

Hussein Kharter Sabeel Interview

LOCATION: Beer al-Deek, North Darfur
DATE: 21st March, 2020
INTERVIEWER: Anton Lin

Hussein Kharter Sabeel

- ◇ Local Zaghawa Tribal Leader
- ◇ Interview conducted as part of a gathering of village leaders that Mr. Sabeel was leading

Some Sudanese Proverbs from Mr. Sabeel
'When the heads come together, it will give light.'

'If the area doesn't have rain or government, don't stay there.'

'If you have a back, they will not slap you in the stomach.'

His interpretation of the last proverb: If you have support, people won't attack you.

PEOPLE

On Beer al-Deek:

'This is a large area with more than 50 villages and 15,000 people. We have two schools, with more than 1,000 students. Our leader is Mohammed Abdel al-Shatta.'

'We were nomads before and had almost nothing. Now there is security and we are in villages. The things we want now are education and health; schools and clinics.'

On life under Bashir:

'The suffering and the security situation here were worse than anyone can imagine. It was inhuman.'

'We received nothing from the government for 20 years. We had to travel far for medical issues, but the roads weren't safe so we often couldn't.'

On race:

'We don't see a difference between Arab, African, and white. Everything should be equal, not just here but everywhere in Sudan. If we have justice, we can build this country.'



POLITICS

On the current government:

'The people leading the country now are good people and will do good things for Sudan.'

'The Ministry of Education gave us some teachers, but other than that, we don't see any government. That is why we asked the RSF to increase their presence here- we have no other form of government. The RSF built our well and a school and clinic. The mosque was built by the people of the village.'

On what they want from the government:

'We ask the RSF for things because there is no other government here. There is nobody to else provide us with help. The government needs to support us.'

'We ask the RSF to provide more medicine, which is too expensive for us to buy.'

'We want the RSF to send more soldiers here from Zurug, to take security to 100%.'

'The government needs to send more teachers. For 1,000 students we have 22 teachers, of whom only five are from the government and the rest are unpaid volunteers. We also need more schools.'

On life today:

'We have peace, two schools, and a well, with another one being built. We also have a clinic, but it doesn't have enough medicine. The roads are safe and we can travel freely now.'

POWER

On the local security situation:

'From 2003 until 2017 the security situation here suffered. Now it is mostly better, although there are still some incidents between camel herders and farmers. These issues are resolved properly due to the fact security has improved, so the disputes are no more than you find in any part of the world- all humans have disputes.'

'The main threat to our security is smuggling- drugs and alcohol smugglers. Zurug provides security for this area. We have asked them to send more forces here so we can reach 100% security control.'

'We used to have problems along racial lines, but those have mostly gone now.'

On the relationship with the RSF:

'The reason we ask the RSF for things has nothing to do with politics. They are our neighbours and most relations between any people are driven by humanity. That's why we ask. We would like a larger deployment here because it would bring more social support.'

On the role of the RSF regarding security:

'It was the RSF who brought security to our area in 2017, and it is peaceful here now. Not perfect, but much better.'

'When there is trouble, we send a car to the RSF, and they come to help us resolve it.'

'The soldiers we requested the RSF to send to stop the drugs supply have mostly removed that problem now.'