



Attention: Foreign Affairs LA  
Support the Genocide Resolution  
H.Res.193/S.Res.164

Armenian National Committee of America  
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

To: Foreign affairs aide  
From: Abraham Niziblian, Government Affairs Director  
Date: June 17, 2004  
  
Re: *Over 320,000 killed in Sudan genocide in 2004*

Last month (5/29/04), New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof sharply criticized international indifference to the unfolding genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan, writing that:

*“As for America, we have repeatedly failed to stand up to genocide, whether of Armenians, Jews, Cambodians or Rwandans. Now we’re letting it happen again.”*

In a powerful column published just yesterday, Kristof voiced his impatience with the Bush Administration’s ongoing discussions about whether to describe the mass murder and rape in the Darfur region of Sudan as “genocide” - despite the fact that, by conservative estimates, over 320,000 people have already been killed this year.

As the descendents of survivors of the Armenian Genocide, Armenian Americans feel a special obligation to encourage our government to take the lead in preventing genocides, anywhere around the world. Please stand up against genocide in Sudan and do all that you can to ensure we, as a nation, meet our obligations under the Genocide Convention to prevent and punish all instances of genocide.

If I can be of any help, please contact me at (202) 431-3806 or [abraham@anca.org](mailto:abraham@anca.org).

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# The New York Times

ON THE WEB

## Editorials/Op-Ed

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# Dare We Call It Genocide?

By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF

**ALONG THE CHAD-SUDAN BORDER** - The Bush administration says it is exploring whether to describe the mass murder and rape in the Darfur region of Sudan as "genocide." I suggest that President Bush invite to the White House a real expert, Magboula Muhammad Khattar, a 24-year-old widow huddled under a tree here.

The world has acquiesced shamefully in the Darfur genocide, perhaps because 320,000 deaths this year (a best-case projection from the U.S. Agency for International Development) seems like one more boring statistic. So listen to Ms. Khattar's story, multiply it by hundreds of thousands, and let's see if we still want to look the other way.

Just a few months ago, Ms. Khattar had a great life. Her sweet personality and lovely appearance earned a hefty bride price of 40 cattle when she was married four years ago to Ali Daoud, a prosperous farmer. The family owned 300 cattle and 50 camels, making them among the wealthiest in their village, Ab-Layha in western Sudan. Ms. Khattar promptly bore two children, the youngest born late last year.

About the same time, though, the Sudanese government resolved to crush a rebellion in Darfur, a region the size of France in western Sudan. Sudan armed and paid a militia of Arab raiders, the Janjaweed, and authorized them to slaughter and drive out members of the Zaghawa, Masalit and Fur tribes.

On March 12, Ms. Khattar was performing her predawn Muslim prayers about 4 a.m. when a Sudanese government Antonov aircraft started dropping bombs on Ab-Layha, which is made up of Zaghawa tribespeople. Moments later, more than 1,000 Janjaweed attackers rode into the village on horses and camels, backed by Sudanese government troops in trucks. "The Janjaweed shouted: 'We will not allow blacks here. We will not let Zaghawa here. This land is only for Arabs,'" Ms. Khattar recalled.

Ms. Khattar grabbed her children, and, as shots and flames raged around her, raced for a nearby forest. But her father and mother tried to protect their animals — they were yelling, "Don't take our livestock." They were both shot dead.

The attack was part of a deliberate strategy to ensure that the village would be forever uninhabitable, that the Zaghawa could never live there again. The Janjaweed poisoned wells by stuffing them with the corpses of people and donkeys. They also blew up a dam that supplied water to the farms, destroyed seven hand pumps in the village and burned all the homes and even the village school, the clinic and the mosque.

In separate interviews, I talked to more than a dozen other survivors from Ab-Layha, and they all confirm Ms. Khattar's story. By most accounts, about 100 people were massacred that day in Ab-Layha, and a particular effort was made to exterminate all men and boys, even the very young. Women and girls were sometimes allowed to flee, but the prettiest were kidnapped.

Most of those raped don't want to talk about it. But Zahra Abdel Karim, a 30-year-old woman, told me how in the same attack on Ab-Layha, the Janjaweed shot to death her husband, Adam, and 7-year-old son, Rahshid, as well as three of her brothers. Then they grabbed her 4-year-old son, Rasheed, from her arms and cut his throat.

The Janjaweed took her and her two sisters away on horses and gang-raped them, she said. The troops shot one sister, Kuttuma, and cut the throat of the other, Fatima, and they discussed how to mutilate her. (Sexual humiliation has been part of the Sudanese strategy to drive out the African tribespeople. The Janjaweed routinely add to the stigma by branding or scarring the women they rape.)

"One Janjaweed said: 'You belong to me. You are a slave to the Arabs, and this is the sign of a slave,'" she recalled. He slashed her leg with a sword before letting her hobble away, stark naked. Other villagers confirmed that they had found her naked and bleeding, and she showed me the scar on her leg.

By comparison, Ms. Khattar was one of the lucky ones. She lost her parents, her home and all her belongings, but her husband and children were alive, and she had not been raped. Unfortunately, her luck would soon run out.

I'll tell you more of her story on Saturday, because if she and her people aren't victims of genocide, then the word has no meaning.

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