



Global Network For Rights And Development
الشبكات العالمية لحقوق الإنسان والتنمية

Maarij and GNRD call for a rethink of coercive measures

Through their work in Sudan, the Maarij foundation for Peace and Development and the Global Network for Rights and Development have witnessed first-hand the effects of coercive measures on vulnerable civilians, many of them children. Even when targeted and aimed at the ruling authorities, such measures result in a diminishing of inward investment and the further impoverishment of people who had little enough to begin with.

In deciding to impose such measures, therefore, the overriding concern for the authorities, whether they be multilateral or unilateral, must be the well-being of innocent civilians, especially women, children and other vulnerable groups of the population.

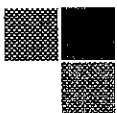
In Sudan, the Maarij and GNRD are extremely concerned that the health and development of innocent civilians have been detrimentally affected by the imposition of sanctions by the United States in 1997, since taken up by many other members of the international community. Coercive measures break the economy and leave civilians dependent on humanitarian aid, the delivery of which may be sporadic and contingent on prevailing security conditions. People are often left without the basic essentials to survive.

If the aim of coercive measures is to encourage civilians to exert pressure on their leaders to enact change, there are few grounds in applying them in States where most people have little political power to leverage. In Sudan almost half the population is aged under 18 and cannot be held responsible for any actions that may have led to the imposition of sanctions in the first place.

Coercive measures are too often a form of collective punishment, which, if applied during time of war would be an unacceptable breach of the Geneva Conventions. The same rules should also apply between nations and multilateral organizations during periods of tension or undeclared conflict. After all, the effect on vulnerable civilians remains the same.

Civilians should not be used as pawns in political power games between governments. The Global Network for Rights and Development and the Maarij Foundation for Peace and Development call on the coercive measures regime to be lifted against Sudan. It further expresses the belief that the whole issue of coercive measures be reconsidered by the international community, putting civilians at the centre of its deliberations.

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