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The “Revolutionary Affront” Group’s Kampala Declaration

The so-called “Revolutionary Front”, better known as the Revolutionary Affront Group of the Sudan, rejects elections as a means of acquiring a mandate from the people to replace the incumbent government of President Omer H. A. Al Bashir. Without support among the people, and without any “liberated territory” inside the Sudan, leaders of the “Affront” congregated in Kampala, Uganda on 5th January 2013, embraced by a president who has a checkered record in human rights.

Professor Aili Mari Tripp, a political scientist at the University of Wisconsin - Madison - USA, has published “Museveni’s Uganda” in 2010. The book provides amazing details of what happened when Kizza Besigye stood as presidential candidate against Museveni: 4,000 of his supporters were arrested and an army paramilitary group killed some and tortured others.

There were police reports of elections related violence that included attempted murder, assault and robbery as well as beatings, harassment and intimidation according to US Department Report (2002). Some of the attacks were carried out in broad daylight.

An official Ugandan report by a parliamentary delegation that visited Kigo prison was shocked by the level of torture. “Inmates showed them their crushed testicles. Some claimed heavy stones were suspended from their private parts. Crocodiles, snakes and red ants were used to threaten and torture victims.”

Indeed, Museveni’s Kampala is the ideal venue for the meeting of “Affront Groups” that have already committed horrific human rights violations of their own in Darfur, South Kordofan and the Blue Nile states. Birds of a feather do flock together.

The “Affront Group” has issued yet another statement calling for regime change by force. It was signed by Yasser Arman of the SPLM/N and given the title “New Dawn” which is a translation of the Al Fajr Al Jadeed, the Communist Party’s magazine.

Nothing is new in this Museveni-sponsored Affront. The leader of the rump of JEM, Jibril Ibrahim, was there putting a brave face on the loss of what remained of his military wing. Abdul Wahid Nur (who, in the words of former US Envoy Andrew Natsios, was putting on weight in Paris) was also present, having added on more weight. So was Minni Minawi whose personal involvement in killings and ethnic violence were documented by Alex De Waal and Julie Flint in their book “Darfur”.

The Kampala Affront is an isolated and desperate attempt at media projection of an insignificant event. They are isolated from the people and, significantly, from those sections of the international community that have in the past, overtly and covertly, financed and armed the SPLA/M during the 1983-2005 civil war. The US Charge d' Affaires has declared last month what the US believes about regime change. It has to take place lawfully and peacefully, according to the constitution. The rebels have been informed of the US's position.

What are the chances of the Kampala Affront Group repeating the success of SPLM in acquiring arms and help from neighbours of the Sudan to repeat history? A scrutiny of the geopolitical landscape shows that this is highly unlikely. Sudan's relations with all its neighbours are such that distant Uganda, not a neighbour, is now the hub of anti-Sudanese activity.

Inside Sudan the National Congress Party, the Democratic Unionist Party and the Umma Party, are the three main political parties, two of them are the main pillars of the broad-based government, the third (Umma) is against regime change by force. Effective mobilisation of the masses cannot succeed without the Big Three.

Admittedly, the marginal Communist Party and the foreign financed and remote controlled organisations are capable of loud internet generated political haboobs; but they are without grass root appeal and have been thoroughly discredited after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Like orphans, they have now been fostered by multi-nationally financed NGOs, further eroding their credibility.

If their situation is so hopeless, why did the Kampala Affront Group bother to make yet another declaration of an elusive dawn?

The answer is simple. Abdul Wahid Nur has got offices in Tel Aviv, despite the fact that a racist Likud MP has described Africans in Israel as "cancer". JEM has used Israeli weapons against the government according to UN reports. The role of these terrorists is to keep appearing in press conferences, make the odd attack against civilians, road construction workers, or UN humanitarian aid convoys, in order to provide the Israeli lobby in the US with a pretext to continue campaigning for sanctions against Sudan.

The policy of illegal settlements in the Palestinian territories shows that Israeli political goals and values are not identical to those of the western democracies and that the lobby can, and does operate against western policies and interests when it chooses to.

As far as Museveni's Uganda is concerned, it is most appropriate that those Sudanese who reject elections meet and find sanctuary and encouragement by a one-man regime that beats up, tortures and assassinates its own political elite. Uganda is the high ideal of the Affront Group; Museveni and Netanyahu are their godfathers. This shows their true credentials and will ensure their eventual disintegration. Their Kampala dawn is actually a sunset of their aspirations.

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