



## About DAN

The Darfur Australia Network (DAN) is a not-for-profit community organization run by members of Australia's emerging Darfuri Sudanese communities and concerned volunteers.

DAN was founded in May 2006 in Melbourne and in March 2007, a Sydney office was opened. Today, DAN has become Australia's most prominent advocacy organization speaking out about the conflict in Darfur.

Working in partnership with the Darfuri Sudanese communities of Melbourne and Sydney, DAN's main objectives are to raise awareness about the conflict in Darfur and to advocate for appropriate public policy responses to this urgent humanitarian and political crisis.

# DARFUR AUSTRALIA NETWORK

## NEWSLETTER

May - July 2012

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## DAN DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In June 2012, the inevitable happened: anti-government protests spread across Khartoum and then to other parts of Sudan. The demonstrations expanded beyond the core group of student activists and spread to several neighbourhoods as hundreds of Sudanese took to the streets after Friday prayers. The government responded with tear gas, and protesters responded with rocks and burned tires as they faced off throughout the city. A mass demonstration quite unheard of in Sudan in recent times had started.

These demonstrations were sparked by the announcement of economic austerity measures by the government, including the reduction of the subsidised fuel prices and other measures. However the protests were part of decades of pent-up political grievances on the part of the various marginalized peoples of Sudan. From the East in the Red Sea, Kassala and Gedaref and the in West in Darfur on account of mass human rights atrocities and the failure of the Doha Peace Agreement. People continue to suffer in refugee camps. In the Nuba Mountains of South Kordofan and in Blue Nile continuous human rights violations and deliberate famine have caused much of the population to move into South Sudan.

Economist forecasts for Sudan predict uncontrollable levels of inflation, and so far these predictions have been largely correct. In August the value of the Sudan currency fell to an all-time low after Sudan failed to secure oil fees from South Sudan.

The Sudanese in Melbourne responded to this call to protest by staging their own march in Melbourne on 7th July 2012. Over one hundred Sudanese including men, women, children and other supporters marched from Federation Square to the State Library. They brought out banners and chanted their way through Melbourne City. At the State Library, both men and women made speeches declaring their desire for peace in Sudan and calling on the President Omer Al Bashir to step down. It was the first display of public solidarity in some time and affirmed the passions of the Sudanese community in Melbourne.

Since then, representatives of the Sudanese community have continued to meet to discuss more collective action. DAN has offered to support them in whatever way possible and allow them to carry out their activities and continue to monitor the situation in Sudan.

In other activities, in May we launched the DAN Strategic Plan in Dandenong in Melbourne. It was well attended and we had the opportunity to discuss the Plan at length. We hope to involve more women at our further activities later on in the year. We also recruited two new Board members and volunteers. You will find more updates and activities in this newsletter.

We wish the Darfur community a very blessed Ramadan.

Luse Kinivuwai  
Director, Darfur Australia Network



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## SITUATION UPDATE

The situation in Sudan remains in a dire state causing distress to all its civilians as intense rebel fighting, mass killings and widespread poverty continue to plague the nation. Millions of people throughout regions of South Kordofan, Blue Nile, and other areas along the North/South border continue to face life-threatening humanitarian crises, lack of food, water, and medicine.

This state of affairs are further exacerbated with international help seemingly on the decline due to restrictions imposed by the Sudanese government.

However, in recent developments, the Sudanese have joined together to voice out their anger in an uprising, following closely in the shadow of its neighbours, Egypt and Libya. Angered by austerity measures announced by President Omar-al-Bashir aimed at reducing a \$2.4bn budget deficit coupled with overwhelming discontent with the Sudanese government and a soaring inflation rate and prices of basic goods, Khartoum is now grappling with a surge of protests recalling the events of the Arab Spring.

Although small-scale, the protests mirror the 'Arab Spring' due to common complaints of unemployment, rampant government corruption and a crippling economy along with scenes of teargas and burning tyres in all parts of Sudan's capital, Khartoum.

For the past few decades, the Sudanese along with diaspora communities have been urging the international community, the UN (United Nations) and the AU (African Union) to take the necessary measures to combat recurring violence throughout the country.

Whilst western nations have resorted to sanctions and draft resolutions to ease the crisis, several countries have repeatedly stood in the way. However, the people of Sudan on their own strength and accord have come together to raise their voice with the intention of bringing about the desired change in Sudan.

The protests, which were initially triggered by the economic crisis, have seemingly become much more than that; Sudanese are taking to the streets to express their repressed anger and bitter discontent at the dictatorship amongst many other pent up frustrations.

While the protests have not gathered momentum to the scale of Tunisia, Libya, Yemen or Egypt, it is an indication that Sudanese people are willing to do what it takes to express their right to a better government.

Meanwhile, there continues to be continuous reports of clashes and fighting in Darfur, along with reports of numerous abuses and continuous food and water shortages in the IDP camps.



darfur australia network



Protests in Khartoum. Bikyamasr

## **DAN Volunteer Positions Available**

**Volunteer with DAN in 2012-2013**

DAN has a range of exciting volunteering opportunities available from administration and events to fundraising activities, communications and advocacy. You can visit our website or email [volunteer@darfuraustralia.org](mailto:volunteer@darfuraustralia.org) for more information. We look forward to hearing from you!

Thank you for your continued interest and support!



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## DAN UPDATES

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### Community Meeting

On the 26th of May 2012, the DAN community meeting was held in Dandenong. The meeting was attended by community leaders and representatives of the DAN Board. The objective of the meeting was to discuss the 2011-2014 Strategic Plan and map out the activities for the next financial year.

The gathering was addressed by the Darfur Australia Association President and DAN Board member Dr Idris Tarrh and Mr Amer Hesabu, President of Darfur Union in the United Kingdom, who briefed the community on the activities of the Darfur community in the UK.

The Director of DAN briefed the community on the 2011-2014 Strategic Plan, and this was discussed by the community.



### Destiny of Sudan's Bashir lies with ICC: Op Ed by DAN in The Australian

In response to the conviction of Charles Taylor the former Liberian President by an international criminal court, DAN director wrote an Op Ed which was printed by The Australian on 7th May 2012. The full article can be viewed in the link below.

[Op Ed in the Australian](#)

The Darfur community in Australia reacted joyously to the conviction, with many of them also expressing hope that a similar fate will meet the current President of Sudan, Omar Al Bashir.

**DAN would like to thank all the volunteers, community members, partners, supporters & those who make the work of this organisation possible...we couldn't do it without you!**



## ACTION FOR SUDAN

A rally, themed 'Action for Sudan' was held from the Federation Square to the Victorian State Library on the 7th of July 2012 in support of the recent uprising in Sudan against the current, brutal regime. The march was organised by the Sudanese Community in Melbourne, with the assistance and support of DAN.

The march was held to:

- Raise awareness of the conflict in Sudan and the need for change.
- Call for the end the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, deliberate starvation, poor health care, rapid economic decline and lack of basic infrastructure particularly in Darfur, Kordofan and the Nuba mountain region and the Blue Nile.
- Voice an end to the use of unnecessary force and arms against the protesters in Sudan who are exercising their basic rights.



Michel Danby, a Member of Parliament also attended the march to show his support for the Sudanese community and addressed the gathering.

'Action for Sudan' was quite significant as it was a collective effort made by the diaspora to highlight the conflict in Sudan. Abdul Yussif, a community member commented on this, saying "I surprised when I saw people from different regions of Sudan at the march. I was expecting people from Darfur and Nuba but it was very different this time, all Sudanese participated in the March and showed their support for people in Sudan to end the brutal regime".

It was also a momentous occasion as there were many passionate women who attended the rally to voice their support!

Overall it was a successful event, and while the main objective was to show their loyalty to their fellow countrymen affected in Sudan, this event proved even more fruitful in bringing together the entire diaspora and supporters in Melbourne to protest for one worthy cause.





## News in Brief

- DAN has welcomed two new Board members Ahmed Mohamed and Meagan Rourke. Ahmed is the President of the Darfur Association in Sydney and Meagan has had a long association with DAN including coordinating Dan's activities in Sydney.
- DAN recruited three more volunteers this year, Kenosha Kumaren, Brad Halt, and Funso Ogunsonya. We welcome the three new volunteers to DAN.
- DAN developed a Fundraising Policy. This was approved in the July Board meeting. The Policy will guide DAN in a more strategic direction in attempts to diversify its funding base
- DAN Director attended the Humanitarian Rights workshop in June and the Women's Rights workshop in July, both organised by the Humanitarian Crisis Hub (HCH).
- DAN is looking for new volunteers for website design and other positions. Details in the advertisement on page 5.
- Do you need a speaker to address the conflict in Darfur? For information on getting a speaker to your school or university please contact: [contact@darfuraustralia.org](mailto:contact@darfuraustralia.org).
- Want to be updated on the Darfur conflict and read interesting news and reports?

Like our Facebook page  
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Darfur-Australia-Network-DAN/206700009341067>

## Pictures from DAN activities





## Acknowledgements

DAN would like to thank all the supporters and volunteers for our work in advocacy on the crisis in Darfur and community engagement with the Australian Darfuri community.

We know many of you care about the people and situation in Darfur and the Darfuri community in Australia, and you are not satisfied with just reading updates about Darfur in the news. If that's you and you want to make a difference this year, consider making a donation at <http://darfuraustralia.org/action/appeal> or contact us at [contact@darfuraustralia.org](mailto:contact@darfuraustralia.org). Visit <http://darfuraustralia.org/action/merchandise> for our products.

### CONTACT DETAILS

Room 4.9, 247 Flinders Lane,  
Melbourne, VIC, 3000

(03) 8060 5659

[contact@darfuraustralia.org](mailto:contact@darfuraustralia.org)

[www.darfuraustralia.org](http://www.darfuraustralia.org)