformation, and destroying the economic livelihoods of its people, causing wide-spread hardship.

Despite the fact that President al-Bashir is indicted by the International Criminal Court on counts of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, the UK continues to engage in a ‘Strategic Dialogue’ with Sudan’s government, rather than undertaking broad-based engagement at all levels of society. During this time, the UK Government’s role as Sudan’s ‘critical friend’, able to decry publically the Sudanese Government’s aggression, has also diminished.

We believe that the British public does not want to enter into deals with Governments holding such poor human rights records. And as members of the Sudanese diaspora, Members of Parliament, non-governmental organisations, and as individuals, our concerns are not currently being considered.

Already a report in February 2017 by interested MPs and Peers stressed their concerns with the ‘Strategic Dialogue’ and cooperation under the aegis of the EU-wide ‘Khartoum Process’, yet the UK Government continues on the path toward normalisation.

Each time we hear that a peaceful protester has been detained, that a young woman has been sentenced to death for defending herself against her rapist, that market sellers have been targeted and killed by bombs, that the buildings and resources of UNAMID are now benefitting the region’s long-term tormentors, or when we are told that our families cannot afford to buy staple food and medicines, we are reminded of the poor and deeply dangerous way Sudan is governed.

It is only by listening to a wide range of stakeholders that the outcomes of ‘Strategic Dialogue’ with Sudan will be effective and secure the best changes for its people. We call for transparency, inclusion, and assurance from the British government that benchmarks are being set and fulfilled. Objective outcomes regarding human rights, humanitarian access, equal citizenship, and democratic transformation for all must be central to this dialogue and demonstrated accordingly.

To date, there have been five meetings between the Governments of the UK and Sudan, yet the people of Sudan have seen no improvement in their daily lives. Therefore, prior to the next meeting in London in October 2018, we urge you to arrange a more inclusive agenda.

The British Government should work to support Sudan in creating a peaceful society where people do not have to flee their homeland. This would be the most beneficial outcome for both the UK and Sudan, and therefore the goal to which both Governments should strive. Can we trust that this is what you will aim for? Will you listen to us?

Sincerely,

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