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*Note: Opinion pieces are generally
750 words. Letters to the Editor should
not be more than 250 words.*

Stand with Sudan

Dear Editor,

I am gravely concerned about the situation in Sudan and extremely disappointed by the lack of attention from U.S. policymakers towards recent developments. Following increasing frustration over corruption, violence, and economic mismanagement by the Sudanese government for the past 30 years, protests erupted in December 2018 when fuel and wheat subsidies were terminated. What began as small local protests have now grown throughout the country as the Sudanese people demand the peaceful resignation of their oppressive president Omar al-Bashir

The response from President al-Bashir of Sudan has been violence. Mr. al-Bashir has had his troops respond with live gunfire and tear gas against the peaceful protesters, blocked media coverage, and restricted internet access to coordinate activities. The government response has violated International Human Rights law by denying protesters the freedom of expression and speech. Reports from Sudan indicate that over 40 protesters have been killed, hundreds have been jailed, and many have been tortured.

President al-Bashir is not only killing peaceful Sudanese protesters in masses who ask for his peaceful resignation; this has been his approach in treating Sudanese citizens for the last 29 years. Every year U.S. policymakers watches idly for another million to be reported dead. One example is the long-standing crises in Darfur for which President al-Bashir of Sudan is wanted by the International Criminal Court for crimes of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity committed against the people of Darfur. By writing this letter, I would like to bring more attention to the plight of the Sudanese and to urge our elected officials including Representative **XXXXXX** to speak up, make the situation in Sudan a priority agenda item, and demand proactive U.S. leadership in standing with the people of Sudan and creating an effective policy that can help bring about a lasting stability that meets the aspirations of the Sudanese people as they are desperately marching and calling for the world to help.

As **[a concerned citizen, or something about yourself]**, I value our freedom and American values. I want to see our government stand for human rights at home and internationally and be a voice for justice and the lasting peace that the people of Sudan have long cried for.

Given the history of crimes against humanity by Omar al-Bashir and his regime, I call upon you, the free press, to write the less-published truth and the rarely told story.

The man currently ordering attacks on peaceful protesters has a history of killing his nation's population, as seen in a brief summary of current and historical events in Sudan:

- Since 2002, the government has orchestrated a scorched-earth policy against the indigenous people of Darfur, resulting in genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.
- In 2004, the Bush Administration declared the situation a genocide. Since then, millions of Darfuris have been forced to flee their homes. Over 400,000 have been killed, and, as of today, over 3 million people have been displaced. 15 years later, Darfuris are still subjected to brutal attacks and deprived access to humanitarian assistance. Rape has been used as weapon of war, while arrests and torture devastate the lives of innocent civilians in Darfur.
- In 2009, President al-Bashir was indicted by the International Criminal Court for committing crimes in Darfur. He has yet to face justice. President al-Bashir's regime has reportedly used chemical weapons against the people of Darfur since September 2016.
- The government has also attacked South Kordofan and Blue Nile regions, displacing nearly a million people.
- al-Bashir's government has consistently violated religious freedom of the religious minorities, particularly Christians in Sudan, and demolished churches
- The government has sponsored, and aided terrorist groups and the practice has been designated by the US Department of State

The United States, as a leading government in the world with a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council, has the advantage and the leverage to demonstrate leadership in resolving Sudan's crises peacefully.

It is particularly important that our media outlets cover these atrocities and that our leaders express concern. Reporting on the horrific situation is crucial to bringing attention to the people of Sudan and mobilizing political action that may help save lives. Silence and the lack of media coverage will aid the perpetrator. As human beings, we have a moral and ethical obligation to speak up when acts of genocide occur.

For more information about the situation, please visit www.darfurwomenaction.org/Stand with Sudan

Sincerely,
[Your Name]