

## What Is The Foreign Office Good For?

A Foreign Office official has said that the UN **should not** impose sanctions on Sudan:

“[They] must remain an option but ... there is a danger that the albeit limited cooperation that Sudanese government has offered so far would be withdrawn if the international community failed to acknowledge the small things that have changed for the better.”

Is *that* the main danger that the Foreign Office fears? For over a decade, the Islamist government in Sudan has been **waging** a genocidal campaign against Christians and black Africans. They are not doing this by mistake. They do not just have lax security, they are actively sponsoring mass murder.

And the Foreign Office wants the free, powerful nations of the world to *back off* for fear that the vicious tyrannical thugs might undo even the “small things that have changed for the better”? Is that all that the future victims of genocide can expect from the West? is that all we are good for?

Vicious tyrannical thugs do not lightly abandon attempts to destroy those whom they see as their enemies or their rightful prey. Even now they **will not admit** that they are responsible for the current crisis. Why are they now even slightly less uncooperative than in the past? It is not because of any sudden access of good will, either to their victims or to the West. It is solely because they rightly perceive that the US is now starting to pay attention to them and they are afraid, as they ought to be. If the West is to make the Sudanese government disarm the militias and cease their totalitarian violence, we must openly threaten them. Sanctions would be a start. Begging them not to undo even the few cosmetic concessions they have so far made would not.

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## Sanctions?

To be sure, it's a good idea to punish people or governments when they commit crimes, so as to give them an incentive to stop. In the case of Sudan, military action (ground or air strikes) might be a start. But sanctions mean that people living in the territory of a bad

government are punished for the actions of that government, even though many may well disagree with those actions. Under sanctions those people are no longer allowed to trade with foreigners. Many of these people will be the very victims of the government aggression the sanctions seek to address. Furthermore, all people in the whole world are punished by not being able to trade with people living in that country. What is the justification for this?

**Henry Sturman**

by **Henry Sturman** on Sat, 09/25/2004 - 14:49 | [reply](#)

## **collateral damage**

that effect is collateral damage, and just like with bombing, sometimes it's worth it. though i do find it hard to imagine when sanctions on everything would help, sanctioning say \*weapons\* sounds reasonable enough. No need to sell big bombs to someone the day before we invade.

-- Elliot Temple

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by **Elliot Temple** on Sat, 09/25/2004 - 17:47 | [reply](#)