

The Nuba Mountains have been sealed off from outside observers for over 10 years. Yet there has never been any serious attempt to force Khartoum to open up this area for humanitarian assistance and investigation into the reports of genocide.

Whenever the Sudan government announces that they are serious about achieving peace in Sudan, the international community announces "new breakthroughs" in peace negotiations. Cease-fires come and go, but there has never been a stop to the bombing of innocent civilian targets in the Nuba Mountains. Such agreements only allow the Sudan government to redeploy their forces in strategic areas not covered by the cease-fires.

Consequently, year after year, the population of the Southern Sudanese Christians continues to be decimated, and more and more land is taken over by the northerners.

4.2.4 Manipulation of humanitarian aid agencies

The way that the Khartoum government has used the international aid community to further its campaign of genocide is indeed striking.

During the civil war in Ethiopia, the Communist regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam attempted to use famine to starve out the support base for the TPLF and EPLF rebels in northern Ethiopia. When the world community finally figured out what was happening, they were forced to support a cross-border humanitarian operation directly into the rebel held areas, by-passing the Ethiopian authorities, and hence defying the sovereignty of Ethiopia.

These efforts saved the lives of thousands of innocent Ethiopian civilians who otherwise would have starved to death. Yet the humanitarian assistance also increased the popularity of the rebel movements, and was a significant factor in their ultimate victory over the Mengistu regime.

The National Islamic Front in Sudan learned from this experience, and no doubt, was determined not to let it happen in Sudan. Consequently, Operation Lifeline Sudan was allowed to exist in some areas under the control of opposition forces. The UN, however, is unable to operate outside of its mandate, which requires it to abide by the edicts of the "sovereign" state. Hence, the Khartoum government has total control over the activities, location of operations, and programs of OLS, and its partner agencies.

This has enabled them to focus on strategic areas such as the Nuba Mountains. Northern Bahr El Ghazal, and the oil field areas, while still appearing to the international community to be concerned about the people in southern Sudan.

The UN, and other NGOs working in the areas to which they have been granted access by Khartoum, are reluctant to speak out against government atrocities, for fear that it will jeopardize their ability to meet the needs of the people in the areas where they are working. Consequently, most aid workers are compelled to sign "gag clauses", which