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Sudan: The real genocide

Whether you call it an obsession or antisemitism, social convenience or just ignorance, the international silence on the Arab genocide in Sudan adds up to the same thing: an egregious moral outrage.

By [RAFAEL MEDOFF](#) JANUARY 13, 2025 01:54



MASALIT WOMEN gather under a tree to share stories about the deaths of their children and other family members, mostly male, at a refugee camp in Adre, Chad, in 2023. The women had fled to Chad as a result of an ethnically targeted massacre in Sudan's West Darfur state. (photo credit: EL TAYEB SIDDIG/REUTERS)

The Biden administration has confirmed that Arab militias are committing genocide against black Africans in [Sudan](#). So how will those who are falsely accusing Israel of genocide respond to the news that real genocide is underway?

It seems unlikely there will be much of a response. After all, the evidence of genocide in Sudan has been reported for many months, yet there have been no noticeable protests.

New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof reported last year that “some of the same Arab forces responsible for the genocide in [the Sudanese region of Darfur] in the 2000s are picking up where they left off... massacring, torturing, raping, and mutilating members of non-Arab ethnic groups – the same victims as before – while burning or bulldozing their villages...”

Kristof emphasized that there is an unmistakable racist element to the persecution: “Arab militias mock their victims as ‘slaves’ and taunt them with racial epithets – the non-Arabs are often darker skinned. The militants seem to be trying to systematically eliminate non-Arab tribes from the area.”

Last week's statement by US Secretary of State [Antony Blinken](#) confirming that genocide is underway in Sudan was curiously vague in describing the racial and ethnic aspects, even though that is precisely what makes the violence genocidal.



Families displaced by RSF advances in Sudan's El Gezira and Sennar states shelter at the Omar ibn al-Khattab displacement site, Kassala state, Sudan, July 10, 2024. (credit: REUTERS/FAIZ ABUBAKR)

Blinken used the word “Arab” just once in his 500-word statement. The word “Muslim” was not mentioned at all. Blinken said the perpetrators “have systematically murdered men and boys – even infants – on an ethnic basis and deliberately targeted women and girls from certain ethnic groups for rape and other forms of brutal sexual violence.”

But he did not name those ethnic groups.

It was left to *The New York Times* to point out that the victims are “the Masalit ethnic group,” and “the Masalit are ethnic Africans,” while the group perpetrating the genocide, the Rapid Support Forces (R.S.F.), is “dominated by ethnic Arabs.” For some reason, however, *the Times* placed that statement in parentheses, as if it was not really important, and relegated it to near the end of its article.

The Biden administration’s acknowledgment that Arabs are committing “systematic murder” of civilians, even infants, and are carrying out “mass rape and other forms of brutal sexual violence” against non-Arabs in Sudan sounds a lot like the attack by Hamas and other Palestinian Arab terrorists on Israelis on [October 7, 2023](#).

Yet many self-described human rights groups, women’s rights organizations, and college campus activists responded to October 7 not by condemning the genocidal Arab attack but by denying or ignoring the Hamas rapes and falsely accusing Israel of genocide – in some cases even before a single Israeli soldier had set foot in Gaza.

How will they respond to the news of real genocide in Sudan? Marches? Tent encampments? Heckling of political leaders? Probably not. Just as Nicholas Kristof’s many columns about Sudan were greeted with silence, so has the State Department’s Sudan genocide determination so far failed to inspire any mass protests.

The question is why. Why the blatant hypocrisy? Even if the marchers and tent protesters sincerely believe genocide is taking place in Gaza, why aren’t they also protesting against the Arab genocide in Sudan?

There are four possible explanations.

The first is that hating Israel has become a kind of obsession, and like all obsessions, it results in a narrow focus that shuts out everything else. For hardcore campus protesters, hating Israel is more than a hobby: it is their core identity. It’s what they think and talk about every day.

It shapes their choices in relationships (no “Zionists,” please!) and even fashion. They don’t have the mental bandwidth to address any other cause, no matter how urgent.

The second explanation is old-fashioned antisemitism. For some, yelling about Gaza is just an excuse to yell at Jews and the Jewish state. In their minds, Jews are bad and Arabs are good. Acknowledging that Arabs in Sudan are committing genocide against blacks upsets their perception of how the world works.

There is a third possible explanation: social convenience. For some, focusing on Gaza is “what the cool kids are doing.” Those who want to fit in socially, who have political aspirations, or who just want to get good grades in class, see Israel-bashing as a path to those goals. Speaking out about Sudan offers no such advantages.

Finally, there is the factor of ignorance. It’s easy enough for those who derive their news from social media to swipe right past news about parts of the world that seem remote, complicated, or just uninteresting. Many former tent protesters don’t know about Sudan and are not curious enough to find out.

Whether you call it an obsession or antisemitism or chalk it up to social convenience or just ignorance, the international silence on the Arab genocide in Sudan adds up to the same thing: an egregious moral outrage.

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