

The Sudanese revolution is our honour! Down with the Transitional Military Council!

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Since mid-December 2018, Sudan has been going through a major popular uprising. The social explosion has been driven by poverty, precarious living conditions and unemployment (which strongly affects young people, as elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa). It was triggered by the record inflation that pushed up the price of basic necessities as a result of the measures requested by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which has contributed to impose economic liberalization for the past thirty years. This liberalization has only benefited the circles closest to the top of the State.

The uprising did not only challenge the social situation, but also the authoritarianism of the regime led by Omar Al-Bashir. After taking power in a military coup in 1989, Al-Bashir had stifled any possibility to express divergent views. Authoritarianism has been supported by a belligerent policy, pointing to scapegoats, particularly among the people of Darfur against whom the regime has committed genocide, and among the predominantly Christian populations of what became the independent state of Southern Sudan in 2011 (and was formerly a region of Sudan). Therefore, the demand to put an end to Omar Al-Bashir's regime (a regime which was supported by the army and the Muslim Brotherhood) soon completed the social unrest.

The popular uprisings in Sudan and Algeria are a continuation of the popular movements that began in December 2010 in Tunisia and spread to the Arabic-speaking region in 2011. It is indeed a long-term revolutionary process that runs through the region, requiring profound changes in economic and social structures in favour of the working classes. The counter-revolutions of the existing regimes, of fundamentalist forces and of regional and international imperialist forces cannot put a final stop to this process; they can only delay its completion.

The mass uprising in Sudan achieved a first major victory when Omar Al-Bashir was forced to resign on 11 April 2019, almost 30 years after taking power. He was dismissed by the army, which is trying to save the regime by changing its head. A "Transitional Military Council" has been formed. However, as in Algeria following Abdelaziz Bouteflika's departure on 2 April 2019, the popular movement was not satisfied with this: refusing to have their revolution confiscated by the military high command, as was the case in Egypt in 2013, the demonstrators continued their protest and demanded the fall of the regime as a whole, the setting up of a civilian transitional government and the organization of free elections after a period of three years (the relatively long duration of which is intended to allow democratic debates to take place in a society that has been muzzled by the authorities for thirty years).

The popular uprising demonstrated a formidable collective imagination and tenacity. From 6 April 2019, a giant sit-in was organized in front of the complex housing the presidency and army headquarters in the capital Khartoum. From this moment the occupation of this space only widened, giving rise to a "city within the city" where democratic effervescence could take place day and night. The movement has widely recognized the legitimacy of the Forces of the Declaration for Freedom and Change (FDFC) to represent it. This coalition includes the Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA), political opposition organizations ranging from politically liberal groups to the Sudanese

Communist Party, and political-military groups in the south and west of the country that declared a ceasefire in the wake of the popular uprising. The SPA (originally composed of doctors, journalists and lawyers, then expanded to include teachers, engineers, artists and, more recently, factory and railway workers) plays a central role in the FDFC coalition. Feminist groups are also influential, and women are at the forefront of the popular movement. It must be noted that this coalition has not conceded anything to the military since it embarked on a negotiation process aimed at meeting the uprising's demands for the formation of a transitional civilian government.

Faced with a popular movement of such determination, the military command, which had until then sought to appear as the guarantor of a peaceful democratic transition, finally showed their true colours by deciding to engage in a showdown. On the morning of 3 June 2019, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a paramilitary militia fully integrated into the regime, and other security forces attacked and dispersed the Khartoum sit-in and sought to break the democratic momentum by firing live ammunition, raping women and burning camps. A provisional estimate indicates that more than a hundred people were killed and several hundred injured.

The Forces of the Declaration for Freedom and Change have clearly identified the Transitional Military Council (renamed the "Coups Council") as responsible for this massacre and have ended negotiations with it. They call for a general strike and total civil disobedience until the regime is overthrown.

The international CADTM network:

- fully supports the Sudanese popular uprising, as well as other ongoing and future uprisings in the region against authoritarian regimes that appropriate states and their resources;
- strongly denounces the Khartoum massacre of 3 June 2019 and the counterrevolution led by the Sudanese military command;
- denounces the complicity of regional states, international powers and international financial institutions with the Sudanese regime, whether through active cooperation over the past 30 years to deepen neoliberal policies in the country (in particular the IMF-led debt and structural adjustment policies, which have benefited only domestic capitalists—in collusion with the regime— and international capitalists) or through silence in the face of the army's counter-revolutionary maneuvers aimed at ensuring the continuity of the regime;
- calls for the participation to all actions of solidarity with the Sudanese popular uprising that may be organized in the coming days and weeks.

CADTM International, 6 June 2019

P.S.

- <http://www.cadtm.org/The-Sudanese-revolution-is-our-honour-Down-with-the-Transitional-Military>