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Responses to Information Requests

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28 October 2016

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Sudan: Information on the Sudanese Baath Party, including aims and objectives, membership procedures, and treatment by authorities (2014-October 2016)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

1. Overview

Sources describe the Sudanese Baath Party as "a small party" with limited influence in Sudan (*PHW* 2011, 1358; Sudan Tribune 6 Mar. 2013). Sources have referred to the party as: the "Sudanese Baathist Party" (Radio Dabanga 21 Sept. 2015), "Baath Arab Socialist Party" (ibid. 29 May 2014), "Hizb al-Baath al-Sudan" (*PHW* 2011, 1358), the "BP" (ibid.), "Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party" (Sudan Tribune 2 Apr. 2010), "Sudanese Socialist Baath Party" (Radio Dabanga 31 Dec. 2015), and "Sudanese Ba'ath Party" (Sudan Tribune n.d.a; ACJPS 21 May 2014; Pambazuka News 31 July 2012). The *Political Handbook of the World (PHW)* indicates that the main platform of the Baath Party is Sudanese "integration and unification with Egypt or Libya in support of forming a 'Pan-Arab Nation'," and that the organization has received support for this mission from the Baath Party of Iraq (2011, 1358). A 2012 report published by Media in Cooperation and Transition (MICT), a "German media development organization that implements projects in the Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia," (MICT 2012, 4) similarly notes that the Baath Party operates "Pan-Arabist and secularist programs" (ibid., 40). According to the *PHW*, the Sudanese Baath Party "cut ties" with its Iraqi counterparts "[a]fter the fall of the regime of Saddam Hussein" (2011, 1358).

2. Leadership and Membership

Sources indicate that the following individuals occupy leadership roles within the Baath Party:

- Leader: Mohammed Ali Jadin (*PHW* 2011, 1358);
- Alaeldin Abakar, a "member of the party's Political Committee" (Radio Dabanga 31 Dec. 2015);
- Adil Khalafallah, "a leader of the Sudanese Baath Party" (ibid. 31 Aug. 2015);
- Yahya El Hussein, a "prominent member" of the Baath Party (ibid. 19 Jan 2015);
- Spokesmen: Diaeldin Bilal (ibid. 31 Dec. 2015), Mohamed Ziaeldin (ibid. 27 Nov. 2015), Mohamed Diaa (ibid. 30 Oct. 2015), Mohamed Dia'eldin (ibid. 3 Sept. 2015), Mohamed Diya'eldin (ibid. 31 Aug. 2015), and Mohamed Diya-eddin (Sudanese Online 13 Nov. 2014).

Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Information on the Baath Party's membership, including the procedures and requirements for becoming a member, could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3. Political Objectives

In a 2006 statement published in *Sudan Vision Daily*, a Sudanese English daily newspaper, the Sudanese Baath Party "official Spokesman," Ustaz Kama Boulad, described the party as

a national entity based on a united national organization all over the Arab world. ... Boulad explained that their party had held its regional conference last year [2005] through representation of all conferences and party grassroots in Khartoum and other states, and that a regional leadership was elected to manage the party's affairs and its relations with all political forces. (*Sudan Vision Daily* 10 Apr. 2006)

Sudanese Online, an online news source based out of Phoenix, Arizona, that provides Sudanese news to "the Sudanese-American community and [the] Sudanese around the World" (n.d.), further quotes a Baath Party spokesperson and head of the Media Committee of the National Consensus Forces (NCF), Mohamed Diya-eddin, as stating that the Baath Party alongside the NCF are "working toward realization of our known stance of bringing down the regime as a main goal for the opposition" (Sudanese Online 13 Nov. 2014).

3.1 Political Coalitions

Sudan Tribune, a Paris-based news website that aims to "promote plural information, democratic and free debate on Sudan" (Sudan Tribune n.d.b), indicates that the Sudanese Baath Party is part of the "internal groups of the opposition umbrella [known as] Sudan Call," which was established in Addis Ababa on 3 December 2014 (ibid. 7 Oct. 2016). Another Sudan Tribune article notes that the other members of the "Sudan Call" include the Sudanese Congress Party (SCoP), Center Alliance Party (CAP), Sudanese National Party (SNP), and the Sudanese National Alliance (SNA) (ibid. 28 Sept. 2016). According to the same source, the "Sudan Call" group cut ties with the opposition group NCF in late September 2016 "following mounting differences over participation in the African Union-led peace process" (ibid.).

Radio Dabanga, a Netherlands-based news radio station focused on Darfur (Radio Dabanga n.d.), indicates that the Baath Party is one of "the signatories of the Teiba Charter [of late October 2014]," which was signed by a "number" of Sudan's opposition parties (ibid. 26 Oct. 2014). The same source further describes the Teiba Charter as a "road map to a peaceful and stable Sudan" with the "unification of the political and armed opposition in order to overthrow the regime" as a need stressed by the signatories (ibid.). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3.2 Participation in the 2014 National Dialogue Promoted by the Government

A Sudan Tribune article published on 27 November 2014 reports that opposition parties, including the Baath Party, "refuse[d] to join the [national] dialogue process" promoted by the Sudanese government, which "vowed to implement a number of confidence building measures including the release of political detainees and allowing political parties to carry out [their] activities" (Sudan Tribune 27 Nov. 2014). The same source also states that the Sudanese government "slammed" the opposition groups reluctant to join the national dialogue "saying they are not serious about peace and dialogue" (ibid. 7 Oct. 2016).

A Sudanese Online article published on 13 November 2014 quotes the spokesperson of the Baath party and head of the Media Committee of the NCF as stating that

their consent to participate in the national dialogue is conditional on the provision of the democratization requirements, the release of detainees, stop of war in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, establishment of a transitional government an[d] holding of free and fair elections. (Sudanese Online 13 Nov 2014)

Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3.3 Participation in the 2015 General Election

A January 2015 article published by Radio Dabanga quotes a member of the Baath Party as stating that the group planned to boycott the general election in April 2015 (Radio Dabanga 19 Jan. 2015). The same source notes that the party intended to participate in the following initiatives after the election boycott:

the establishment of a broad mechanism to oppose the government's policies, and the holding of an extended meeting with all signatories of the Sudan Appeal and the Action Charter, including all opposition parties and civil society organisations. (ibid.)

Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

4. Treatment of Baath Party Members by the State

According to the *PHW*, the Sudanese regime's specific targeting of members of the Baath Party, including "several arrests" of its members, "receded" after the First Gulf War (2011, 1358). Similarly, according to a research report on the contested identity of journalism in post-separation Sudan produced by MICT, "dozens" of Baath Party members faced arrests after President Bashir took power in 1989 (MICT 2012, 40). The same source indicates that the Party, however, "enjoyed greater political freedom" with "Sudan's backing of Iraq during the 1990/91 Gulf War" (*ibid.*).

4.1 Incidents of Arrest and/or Detention

Instances of arrest and detention reported by sources include:

- On 27 April 2014, four Baath Party members were detained in Omdurman after the Party campaigned "against the armed conflicts in the country" (Radio Dabanga 2 May 2014). Security forces reportedly "dispersed a crowd of civilians attending the campaign of the Baath Party in front of El Tijani El Mahi hospital in Omdurman" (*ibid.* 27 Apr. 2014).
- On 5 May 2014, two Baath Party members and El Nilein University students were arrested by security forces for protesting governmental policies in front of the Khartoum-El FitiHab bridge (*ibid.* 6 May 2014).
- On 16 May 2014, four members of the Baath Party were arrested in Khartoum and Khartoum Bahri after distributing material calling "for the fall of the current regime" (ACJPS 21 May 2014).
- In the week leading to 10 April 2015, two members of the Baath Party were "detained while holding banners that called for a boycott of the 'fake election'" during "a silent sit-in at Kober bridge, where members peacefully raised anti-election slogans" (Radio Dabanga 10 Apr. 2015).
- On 30 August 2015, a leader of the Sudanese Baath Party was reportedly taken away to an unknown destination by agents of the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) (*ibid.* 31 Aug. 2015).
- On 27 August 2015, "a prominent member" of the Baath Party, was held at his office in downtown Khartoum and later taken to an unknown detention centre by agents of the NISS (*ibid.* 21 Sept. 2015). Without providing further information, the same source states that he was "tortured during his detention" (*ibid.*).
- In late August 2015, "a number of Baath Party and Sudanese Congress Party leaders were summoned to report to the NISS in Khartoum every day in semi-detention" after launching "an anti-government campaign in public places in Sudan" (*ibid.* 13 Oct. 2015). Similarly, in the week leading to 30 August 2015, six Baath Party members "were summoned to report at one of the NISS offices in Khartoum ... every day from the early morning until midnight" following "a campaign against the government by writing slogans ... [that call] for the ending of the wars and a popular revolt on the walls of public institutions" in Khartoum (*ibid.* 3 Sept. 2015). Without providing further information, the same article states that agents of the NISS used these people's phones "to log in on their own WhatsApp and Facebook accounts in front of them" (*ibid.*).
- In December 2016, a member of the Baath Party's political committee, was detained by the NISS on Tuesday morning, then released on Wednesday evening, "after statements he had made to the press about the protest that swept the town [of El Geneina, capital of West Darfur] earlier" (*ibid.* 31 Dec. 2015).

4.2 Incidents of Prevented Travel

- In June 2015, a Baath Party member "invited to participate in the European Parliament hearing in Strasbourg on 9 June, ... was barred from travelling to Paris" (Radio Dabanga 24 Mar. 2016). The passport of the party member as well as those of representatives of other opposition political parties "were taken from them at Khartoum Airport" (*ibid.* 9 June 2015a). According to a representative of the National Umma Party, those attempting to travel to Strasbourg "were briefly detained too, without being informed why" (*ibid.* 9 June 2015b).

4.3 Other incidents

- In the week leading to 2 May 2014, three Baath Party members were arrested after a gathering in [Khartoum] Bahri's Central Station (Radio Dabanga 2 May 2014). The three were "punished with 40 lashes and a fine of SDN100 [C\$21], which was immediately carried out" (*ibid.*).
- In the week leading to 23 November 2014, the NISS "prevented the party from organizing a symposium in the neighbourhood of Borri [in Khartoum]" for "unspecific security reasons" (Sudan Tribune 27 Nov. 2014).
- On 27 November 2014, the Sudanese police revoked the Baath Party's permission to "organise a political rally ... in the suburb ... 10km east of the capital Khartoum" for security reasons (*ibid.*).

- On 16 April 2015, a "leader of the Sudanese Baath Party," as reported by the Sudan Appeal signatories, was monitored by Sudanese security forces (Radio Dabanga 16 Apr 2015).

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.

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