

## **Omar Al Bashir's 94.5 % Landslide Victory over Presidential Election in Sudan**

Sudanese were once again called to the polling stations to cast their ballots to determine their 'strong man' to lead the country through this dark period in her history in an election that many including major political parties and the west have question the credibility of the process; in any event Bashir National Congress Party swept 5,252,478, or 94.5 per cent of the ballots cast said the head of election Mr. Mokhtar al-Assam in the capital, Khartoum. Mr. Bashir has been in power for 26 years now even though major political parties and dissidents have called his re-election a "Political Charade" he is determine to continue with his new constitutional status.

While Mr. Bashir and his party members celebrate their democratic victory, human rights activist in the name of Suliman Baldo who is the executive director of Sudan Democracy First Group, have distant himself from the election as he lamented that "It is the opposite of a great day for democracy. There was general apathy, a sort of fatalism that Bashir and his party were competing with themselves. The boycott was systematic, including even from the membership of the ruling party." He continued similarly in speculation that fighting in the Darfur region and other regions will intensify as he contends that "Major battles are being fought as we speak now. The Political crisis will become more serious and aggravated because there is now no room for dialogue between the government and opposition."

The International Criminal Court (ICC) had issued two unsuccessful warrants to arrest Mr. Bashir after the Security Council referred Sudan to the ICC. The first warrant was issued by Pre-Trial Chamber I on 4 March 2009 and the second on 12 July 2010. However, after several appeals by the Prosecutor Ms Fatou Bensouda from Member States of the Rome Statute and the Security Council to facilitate his transfer to The Hague, Mr. Bashir was a couple of days after the Kenyan president Mr. Kenyatta was discharge of his alleged criminal responsibility, Mr. Bashir was finally acquitted of the following alleged criminal responsibility: five counts of crimes against humanity as per Article 7 (1)(a) – (g) ; two counts of war crimes as per Article 8 (2)(e)(i) and (v) ; and three counts of genocide as per Article 6 (a) – (c) of the Rome Statute. Ms Bensouda has blamed the Security Council for inaction after referral of the case to the Court as

she lamented that innocent girls and women will continue to suffer from the effects of the crisis in the country.

One party rule is the *modus operandi* in Africa. This phenomenon is still very much alive until recently during and after the “Arap Spring” that we saw the Mubarak regime; the Ghadafi regime; and others crumble like a cookie.

While some commentators and organizations like the African Union (AU) see Mr. Bashir as a symbol of peace in the ongoing conflict between North and South Sudan over the oil and also the crisis in Darfur; he faced stiff opposition from dissidents and the Western world that have question the credibility of the recent election and his subsequent victory. For instance Olivia Warham who is director of the U.K - based campaign group Waging Peace, said: “I can hardly say I’m surprised – everyone knew Bashir would win from the day he announced his candidacy. This was a farce of an election.” He continued that “Even those who could vote just didn’t show up. Polling stations were deserted, or filled with more police officers and ruling party plants than actual voters. Victims of the genocide in Darfur and elsewhere are terrified that Mr. Bashir is adding another five years to his already almost 26-year rule.”

As indicated earlier, the ruling party in most countries in Africa has the means and resources to sustain election campaigns as oppose to the opposition parties. One reason for this is that the ruling party generally controls the wealth of the country which automatically command excess power that it is all too often abused by its militants. This point can be corroborated with Noam Chomsky’s view in an article titled “Destroying the Commons: How the Magna Carta Became a Minor Carta” that “Politics today has been reduced to a lucrative venture where one looks out mainly for returns on investment rather than on what one can contribute to build highly degraded environment, communities, and a nation.” In Burundi as we speak the unrest has cause many of its citizens’ to flee the country in protest ahead of the June 2015 election which will be our next report.

