

Responsibility to protect? Hardships in the wake of the UN's Darfur visit The Enough Project 2  
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Immediately following the U.N. Security Council's recent two-day visit to Sudan's western region of Darfur, sources on the ground reported that Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Services, or NISS, was pursuing a number of people who had met with the Council. The drama that transpired as a result of the U.N.'s high-level visit prompts important questions about how to raise awareness without putting individuals in danger in a volatile place like Darfur.

As part of its visit to El Fasher (the capital of North Darfur), the Council met with groups of internally displaced people, or IDPs, to discuss a range of issues including ongoing insecurity, humanitarian conditions, lack of access to justice, and abuses by NISS. According to reports, shortly after the Council's departure, NISS began searching Abu Shouk and Al Salaam IDP camps for 16 people who had spoken to the Council (...)

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(...) Regardless of whether or not the Council should have taken steps to ensure that their sources were protected, it seems fair to say that the Council's lack of response to the incident is unacceptable. Since returning to New York, the Council has failed to make any public statement condemning the actions of NISS and requesting the release of the prisoners. While a statement alone is likely to yield few results, not issuing a condemnation reverses all the good that might have come from such a trip by signaling to the government that the Council's promises to work harder to protect civilians in the region – a cornerstone of the peacekeeping mission's mandate – are hollow (...)

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