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23 July 2004

Sudan: Jinjaweed Militia Still Useful to Khartoum

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We will use the army, the police, the mujahedeen, the horsemen to get rid of the rebellion.

support of hastily recruited Jinjaweed

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-Sudanese President Bashir speaking about Darfur and the Jinjaweed on 31 December 2003

Over the last 18 months Khartoum has supplied the militia with small arms, ammunition, vehicles, money, satellite telephones, and radios,

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Using Jinjaweed To Counter Rebels

Basics of the Darfur Rebellion

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The Jinjaweed¹ are an irregular Arab militia recruited from nomadic tribes in the region and used by Khartoum to augment the Sudanese Army's counterinsurgency campaign against two rebel groups. The Jinjaweed were formed and armed by the Sudanese regime in early 2003 following a series of embarrassing military setbacks. The Sudanese military—

Longstanding grievances over Khartoum's marginalization of the western Darfur region exploded into armed rebellion in early 2003 when rebels, fearful that the ongoing peace talks between the southern-based Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the government would ignore their demands and emboldened by the success of the SPLA in wringing concessions from Khartoum, began successfully attacking government garrisons and convoys in the region.

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intended to use the militia to clear suspected rebel areas and patrol key roads.

Early on in the conflict the Sudanese military suffered a string of humiliating defeats in clashes with the rebels, forcing Khartoum to bring in large numbers of reinforcements from southern Sudan and simultaneously arm local Arabs. Once reinforced, government forces in January 2004 launched a successful counteroffensive to regain control of key towns and villages, driving the rebels into central Darfur. Fighting has internally displaced more than 1 million people and sent as many as 200,000 Sudanese refugees across the border to Chad.

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The senior Sudanese general in Darfur claimed in June that his forces would have been defeated in early 2003 by the rebels if he had not immediately responded to the attacks with the

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¹ Jinjaweed—an Arabic word—is literally defined as "devil riding a horse and carrying a gun."

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Despite its denials, the Sudanese military has worked closely with the Jinjaweed over the past 18 months. Khartoum has overseen Jinjaweed operations through an office in the Ministry of Defense formed in early 2003 called "Border Intelligence," which has been headed by an army brigadier general and managed jointly by the Sudanese military and the Sudanese intelligence service, [Redacted]

[Redacted] In addition to providing arms and other supplies, the

Jinjaweed Fighters [Redacted]

Estimates of the overall Jinjaweed strength vary from 11,000 to 30,000, and they operate in groups of 100 to 200 fighters, conducting raids often on horseback or camel. [Redacted]

The force size varies from week to week, with some fighters joining in and others dropping out. [Redacted]

It is often difficult to differentiate between the Jinjaweed and other formal Sudanese military units—such as the PDF— [Redacted]

Jinjaweed report to Sudanese military officers, wear government-issued uniforms, and have fought in the Darfur conflict with regular Army units. [Redacted]

Not all Jinjaweed are from Sudan; an unknown number of fighters, some of whom are most likely bandits, come from Chad, the Central African Republic, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali. [Redacted]

Sudanese Army has attempted to use the Jinjaweed in a military role as a supplement to its regular forces:

- Khartoum's counteroffensive in January 2004 included the coordinated use of fighter-bombers, attack helicopters, ground forces, Popular Defense Force (PDF) militia, Jinjaweed, and

police units against suspected rebel-held towns. After the Army captured key towns, Jinjaweed patrolled roads to ensure that lines of

communication remained open. [Redacted] [Redacted]

- Numerous refugee accounts state the Jinjaweed operate in coordination with Sudanese aircraft; [Redacted] Khartoum has provided close air support to the Jinjaweed and that the radios supplied to the Jinjaweed are used for ground-air communications. [Redacted]

Also Targeting Civilians . . . [Redacted]

After initially focusing their attacks on the rebels, the Jinjaweed quickly moved to attacking civilians in towns, villages, and the countryside. Over the past year, Jinjaweed raiders destroyed hundreds of villages, driving tens of thousands of people from their homes. In the process, they killed thousands of civilians and livestock, raped women, abducted people for ransom, stole property, contaminated wells, and destroyed irrigation systems:

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

In targeting civilians, the Jinjaweed were motivated by ethnic animosity, a desire to settle scores, and promises that they would be allowed to loot possessions and confiscate land from the rebels and their supporters. The Arab nomads have long been at odds with ethnic African farmers—who make up the bulk of the Darfur rebels—over pasture, agricultural land, and water:

- Quarrels over scarce resources became particularly acute after the extended drought of the 1980s hastened desertification of northern

and central Darfur, putting increased pressure on wells and grazing.

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- In past droughts, disputes over land ownership and access to water were settled through traditional leaders; but this mechanism broke down in the 1990s after automatic weapons from regional conflicts were introduced to the area in large numbers. [Redacted]

denied the militia had done anything wrong.

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Sudanese Army units were aware of the atrocities being committed by the Jinjaweed, [Redacted]

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... With Khartoum's Backing [Redacted]

[Redacted] Some military commanders and government officials have continued to defend the Jinjaweed or downplayed their activities [Redacted]

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We cannot confirm that Khartoum has sanctioned Jinjaweed atrocities, but it did facilitate them by bombing rebel-held towns and took little or no action to stop the targeting of civilians. Indeed, until pressured by the international community to condemn the Jinjaweed's actions, Sudanese officials publicly

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- President Bashir praised the militiamen for their role in combating the rebels in December 2003,

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- A senior Sudanese official in May downplayed Jinjaweed attacks, saying that the current crisis was no more than an internal conflict due to tribal rivalries, [Redacted]

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Khartoum Failing To Rein In Jinjaweed ... (C/NF)

Despite President Bashir's pledge in late June—made under international pressure—to stop Jinjaweed attacks, and recent government claims it has arrested 60 militiamen, the Jinjaweed continue to violate the cease-fire agreement reached with the rebels in April. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] the Jinjaweed, with Sudanese Air Force support, attacked 48 villages in southern Darfur State between 30 June and 4 July 2004; according to press reporting, more than 75 people were killed, dozens injured, and seven villages burned in the attacks. Other attacks and harassment have taken place:

- On 6 July, rebels reported to the African Union cease-fire monitors that Jinjaweed and

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government forces were attacking camps north of Nyala in Southern Darfur State, [redacted]

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- On 3 July, UN aid officials reported that a relief truck driver was killed and two others were injured in a Jinjaweed attack in Western Darfur State. Another truck driver in the same area reported having to pass through 16 Jinjaweed checkpoints where he was repeatedly threatened, [redacted]

- [redacted] as of 21 July, 40 CFC monitors are operational in Al Fashir, Nyala, and Abeche, with plans to deploy a total of 138. The Al Fashir team has carried out five investigations as of 14 July; preliminary information confirms rebel reports of government attacks, [redacted]

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- [redacted] Jinjaweed members surround some displaced persons' camps, raping women who leave the camps in search of firewood and water. [redacted]

- An AU military force of at least 300 will protect monitors—Nigeria and Rwanda have pledged troops so far—the majority of which will be stationed in Al Fashir with smaller contingents in each of the regional headquarters. [redacted]

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... Which Remains Useful and Feared [redacted]

Khartoum will probably continue to support the Jinjaweed in some fashion because the militia provides a low-cost means of countering the rebels. Without the Jinjaweed—its most mobile force—the Sudanese military will be vulnerable to rebel attacks:

- The rebels continue to operate over much of Darfur but the mobile Jinjaweed—by patrolling the countryside—can deny them the use of key towns and roads, permitting the Sudanese military to safely remain in well-protected towns. [redacted]

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Fundamentals of AU Monitoring Mission [redacted]

The African Union (AU) is charged with deploying observers to Darfur in order to monitor Khartoum and the rebel's implementation of the April cease-fire agreement. The AU-led Cease-Fire Commission (CFC) is headquartered in Al Fashir—the logistic base and primary command center for the monitoring mission. Regional CFC headquarters in Al Fashir, Nyala, Al Junaynah, Kabkabayah, Tine, and Abeche (Chad) will each have an administrative staff and two eight-person monitoring teams. Monitoring teams—each with two AU members, a US or EU member, a government representative, two rebel representatives, a mediator, and an interpreter—have the mandate to verify and implement the cease-fire agreement:

Even if Khartoum were convinced it could survive without the Jinjaweed, it would be reluctant to confront them, fearing a new war:

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- The now well-armed and capable militiamen will not easily give up the land and other property they have seized and will certainly refuse to surrender their arms as long as the rebel forces remain intact.

- [redacted] after being armed, the Jinjaweed became more and more difficult for Khartoum to control, and the militiamen repeatedly disobeyed orders, [redacted]

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[redacted] A Sudanese Army general in mid-May 2004 said that the government had lost control of the Jinjaweed and needed monitors to prevent cease-fire violations, [redacted]

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- At least some of the Jinjaweed leaders, moreover, are respected tribal leaders who could call on their supporters to fight Khartoum if it moved to disarm or disband the militia. Sudanese officials in mid-July rejected a US request to arrest and try alleged Jinjaweed leaders—including Musa Hilal—saying the proposed action would create sedition and intensify the war, according to Sudanese press reporting. Sudanese officials added that Hilal is a popular figure and provincial leader. [redacted]

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Instead, Khartoum is more likely to respond to international pressure by trying to reduce the militia's visibility—integrating some forces into military units and police or by withdrawing fighters into areas where no relief organizations or AU monitors are active. [redacted]

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[redacted] Khartoum began integrating Jinjaweed units into the military in May. US officials also noted in late June that some of the new policemen assigned to Darfur were in fact Jinjaweed:

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- UN personnel report that militiamen around internally displaced persons camps in Northern Darfur appear to be pulling back, [redacted] possibly in response to international pressure. [redacted]

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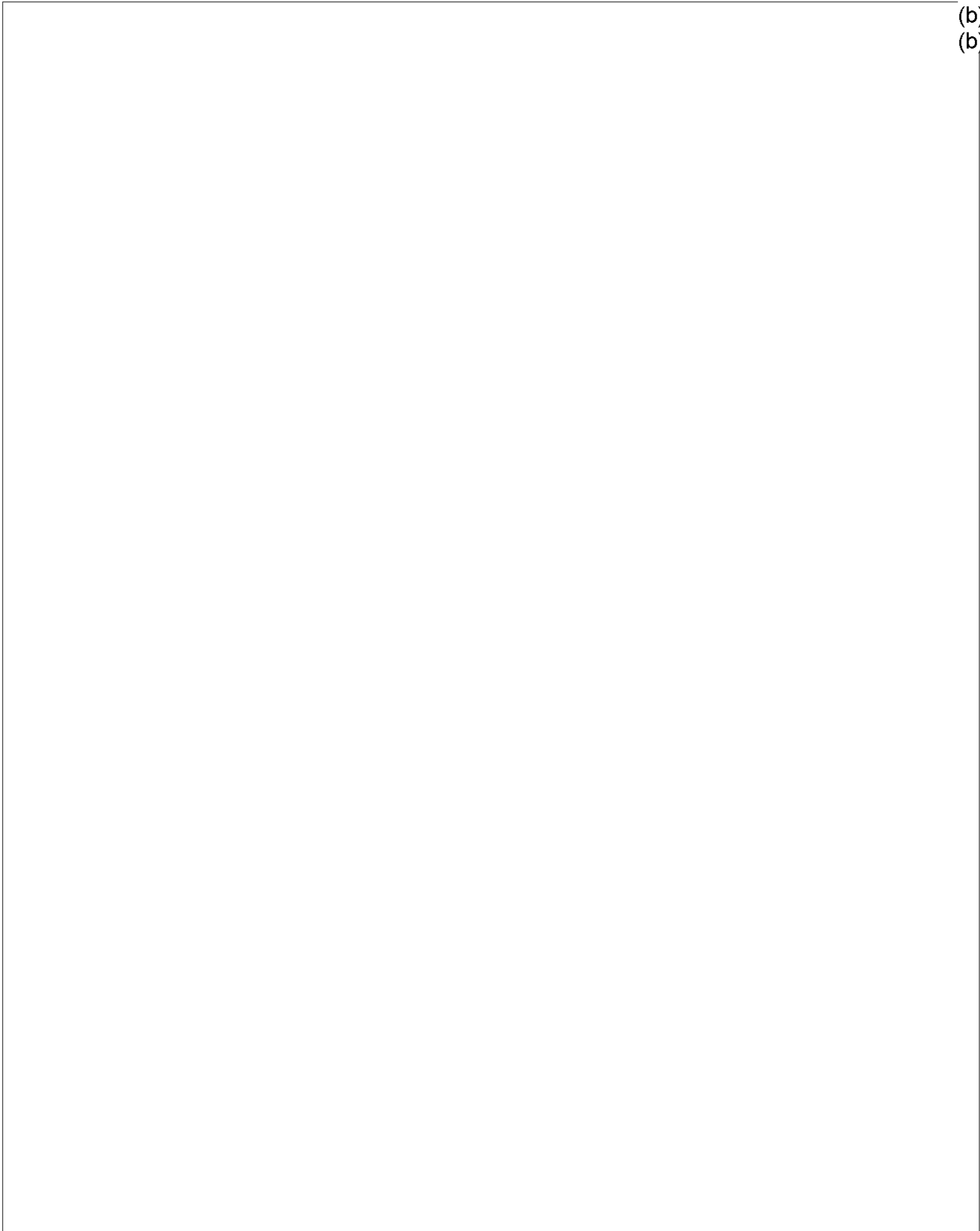
Integration of Jinjaweed into military and police units may allow Khartoum to exercise a greater level of

control over the militias, potentially limiting attacks on civilians. [redacted]

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