



Doctors of the World was one of the few groups providing primary care for internally displaced people in south Darfur, like the girl above

MOHAMED NURELDIN ABDALLAH/REUTERS

Criminal Court, Luis Moreno Ocampo, told the *BMJ* that the 2009 expulsion of international aid agencies from Darfur “had provided the crucial evidence of intent” required for last year’s additional indictment of the president on charges of genocide.

The latest expulsion comes just as member states of the court has been considering postponement of the indictments in exchange for the Khartoum government allowing Southern Sudan to secede peacefully, after 99% of the electorate last month voted for independence in a referendum granted as part of the 2005 comprehensive peace agreement that ended decades of civil war between the country’s north and south.

Ahmed Adam Hussein, spokesman for the rebel Justice and Equality Movement, told the *BMJ* that he “strongly condemned” the expulsion of this “credible organisation” by the Sudanese authorities, which constitutes “a clear violation of the obligations of the Sudanese government under international humanitarian law and thus constitutes a war crime and crime against humanity.”

Calling for pressure on Khartoum “to live up to its international obligations by allowing the international humanitarian organisations to continue working in Darfur and to guarantee unimpeded humanitarian access to the people in need,” he urged the United Nations Security Council to act “to press the Sudanese regime to reverse this illegitimate measure.”

Kasia Bonkowska, deputy director of the international programme of Doctors of the World, told the *BMJ*, “We are a purely humanitarian organisation working to provide essential assistance to civilians in Darfur and elsewhere in Sudan. We have not yet been officially informed of this decision and look forward to clarifying the situation as soon as possible.”

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Medical charity is expelled from Darfur

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This month’s expulsion of the medical aid organisation **Doctors of the World (Médecins du Monde)** from South Darfur has been widely condemned.

A number of local staff members were arrested by local security officers early this month, and the group was expelled on 17 February, in a move reminiscent of the expulsion of 13 charities in March 2009 that occurred immediately after President Omar al Bashir’s indictment for war crimes by the International Criminal Court in the Hague (*BMJ* 2009;338:b985).

Abdul-Hamid Musa Kasha, governor of South Darfur state, said, “We have expelled the French non-governmental organisation Doctors of the World because we have information indicating that it has violated its mandate. We have evidence proving that it was cooperating with a rebel group and that it was writing reports on movements of the army.”

The group had been one of a few organisations providing maternal and child primary healthcare to the local population in large parts of South Darfur after the expulsion of other agencies.

Mr Kasha said, “What has been done by Sudanese employees working for the Doctors of the World organisation was a violation. We will not hesitate to expel any organisation that does not respect its mandate or that exercises activities violating the nature of its humanitarian work.”

He claimed that the organisation had been releasing false reports about rape and providing Darfuri rebels with satellite telephones and medical treatment. He alleged that the French group had transported four tonnes of drugs to rebel groups via the joint African Union United Nations Mission in Darfur, in coordination with Unicef.

The chief prosecutor of the International