

## CHAPTER III

### THE DYNAMIC OF DARFUR CONFLICT

The conflict in Darfur is not happened in one night, it has long story background. Thus, the chapter will explain the history, introduce the actors involved in the conflict, examine the dynamic of the conflict, and give the impact of the conflict.

#### A. History of the Land of Fur



Figure 3.1 The Map of Sudan; Darfur and Khortum

Source: <https://www.hmh.org/>

Darfur, (Arabic: Land of the Fur) also known as the Western Darfur, historical location of the Billād al-Sūdān (Arabic: “Land of the Blacks”), generally comparing to the western of Sudan. It placed between Kordofan to the east and Wadai to the west and amplified southward to the Al-Ghazali River and northward to the Libyan Desert.

Darfur consists of a very wide plain that has approximately 170,000 square miles (440,000 square km). The volcanic highland of Marrah Mountains dominate the central part of this plain. The Marrah Mountains have an average height of 7,200 feet (2,200 meters), with the highest peak rising to 10,131 feet (3,088 meters) (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2015). In another part of Darfur that had fewer populations are relatively arid areas, especially within the north nearby the Libya Desert territory.

In ancient times the northern occupants of Darfur were related to the pre dynastic people groups of the Nile Stream valley. From generally 2500 BC Darfur was probably within the circle of the Egyptian caravans that traded southward from Aswan. Its first begin with conventional rulers, the Daju (Daju), may have been associated with old Egypt and the trade was conducted from Darfur with Egypt during the New Kingdom and with the cities of Napata and Meroe within the Kingdom of Kush (Cush; presently in northern Sudan). The rule of the Daju in Darfur was eventually followed by that of the Tunjur, or Tunjur.

The Christian period, which endured from 900 to 1200 in Darfur, was ended by the Islam eastward from the empire of Kanem-Bornu (Centred on Lake Chad). By 1240 the ruler of Kanem was claiming control of a trade with Egypt that extended eastward as distant as Sai, and it is from this date that the impact of Kanem and Bornu on Darfur inferred. Darfur may have been a province of either Kanem or Bornu during their golden periods.

The relationship between the Arabs (migrant) and the indigenous tribes of Darfur was in a good condition in the 14th century and the peaceful coexistence between the migrants and the indigenous population continues, the inevitable disputes over natural resources have been resolved through the mediation of local leaders. Later, the Arab tribes of Darfur are mainly immigrants who occupy the Darfur region in North and South. Although not a native, Arabic is the dominant ethnicity

in Darfur and they are Muslims and little by little force the African ethnic moved into the central Darfur (Waal, 2007).

Keira dynasty found the Fur Sultanate in the mid-17th century and is growing in prosperous Darfur. The Keira, a main clan subsidiary with the Hide, ruled Darfur from roughly 1940 to 1916. The historical mention the name Fur was known in 1664. During that period the rulers of the Keira sultanate of Darfur clearly used the term Fur to refer to the region's dark-skinned tenants who acknowledged their Islamic religion and their rule. As the Keira dynasty itself intermarried, its individuals too got to be known as Fur.

The occupants of Darfur were totally Islamized beneath the Keira sultans. The sultans fought irregularly with the Wadai kingdom conjointly attempted to oppress the semi-independent Middle Easterner tribes that possessed the nation. At its peak in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Fur Sultanate became the center of developed commercial activity. At that time, there was a slave trade, ivory, and jewelry items with the Mediterranean.

There are more than thirty ethnic groups in Darfur, but these can be divided broadly into two main categories: Arab and African (Waal, 2007). The indigenous African tribes of Darfur include native Fur, Masalit, Zaghwa, Daju and Berti (Prunier, 2005). Meanwhile the Arabs ethnic which live nomadically move to Darfur as migrant. They were consisting of several tribes, Rezeigat, Habbaniya, Beni Halba, Taaisha, and Maaliyya. The Rezeigat is prevalent in northern Darfur as well (Eyes on Darfur, 2007). Unfortunately, in the middle of the 19th century, Fur Sultanate was defeated by the famous slave traders, Zubayr Rahma. The collapse of the Keyra dynasty makes Darfur things become rootles (Prunier, 2005). Today, the majority of Arabs in Darfur has dark skin, as a result of mixed Arab-African marriages (Collins, 2006).

Within the 1870s Darfur came beneath Egyptian rule and was given provincial status. Though he defended the province against the forces of al-Mahdī, a religious reformer and Sudanese political leader, he ultimately was obliged to

surrender to him in December 1883. Darfur was thereafter incorporated into al-Mahdi's dominions. Following the overthrow of al-Mahdi successor, the khalifah Abd Allah in 1898, the new government of the Sudan recognized Ali Dinar as sultan of Darfur (1899). From that point Darfur got to be a territory (and later three provinces) of the Sudan.

### **B. The Actors behind the Conflict**

The most prominent actor of rebel groups in Darfur is the Justice and Equality Movement, or abbreviated as JEM. Another important rebel group which takes a part in the situation is come from Sudan Liberation Movement, or the SLA. Both are the rebel groups that launched the aggression against Sudan Government in 2003. Both groups are,

#### 1. The Rebellion Groups

##### a. Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)

The Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) is an armed opposition group in the Western region of Darfur. Its roots date from 1993 when it started establishing clandestine cells in Darfur and Khartoum. The founder of this group is Dr. Khalil Ibrahim; he is a national political actor of Zaghawa ethnic. Ibrahim himself had held ministerial posts in state governments during the 1990s and was committed to the counterin- surgency in Southern Sudan before his disenchantment with the ruling National Congress Party. He is the former government minister at once become the man behind the Justice and Equality Movement or JEM (Seekers of Truth and Justice, 2000).



**Figure 3.2 The Militia or Army of Justice and Equality Movement**

*Source: <https://alchetron.com>*

The connection built by Dr. Khalil Ibrahim made JEM had better access than SLA to funding sources and supporters from the outside of Sudan. Over time, the JEM has become the largest rebel group in Darfur with advance military equipment. Unlike the SLA, JEM has declared a national rather than regional agenda, fighting for power in Khartoum.

b. Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A)

Darfur's resentment of the central government started within the edge of 1980s, after the starvation led to increased pressures over the scare of natural resources between the indigenous (Non-Arab) and the nomadic (Arab). This group was established by the three major groups in Darfur: the Fur, the Zhagawa and the Masalit precisely in the 1989. This movement was led by Abdul Wahid al Nur, he is a Khartoum-educated law graduate who has spent more time outside the

Darfur. During the 1980s and 1990s, the Khartoum government backed Arab groups.

The SLM/A has its roots within the self-defense military which formed by communities in western Darfur, precisely in the middle of 1990s. It aims to protect the Indigenous (Non-Arab) from attack.

c. Liberation Justice Movement (LJM)

The LJM was created in February 2010 as a negotiating umbrella for two coalitions formed at international urging-the Libyan-backed Sudan Liberation Revolutionary Forces (SLRF, popularly known as the Tripoli Group) and the Addis Ababa Group that is identified with US Special Envoy to Sudan Gen. Scott Gration. The LJM has no unified military command and its component parts are relatively insignificant militarily.

The movement led by Tijani Sese., he is a member of the Fur tribe whose involvement satisfies the mediation's urgent desire for Fur representation in Doha, leads the LJM. Some groups initially contested his leadership because he played no part in the uprising, having lived outside Sudan for 20 years. Yet Sese, a former member of the Umma party of Sadeq al-Mahdi and a former economics professor at Khartoum University, has experience rarely found in the armed movements-as both state minister of finance and governor of Darfur in the Mahdi government (1986-89). Sese's brother, Fadul al-Sese, is the second-highest-ranking Fur in the Native Administration, the hierarchy of local chiefs and parallel courts established by the British before independence. The LJM structure announced in March 2010 includes five deputy chairmen-two Masalit, one Zaghawa, one Fur, and one Arab-with Bahr Abu Garda as secretary general, Ali Carabino as commander in chief, and Tajuddin Bashir Nyam, JEM's deputy chief negotiator in Abuja, as secretary for peace negotiations. Paradoxically, the LJM is dominated by Zaghawa groups; one of its greatest weaknesses is its limited Fur support.

## 2. The Pro – Government of Sudan

### a. The Government of Sudan under Al – Bashir Leadership

During the time, al-Mahdi was overthrown in 1989 and the position of president was illegally conducted by Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir regime in . Omar Hassan Ahmad Al-Bashir was born in Hosh Bonnaga, he came from Arab descent family (Walker, 2010). He joined the Sudanese Army in 1960; he has strong military and Islamic background.



**Figure 3.3 Omar Hassan Ahmad Al-Bashir**

*Source: <https://www.timesofisrael.com>*

Within the transition time, he became the Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation (the legislative and executive power during the transition time). Start from then, the government works under military governmental and suspended political parties, he is also introduced an Islamic legal code on the national level (Bekele, 2008).

Along with the first years of his leadership, he allied with the leader of National Islamic Front (later on becoming National Congress Party), Hassan al-Turabi and began implementing Sharia Law in several part of Sudan, moreover

in the southern area. His power increased as he appointed himself to be the legal President of Sudan on 16 October 1993 (Walker, 2010). In the mid of 1990's there were a conflict between Omar al-Bashir and Hassan al-Turabi in competing the executive position.

In 2000 presidential election, Omar was elected to be the president, he won over Hassan al-Turabi for 86.5 percent of the vote and in the legislative election, Omar's political party; Al-Bashir's National Congress Party (NCP) won 355 from 360 seats. Thus, the tension among both raised and became worst after al-Turabi's faction; the Popular National Congress Party (PNC) signed an agreement with one of the rebel group, Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (Walker, 2010).

b. Janjaweed

Janjaweed (also spelled Janjawid, Janjawad, Jingeweit, Jinjaweed) existed since the middle of 1980's. They are pro-government armed Arab militia which ordered to prevent African from joining the rebels groups. Janjaweed's attack against civilians also coordinated with the Sudan Armed Forces. The leader of Janjaweed and also the government claimed their assault is for the nation's sake, to against the rebels and violent militias in Sudan (Dagne, 2009).

### **C. The Darfur Conflict**

The Darfur region has a complex tribal mix comprising over 80 tribes, which are divided essentially between the Farmers and the Nomads with their large herds of livestock. This mix of farmers and nomads has peacefully coexisted throughout the past centuries. The tribes have had numerous intermarriages and a large majority of the African tribes of farmers are fluent in Arabic languages and vice versa, for all Darfur people are Africans, although they belong to different tribes. As a consequence of their joint efforts, the tribes were able to collectively put up a stiff resistance of almost 16 years against the expansionist British colonists in the early 20th century. The Darfur region was consequently



the last area to be occupied by the British from amongst the entire territory of the Sudan.

In the past, the Darfur region was a fertile region which received heavy rains. This benefited both the Farmers and the Nomads. However, in recent years due to both severe drought and desertification, the land and water resources available for both cultivation by the farmers and for grazing by the livestock of the Nomads, have considerably declined. This has led to increased friction between the two competing groups of tribes of Farmers and Nomads for the continually declining scarce land and water resources.

However, out of the almost 80 tribes residing in the Darfur region there has been an active militant involvement mainly by a small minority of only three tribes, namely the Janjaweed militia and the two tribes of Fur and Zaghawa. It is also important to note that almost 2/3rd of the Zaghawa tribe reside in Chad and the remaining 1/3rd in Darfur.

As can be seen from the above, the root cause of the Darfur crisis is the competing interests of the nomadic and the farmer tribes over declining land and water resources. This long-standing clash of interests was compounded by two external factors. First, the involvement of several tribal leaders from Darfur, they joined the rebellion in Chad. In order to protect their interests, both the Farmers and the Nomads acquired sophisticated weapons and formed their own militias.

However, these essentially tribal clashes, were initially restricted to a few tribes and were exploited and supported, for their own vested interests, by the forces opposing the government, like John Garang's SPLA of the South; the Turabi group and neighboring countries, like Eritrea. It is important to note that barring a few leaders, there is absolutely no popular support for Garang's SPLA in the Darfur region. Secondly, the economic sanctions imposed against Sudan under the pretext of the hostilities in Southern Sudan, particularly those imposed by the EU, which froze Sudan's development assistance under the Lome and Cotonou

agreements, which was primarily earmarked for the Darfur region.

It was initially the farmer tribes which established their armed militia, which was subsequently followed by the nomadic tribes. Some elements of the Zaghawa and Fur tribes actively took part in the rebellion against the government. In order to sustain their resistance against the Government, the armed militia of these two tribes attacked 80 police stations to collect weapons and vehicles and killed over 400 police personnel and continued to terrorize and force the non-rebel tribes to join the rebellion aimed at seizing control over the entire Darfur region. In keeping with the past practice, the Sudanese Government initially gave a chance to the tribes to peacefully resolve their disputes amongst themselves. The rebels, however, continued their military operations.

It was only after the rebel attack on Al-Fasher airport in March 2003, in which 7 planes were destroyed, that the Government was constrained to resort to the use of force to defeat the rebels, ensure peace and security in the region, and avoid a civil war between the Darfur tribes, which, had it not been controlled, would have led to widespread ethnic cleansing and genocide. Alongside its use of force, the Government also continued to negotiate a political settlement of the crises. The President dispatched a Federal Minister and a State Governor to conduct negotiations with the rebels. However, upon their arrival in Darfur, their vehicles were snatched by the rebels and were used in armed attacks against innocent civilians. The military operations between the government and the rebels and between the latter and other tribal militias had adverse impacts on the humanitarian situation in Darfur and resulted in thousands of displaced persons and refugees who were in dire need of food, clothes, medicine and security.

#### **D. The Impact of the Conflict**

Countless loss happens in Sudan, start from the infrastructure till the death toll during the conflict. Moreover

there are a lot of citizen that should be displaced into the camp or becoming refugee to the neighbor states for the sake of their security.

1. Loss of Live and Injured

The amount of the victims caused by the war is very high. It is estimated that 98-181.000 people have died since March 2003 within the conflict. Fiercely dissimilar passing toll insights, extending from 70,000 to 400,000, result from applying fractional information to bigger, non-representative populaces over contradictory time periods (Bureau of Intellegence and Research, 2005).

2. Internally Displaced Person (IDP's)



**Figure 3.4 The IDP's Camp**

*Source:* <https://unitedafrica.news/>

The Internally Displaced Person is those who have fled their homes because of the conflict. They are displaced within their own country and have not crossed the state boundaries (Myers, 2017). At the present time, almost 2.4 million Darfurians are internally displaced – about one-third of the population.

### 3. Refugees

Refugee is those who have fled from their country because their country cannot provide them protection and security (Myers, 2017). More than 650,000 Sudanese refugees live in neighboring countries - including Chad and South Sudan. Some 300,000 refugees from Darfur are currently living in 12 UNHCR and government run camps in eastern Chad. In addition, there are an unknown number of Darfurians who have been displaced outside of Darfur throughout Sudan which have received very little attention, in part because of traditional labor migration patterns.

