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NUBA MOUNTAINS SOLIDARITY ABROAD

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THE CRISIS IN NUBA MOUNTAINS

THE NUBA

The Nuba people of Northern Sudan, who number over one million, are the descendants of the old Kush Kingdom from the 8th Century BC. They have a distinctive cultural heritage, one of the oldest in Africa. They occupy most of Southern Kordofan Province in Central Sudan, which covers some thirty thousands square miles, roughly the area of Scotland. They are farmers and herders.

Early this century the Nuba managed to resolve their difficulties with their Arab neighbours, the Baggar tribes, after years of slavery and raiding. They subsequently have lived together side by side in relative peace and relationship between the two communities into mutual trust and understanding over the years, with inter-marriage and exchange of culture.

However, during the last two decades the central governments engineered a situation by arming the Arab tribes and setting them against Nuba for their own benefit under the pretext of fighting insurgents from the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). This has led to a systematic genocidal campaign which was motivated by religious, racial conflicts and land acquisition motive.

Since the current government of General al-Bashir came to power in June 1989, Nuba people are being systematically persecuted, dispossessed of their lands, customs and traditions and their future is very much under threat. There is a deliberate policy by the national Islamic Front Fundamentalist regime in Khartoum, to eradicate Nuba identity and their culture, which they called it "the ugly culture which must be removed".

To achieve this, the government armed forces and their allied Arab Militias sealed off the Nuba Mountains region from the outside world since October 1990. United Nations food aid and medicines have been forbidden entering into the area until this very moment, while the sufferings of Nuba people continue. The food is used as a weapon.

In addition a secret war has been carried out, which mounts to

"Ethnic Cleansing", in the Nuba Mountains. This has been documented by Africa Watch, African Rights, Amnesty International, Survival International and Sudan Human Rights Organization.

Educated Nuba have also become the target of this campaign and over a hundred of them mostly graduates have disappeared and are believed to have been killed without trial.

In January 1992, the Governor of Kordofan Abdel Karim al Husseini declared al-Jehad or Holy war against defenseless people of the Nuba Mountains. Having declared al-Jehad the government armed forces and their allied Arab militias moves into the area and began destroying Nuba villages, looting properties, abducting children, capturing women and children exploited as domestic servants while men become impoverished labours for the giant mechanized farming schemes.

The Nuba lands have been taken over by the government and it is now being sold to politically powerful merchants farmers to extend the mechanized agricultural schemes.

The latest report by Amnesty International tell of terrible massacre that has been committed against the Nuba in Jebel Heiban in early January of this Year. Hundreds - may be thousands of men, women and children have been killed and dumped in mass graves.

The recent report released by the British Member of Parliament Baroness (Caroline) Cox who visited Sudan between July 6-13, 1993, indicates "That situation with regard to violations of human rights is still a cause of major concern." She witnessed may explicit signs that the government is using Jehad as means of nation-building. There are evidences that the government armed forces are closing on the Nuba people and if this offenses are to be carried out, it could be the beginning of the end of the last of the Nuba.

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