1. Overview

On its website, the Liberal Party (LP) [or the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) (LP 31 Mar. 2016; ALF n.d.a)] states that it was formed "on the base and legacy of different liberal and democratic groups" (LP n.d.a). According to the Africa Liberal Network (ALN), "a network of African Liberal Democratic political parties" (ALN n.d.a), the LP was formed in September 2008, through the merger of the Sudan Liberal Party, the Sudanese Democratic Movement, the Movement of New Democratic Forces (HAQ)-United Leadership and the Sudanese Democratic Party (ALN n.d.b). The Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA), a non-profit organisation that "strives for excellence in the promotion of credible elections, citizen participation, and strong political institutions for sustainable democracy in Africa" (EISA n.d.), similarly states that the Southern Liberal Party, the Sudanese Democratic Party, the New Forces Democratic Movement (HAQ) and the Sudanese Democratic Movement merged in September 2008 to establish the LP (EISA Feb. 2011).

According to the LP's website, the party has great contact and co-ordination with the new youth movements and close alliances with some regional non-violent political organizations, like Darfur Democratic Forum (DDF), Federal Truth Party (FTP) and River Nile Sons Alliance (RNSA). (LP n.d.b)

The same source further states that the LP also "keeps strong sister relations with South Sudan Liberals organized in the South Sudan Liberal Youth Forum (SSLYF) and South Sudan People Liberal Party (LP n.d.a).

Sources state that the LP is a member of the ALN (LP n.d.a; ALN n.d.b). According to the Arab Liberal Federation (ALF), an organisation "comprised of Arab liberal parties and activists in the Arab world ... committed to the principles of freedom, responsibility, pluralism, tolerance, market economy, civil state and separation of religion from state affairs" (ALF n.d.b), the LP is one of their members (ALF n.d.a).

In a correspondence with the Research Directorate, an Associate Professor with the Political Science Department and the Islamic Studies Institute of McGill University, who studies African politics, particularly in Sudan, stated that the LP "is perhaps the 3rd strongest opposition party in Sudan but I believe it is limited to the urban areas and middle class" (Professor 22 Mar. 2017).

A fellow at Rift Valley Institute, a research NGO[1], who writes about political developments in the two Sudans, stated, in correspondence with the Research Directorate, that "the LDP has splintered into [at least]
two wings...over the past year or so. A wing led by Adel Abd al-Ati who is mostly based in Poland and a wing in Sudan led by Mayada Siwar al-Dahab" (Fellow 23 Mar. 2017). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

2. Leadership

According to sources, Meada Siwar El Dahab [Mayadi Swar al-Dahab; Mayada Siwar al-Dahab] is the president, head or leader of the LP (ALF n.d.a; Associate Professor 22 Mar. 2017; Fellow 23 Mar. 2017).

The Associate Professor stated that he believes that "the party has an executive that is represented by [Mayadi Swar al-Dahab] and members of the four parties that came together to form a unified party" (Associate Professor 22 Mar. 2017). The same source added that the LP "is quite democratic internally in that both the head (i.e. executive), and officer that head the party are voted [in] by the members" (Associate Professor 22 Mar. 2017).

The LP website identifies Mrs. Nour Tawir Kafi as its Honorary President and Dr. Ibrahim Nageeb as its acting Chairman (LP n.d.c). The website also lists the following individuals as part of the party's leadership:

Ms. Amna Osman (Acting Deputy Secretary General)
Ms. Sara Agbna (Acting Secretary for Women Affairs)
Ms. Aza Abdelhai (Acting Secretary General, LPS Youth)
Mrs. Mysoon Musaad (Spokesperson)
Ms. Tamdur Amasaib (Acting Secretary for Social Peace)
Mr. Saifeldin Alnagar (Acting Secretary General)
Mr. Mudathir Khamess Taha (Acting Secretary for Political Affairs)
Mr. Ramiz Altigani (AAB) (Acting International Liaison)
Mr. Muhanad Alkarib (Acting Treasurer)
Mr. Adil Abdel Aati (Acting Secretary for Information)
Mr. Stefanos Omer (Acting Secretary for Youth Affairs)
Mr. Mohamed Talaat (Acting Secretary for Students Affairs)
Mr. Ahmad Halwai (Acting Secretary for Organization & Training)
Dr. Montasir Osman (Acting Secretary for Professionals)
Mr. Mohamed AbdelMoniem (Acting Secretary for Culture)
Mr. Ala Mohamed (Acting Secretary of Humanitarian Affairs)
Mr. Amar Alshareef (Acting Secretary for Legal Affair) (LP n.d.c).

3. Aims and Objectives

On its website, the LP "declares itself as a [s]ocial-[l]iberal [p]arty" and "describes itself in the Party Constitution as a [d]emocratic, [l]iberal, [s]ecular, [n]on-hierarchic, non-centralist and [g]ender sensitive party" (LP n.d.a). Sudan Tribune, a website based in Paris dedicated to providing news about Sudan (Sudan Tribune n.d.), describes the LP as a "social democratic group" (Sudan Tribune 9 Oct. 2016). The source further adds that the LP is an opposition party, with "leftist origins" (Sudan Tribune 15 Mar. 2017).

On its website, the party states that it aspires - through Social Liberalism, Federalism and Liberal Democracy - to empower each citizen and all segments of society to the level of awareness and power so people can participate actively in public affairs and make changes in their life and the country for themselves and by themselves. (LP n.d.a)

The same source states that its mission is...
to provide quality leadership towards attaining good governance in Sudan by mobilizing and enlightening citizenry towards the creation of a democratic and prosperous nation governed by the rule of law, non-discrimination and equitable distribution of resources for the benefit of all (LP n.d.b).

According to the same source, its vision is
to build a society free of racism and ethnic considerations, respect of the different cultures and religions, gender sensitive, committed to the rule of law and economic growth and citizens’ empowerment through sustainable growth and participatory governance. (LP n.d.b)

The Fellow stated that "[t]he broad aims of the party revolve around democratisation and human rights and a call to the end of wars in the country, which are objectives widely shared by the opposition parties in the country" (Fellow 23 Mar. 2017). The Associate Professor stated that the aim of the LP is, primarily, to engage in peaceful and gradualist change to achieve a democratic transition. This would include a constitutional conference that represents all opposition forces as well as the present government to draft a new constitution and electoral guidelines. This would then be followed by parliamentary elections based on propositional representation. It is a social welfare party of the type you find in the West that calls for an open economy but that has a strong emphasis on social welfare. (Associate Professor 22 Mar. 2017)

According to Sudan Tribune, in October 2016, the LP withdrew "from the heterogeneous alliance of Future Forces for Change (FFC)," after this alliance accepted to participate in the "national dialogue movement" (Sudan Tribune 9 Oct. 2016). The same source further reports that the LP issued a statement where it "reiterated its rejection for any dialogue with the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) that does not pave the way for political inclusiveness, stop war and ensure freedoms" (Sudan Tribune 9 Oct.2016). However, in March 2017, according to Sudan Tribune, the head of the LP signed the "national dialogue framework document" while "vowing to continue to work for peace and democratic change" (Sudan Tribune 15 Mar. 2017). According to the same source, the head of the LP explained that the party decided "to engage with [their] partners in the opposition" and "to work with [their] friends from the armed movements and the rest of the political forces" (Sudan Tribune 15 Mar. 2017). Sudan Tribune reported that the head of the party nonetheless "blamed the government for obstructing peace and democratic changes" (Sudan Tribune 15 Mar. 2017). Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

4. Membership

The LP's website states that the party has its branches and units in almost every state of the 19 Sudanese States. It is relatively strong in West Kurdfan, the River Nile, Northern and Red Sea provinces. However, many of the LP membership and activities are concentrated in the Khartoum region, which is the home region to one fifth of the country's population. More than 40% of the LP members are women, which makes it the highest rate of women in Sudanese Political Parties. 70% of members are younger than 35 years old. (LP n.d.a)

According to the Associate Professor, the LP is present "in every region but mostly in the major urban towns throughout every region" (Associate Professor 22 Mar. 2017). According to the Fellow, "its base of support is quite narrow, mostly restricted to the urban milieu of Khartoum" (Fellow 23 Mar. 2017). The same source stated that "[t]he party is quite small, [with its] membership probably in the few hundreds, if not less" (Fellow 23 Mar. 2017).

The Basic Rules and Principles (Transitional) of the party, signed and ratified on 8 October 2008, states that LDP Membership is available for every Sudanese male and female citizens provided that:

- He/she should be 18 (eighteen) years old and up
- He/she shouldn't be in a possession of a membership of any other Sudanese competent political body
- He/she shouldn’t be accused, indicted or charged for crimes such as corruption, financial abuse or human rights’ laws violation
- He/she should declared their comply with and commitment to all LDP’s principles, regulations
and goals as expressed in the LDP’s Establishment Statement and The Declaration of Unity

- Every member should fill and sign an application form provided by the LDP
- Every member should pay a registration fee (LP 8 Oct. 2008, 2)

The document, which also includes the rights and responsibilities of LP members, is attached to this Response.

Information on membership procedures could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

5. Treatment by Authorities

In August 2015, Human Rights Watch reported that as part of a "wave" of arrests of members of opposition parties,

intelligence agents also arrested three members of the Liberal Democratic Party [LP] on August 17, 2015, following an event at the H[AQ] party headquarters in Khartoum. One of the detainees told Human Rights Watch that the officers questioned them for several hours about the party’s activities and work in Darfur, while beating them and forcing them to endure very cold temperatures or stand under the hot sun. The three were released after two days and ordered to return for more questioning over the following days. (Human Rights Watch 28 Aug. 2015).

According to Sudan Tribune, in September 2016, a sit-in protest in front of the Ministry of Justice in Khartoum, organised by the LP to request an investigation into the killing of demonstrators in September 2013, was dispersed by anti-riot police who said that "their protest was not authorized" (Sudan Tribune 26 Sept. 2016). Similarly, the Fellow stated that "security authorities arrested some members of the party for a day or a few days last September when they held a protest calling for justice for those killed in the Khartoum riots back in September 2013" (Fellow 23 Mar. 2017).

Further information on the treatment of the LP and its members by the authorities could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

Note

[1] The RVI describes itself as "an independent, non-profit organization, founded in Sudan in 2001, currently working in seven countries in Eastern and Central Africa. The aim of the Institute is to advance useful knowledge of the region and its diverse communities, bringing a better understanding of local realities to bear on social and political action" (Rift Valley Institute n.d.).

References


Associate Professor, Political Science Department and the Islamic Studies Institute, McGill University. 22 March 2017. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.


Fellow, Rift Valley Institute (RVI). 23 March 2017. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.
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**Additional Sources Consulted**

**Oral sources:** African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies; Associate Professor, Ethnicity, Immigration and Pluralism, University of Calgary; Independent Researcher; Senior Fellow, Francois-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard University.

**Internet sites, including:** AllAfrica; Amnesty International; ecoli.net; Factiva; Freedom House; Germany – Federal Office for Migration and Asylum; NewsXS; Noozz.com; Political Handbook of the World 2015; Stanford University Libraries; SudanJem.com; Sudan News; Sudan News Agency; Sudan Vision; Sudanow Magazine; UN – Refworld; US – Central Intelligence Agency, Department of State; Xinhua News Agency.

**Attachment**


Tips on how to use this search engine.