



# SUDAN

## From a youthful perspective

**The situation in Sudan is tense. Even after the recent developments where the military council and the protest movement came to an agreement, things have not yet settled down. The youth of Sudan plays a big role in this revolution. They formed a majority among the protesters and are now eagerly awaiting if the new ruling will bring the change they were fighting for.**

**In this positioning paper - written at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands - we share some of the perspectives of the youth of Sudan on their future and that of Sudan. It will provide you with a unique insight from the grassroot level - from youth who have sometimes literally risked their lives while protesting for new leadership in Sudan.**

### Create Room for Entrepreneurial Spirit

This paper shows that the youth in Sudan feels obstructed in many ways to fulfil their ambitions and hopes for the future. In Sudan, whether you can succeed in life, doesn't depend on your skills, but on your race, background and connections. There is no room for a more entrepreneurial spirit. Some of the youth we have interviewed, are working hard to conquer civic space in which they will be able to develop initiatives breaking down those barriers of race, background and connections. It is these youth that the new Sudan will direly need in order to build an economically and politically strong state.

*”We expect the diaspora and the international community to support our on-going resistance and struggle to up-root the former regime and its culture that is characterized by deep state, exclusion and nepotism. Through your support, our movement can succeed in implementing the slogan of this revolution: Freedom, Peace, and Justice.”*



### The Power of Women and Youth

While the conflict has brought horror and killings, one of the positive things it has brought is that the power of youth and women could clearly be witnessed. The challenge is now to capitalize on this space, and offer them the opportunities to move forward.

There is scepticism that this space will come from the intermediary leadership. The deep state is still present and there is a general fear for the Rapid Support Forces, who have been accused of widespread abuses in Sudan, including the 3 June massacre in which more than 120 people were reportedly killed.

More investment in Civil Society in Sudan will be the only way to achieve a real new order and the righteous space for women and youth to flourish.



## Mohammed Wagih Darfur

**Mohammed  
is a software  
engineer,  
graduated from Al-**

**Mashriq University in Kordofan. It is his  
dream to open a Media Production Center  
in Nyala.**

**“We** are a group of young people seeking revolution. We want to participate in building the state in general and the Darfur region in particular, as part of the positive change in Sudan. We also aim to contribute to more freedom for all ages and the rejection of racial discrimination.

The current system imposes all kinds of physical, psychological and moral restrictions which prevent freedom of expression, equality of rights and duties and justice. The labour market is poor, and minimum living standards are often not met in Sudan. With our protests, we aimed to reach the formation of civil authority and the establishment of a transitional competent civilian government. We hope the permanent constitution for Sudan will be transparent and give priority the overall interest and reform of the law and justice system and the economic situation of Sudan.

There are some influential people from the former regime, including military members of the transitional council and politicians, who are averse to power change and afraid of the shift to a civil government. They constitute a barrier to the transition and are trying to escape accountability.”



## Nusaiba Husain Hamad Khartoum

**Nusai-  
ba was  
taking  
part on  
a demon-  
stration  
march at  
the arena of**

**the  
office in                      European Union  
Khartoum on 26 April  
2019 when she was arrested by the se-  
curity forces. An event that marked the  
turning point in the long protest against  
Umar Bashir: the disposed president of  
Sudan.**

**“The** struggle of the youth in Sudan has both internal and external dimensions. In Sudan, we lack the economic means to sustain the struggle, as we have been denied viable economic means for years. The

poor economic situation is escalating the political tension.

Externally, the military forces who are resisting change are supported by some countries around us. The nature of this external support is making the process of reaching an acceptable agreement difficult. The external dimension can be understood from the contest of the geopolitics of Sudan which makes youth very vulnerable to the circles of migration, extremism and violence.”

Our group largely consists of educated young people. We closely collaborate with other progressive youth movement groups. We see ourselves as fighters and combatants for change. We are initiating our own future.

We want to achieve sustainable progress for Sudan; economically and politically. We strive for a Sudan that is acceptable and respected by the international community.

## Habeib Basheer Khartoum



**Just few days before the second session of Youth for Social Cohesion training, Habeib**

**was arrested by the security forces.**

**“The** major limitation to the efforts of Sudanese youths is related to the fact that the old regime has left the nation with very weak institutions. The country’s current leadership structure is deeply rooted in the mentalities of use of force as a tool of intimidation. All means of communication, including internet and social media are disconnected to deny the youth any avenue to showcase their plight and the killing that is going on in the country. This makes it difficult to properly coordinate and unify.

Thirty years of ruling from the old regime has destroyed civil services, education and decreased our quality of life. We want a new Sudan that gives hope to every Sudanese. We need a government that will work on a national youth strategy, which gives priority to the need of youth in the government programme.

We want to build a society

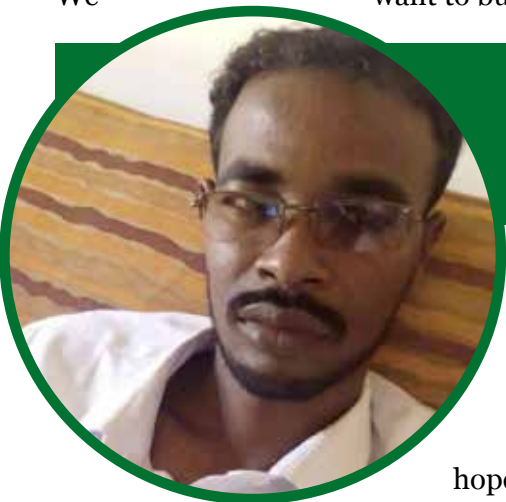
with inclusivity for all Sudanese. Irrespective of ethnicity or decent, Sudanese should have equal opportunity to political, economic and social participation. Inclusion of women in decision-making and their social emancipation is paramount to our demand. This must be the colour of the new Sudan we asking for.

We are also asking for justice for those who lost their lives in the struggle. The perpetrators of the killing and raping must be brought to justice. The government that will eventually emerge from this transitional phase needs to pay special attention to the youth who sacrificed their lives to bring this change.

We will need economic and knowledge building support from the diaspora to enable us to be economically viable and able to contribute towards the reconstruction of Sudan. From the international community, we want a balanced relationship which motivates and encourages our population to contribute towards regional and global peace.

Finally, as youths, we are pushing for a permanent constitution that is derived from democratic value and acceptable to the people of Sudan, and not one that is basically written to promote and sustain the interest of the ruling class.

## Abdelhamid Ikeer Elgasim Darfur



**“We**

**hope for a free democratic country**

**that achieves the youth’s dreams and aspirations. I expect a failure of this**

regime if they cannot work diligently to bind the nation together and distance themselves from exclusion and racial practices on basis of tribalism and nepotism. I also expect an increase in tensions in Sudan if things do not move quickly forward. The barriers are represented in the intransigence of the military council to reach a final agreement, and also in the continued existence of the subordinates of the deep state.



**Hyala is a graduate from Nyala University. Her big dream is to open an internet café.**

## Ihsan Haroun Ahmed Darfur

We all have dreams and projects which we seek to achieve, but the previous ruling did not give us any opportunities for creativity. We hope that the civilian leadership will give room to realize the dreams of young people, bring security and stability, make Sudan flourish, raise poverty, and reduce youth migration. Sudan can become the food basket of the world if it manages to utilize its mighty resources well.

The military transitional Council's clinging to power and their strong grip indicate that they only want to govern and not to pay attention to the demands of Sudanese society or to achieve civil rule.

The role of the international community is very important and appreciated. For example, the Ethiopian and African initiative is benign and important to create consensus, it can lead the revolution to stability.

We, the youth of Darfur suffer from the remnants of negative wars in the society, such as classification on ethnic and regional basis. We want to correct these disadvantages of wars by raising awareness and setting up workshops such as VOND's programs. We want a democratic state that satisfies everyone and fulfils all the requirements, a state where ideas are accepted and aspirations are fulfilled. We hope that every citizen is to be dealt with as a human being without any other classification.

**The** current system is the same as the

old military system, it applies the same laws and procedures as before. The military is not academically qualified to rule Sudan and bring it to safety. They follow the same path as before, with all the drawbacks that brings. They are not seriously committed to meeting the wishes of the citizens in general and youth in particular. We are not able to achieve our ambitions and dreams under this regime.

If we succeed in achieving civil rule, we expect Sudan to be removed from the list of the states which sponsor terrorism. This will lead to the lifting of the siege and the freeze imposed on Sudan. We hope that Sudan will rise and develop in order to achieve a bright future and stability. In Sudan in general, and especially in Darfur, peace needs to be restored. We hope the internally displaced persons will be able to return to their villages and that the hopes and demands of the young people in Sudan will be realized. We dream that evolution and development will prevail in Sudan. That will also reduce the emigration of young people abroad.

## A Role for the Dutch Government

We have asked the youth about the role of the International community in general and the Dutch in particular. What can the Dutch do to support them?

Everyone feels that explicit political support for the youth of Sudan means a lot. Mohammed: "It would help if the international community would not accept everyone as representatives of the State of Sudan. Those who are not in favour of peace should not be invited to international fora."

Habeib: "We expect the diaspora and the

international community to support our on-going resistance and struggle to uproot the former regime and its culture that is characterized by deep state, exclusion and nepotism. Through your support, our movement can succeed in implementing the revolution slogan of Freedom, Peace and Justice."

Nusaiba: "The international community should put pressure on the military council and the revolutionaries movement to agree on a meaningful path towards a democratic government.



The international community could help in building a sustainable democratic system that permits and guarantees the rights of all in the country. They should focus particularly on the role of the youth in the post-conflict Sudan. We urge the international community to lift all sanctions on the nation of Sudan and to remove Sudan from the terrorist list. This will make Sudanese youth feel the commitment to working with the international community for regional and global peace.”

“Donors should increase their support for programmes that aim to provide youth with financing incentives for sustainable economic activities. The youth of Sudan needs management capacity building training and vocational (skills) training. Entrepreneurial youth exchange experiences can help the youth

to be meaningful in the process of rebuilding Sudan and to achieve a better relationship with the international community.”

A new ruling in Sudan can give a boost to economic and entrepreneurial activities. But the youth in Sudan is not prepared for this. For years, the only way for educated youth to make money was to join the military or the government. The tax system made it nearly impossible to start a viable business. Now that opportunities may open up, there is a dire need for training and support for entrepreneurship.

There is also a need to deal with the collective trauma as a result of the massacre. The youth will need tools to cope with this situation to see perspectives for a more positive future.

## VOND & WADI

VOND and WADI are two Dutch organisations working on peace and stability in Sudan. VOND (Vrouwenorganisatie Nederland Darfur) focuses specifically on the war-struck Darfur region and aims to strengthen women and youth organisations that strive for peace. WADI (Women Advocacy and Development Initiative), a Dutch initiative of diaspora women and activists, works on leadership development and capacity building among women and youth in Sudan.

Both WADI and VOND believe that youth and women are important drivers for peace. The information in this positioning paper is based upon interviews held with the youth that participated in the programme ‘Youth for Social Cohesion’, funded by the Peace and Security 4 All



fund  
of the  
Ministry  
of  
Foreign

Affairs in the Netherlands.

The programmes are implemented in Khartoum (WADI) and in Darfur (VOND).

**Like to know more about our work or get in touch with some of the youth of Sudan to learn more from them? Please contact us!**



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