Year of Origin: 1940s

Founder(s): Not determined.

Place(s) of Operation: Sudan

Key Leaders:
- Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir: Chairman and Former President of Sudan
- Nafie Ali Nafie: Deputy Chairman and Presidential Adviser
- Hassabo Mohamed Abdel Rahman: Political Secretary
- Mohamed Khair Al-Zubair: Economic Secretary
- Yasir Youssef: Spokesperson
- Hamid Sideeg: Head of organizational sector
- Hassan Abdallah al-Turabi: Former Secretary-General (deceased)

Associated Organization(s):
- National Congress Party
- National Islamic Front
- Islamic Charter Front
- Sudanese Islamist Movement
- Islamic Movement

The National Congress Party (NCP) in Sudan is the successor organization to the Brotherhood-affiliated National Islamic Front (NIF). Long steeped in controversy, the NCP and its precursors have associated themselves with such notorious terrorists as Osama bin Laden and a variety of extremist groups including al-Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah. Although formally registered as a political party, NCP precursors have at times embraced genocidal violence against the country’s non-Muslims to advance their Islamist agenda. Former Sudanese President and NCP chairman Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir currently stands accused of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide for his violence against religious and ethnic groups throughout Sudan. Sudanese military forces deposed Bashir on April 11, 2019, and reportedly disbanded the NCP.

The Brotherhood first took root in Sudan in 1949, when a group of Sudanese students returning from Egypt decided to form a Brotherhood outpost. At the time, the students allied themselves with the country’s Ansar-Umma, an Islamist political bloc advocating for Sudanese independence from the British government. In 1963, however, the Sudanese Brotherhood formed its own political party, the Islamic Charter Front (ICF), which advocated for the national adoption of an Islamist constitution. Headed by its secretary-general Hassan Abdallah al-Turabi, former Sudanese President and NCP chairman Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir currently stands accused of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide for his violence against religious and ethnic groups throughout Sudan. Sudanese military forces deposed Bashir on April 11, 2019, and reportedly disbanded the NCP.


Turabi—then the dean of the law school at the University of Khartoum—the ICF primarily recruited on university campuses in an effort to enlist young, well-educated members.16

After a military coup in 1969, Sudanese President Nafar al-Numayri abolished all other political parties, effectively dissolving the ICF.17 Following political transition in 1985, Turabi reorganized the former ICF into the National Islamic Front (NIF),18 which pushed for an Islamist constitution and refused to support a 1989 U.N. peace agreement.19 The NIF ultimately backed another military coup bringing to power Sudanese Colonel Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir, who publicly endorsed the NIF’s Islamist agenda.20 Bashir has remained president of the Sudanese government since 1989 and, under the guidance of now-deceased political adviser Turabi, implemented a version of sharia (Islamic law) throughout Sudan.21

Under Turabi’s stewardship, the NIF established ties with a variety of terrorist actors, including al-Qaeda leaders Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, as well as Ali Mohamed, an al-Qaeda operative convicted by the U.S. government for organizing the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.22 Soon after Bashir’s 1989 coup, Turabi encouraged bin

Laden to relocate his operations to Sudan. In 1991, bin Laden accepted Turabi’s invitation, promising to fight alongside the NIF against Christian separatists in southern Sudan in exchange for safe haven.23

Turabi is also responsible for building Sudan’s ties to representatives from other terrorist groups. From 1991 to 2000, Turabi founded and ran the Popular Arab and Islamic Congress (PAIC), an annual conference that attempted to unify global terrorist leaders as a cohesive force against Western world powers. PAIC congregations hosted leaders and representatives from the Palestine Liberation Organization, as well as al-Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah.24 In response to these and other activities, Sudan was placed on the U.S. State Department’s list of state sponsors of terrorism in 1993.25

In addition to meeting with terrorist and extremist groups, Turabi stands accused of carrying out gross human rights violations, including the forced use of child soldiers, in pursuit of his Islamist agenda. In the 1990s, Turabi organized the NIF’s “Civilization Project,” a program that was designed to encourage Sudanese youths to carry out violence against the country’s Christian population.26 Turabi also worked to remove non-Islamists from the government entities, including in the civil service, military, and security sectors. Non-Islamists were reportedly subjected to torture as part of Turabi’s efforts to implement sharia within Sudan.27

In 1996, following years of pressure from the United States and other Western governments, Bashir expelled bin Laden from Sudan, and began efforts to rebrand his party.28 In 1998, Bashir created the National Congress Party (NCP), effectively dissolving the NIF. The NCP, unlike its

NIF precursor, de-emphasized its Islamist agenda and instead focused on garnering widespread support for Bashir.29

In order to publicly distance the NCP from its history of violent Islamism, Bashir removed Turabi from his position as the NCP’s secretary-general. Turabi, who disapproved of the party’s rebranding, broke off from the NCP to form the Popular National Congress Party (PNCP) in 1999.30 Bashir immediately countered Turabi by establishing the NCP-affiliated Islamic Movement (IM) to serve as a counterbalance to the Islamist PNCP.31 Although Turabi’s PNCP remains openly Islamist in its agenda, the party claims that it is not affiliated with the global Brotherhood movement.32

Following Turabi’s split from Bashir in 2000, the NCP surged in popularity, garnering 5 million members by 2009.33 Despite Bashir’s efforts to rebrand his party, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued a warrant for his arrest in 2009, charging him with crimes against humanity and war crimes. In 2010, the ICC issued an additional arrest warrant for Bashir, charging him with three counts of genocide.34 According to the ICC, Bashir has funded and armed Islamist militias known as the Janjaweed in western Sudan. The Janjaweed are responsible for slaughtering more than 480,000 men, women, and children since 2003.35

Although Bashir has not complied with the ICC’s warrants, his party has received backlash in the form of sporadic public protests. Bashir managed to win re-election in April 2015, although the NCP conceded after pressure from the African Union (AU) that there was a significantly lower voter turn-out than in previous elections. Only a third of the country’s registered voters took to the polls, according to the AU’s findings, while protesters engaged in violent clashes between government forces and opposition groups.

In December 2016, Bashir’s NCP began expelling dozens of alleged Brotherhood members from the country in an apparent effort to improve relations with neighboring Egypt. In January 2017, Bashir and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi agreed to begin a new phase of bilateral relations. Nonetheless, in March 2017, Egyptian officials accused the Sudanese regime of continuing to harbor Brotherhood members, and some Sudanese Brotherhood members continued to hold leadership roles in the NCP and Sudanese government, including Speaker of the National Assembly Ibrahim Ahmed Omer and Minister of Defense Abdel Rahim Mohamed Hussein.

In December 2018, widespread protests began across Sudan in response to the rising cost of food. In January 2019, protesters began demanding Bashir step down and Bashir’s forces began responding violently, arresting hundreds and killing dozens of protesters. Bashir declared a


state of emergency on February 22, 2019. He also banned public protest and dissolved central and state governments.41 Protests continued despite Bashir’s declarations. On April 7, 2019, protesters began camping out outside the defense ministry headquarters Khartoum, which also hosted Bashir’s personal residence. On April 9 and April 10, the Sudanese army intervened to protect the protesters from the National Intelligence and Security Services, which Bashir had ordered to violently disperse the protesters.42 On April 11, 2019, under orders from Defense Minister Awad Mohammed Ibn Auf, military forces arrested Bashir and removed him from power. Ibn Auf announced a two-year period of military rule to be followed by presidential elections. Protests continue against military rule.43 Sudan’s National Intelligence and Security Service announced the release of all political prisoners.44 Ibn Auf is himself under U.S. sanctions for his role in violent atrocities in Darfur.45

Following Bashir’s arrest, military forces raided the Islamic Movement headquarters and arrested other members of the NCP, which the military reportedly dissolved. Bashir was reportedly being held with “a number of leaders of the terrorist Muslim Brotherhood group,” according to a son of the leader of the main opposition Umma Party. Ibn Auf rejected calls from international human rights groups for Bashir to face charges in the International Criminal Court. He suggested that Bashir could face trial in Sudan.46 Under Ibn Auf’s direction, Sudan’s military council invited

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other Sudanese parties to discuss the creation of a civilian government. The council said it did not invite the NCP as the council blamed the party “for what happened.”

History:

- **1940s:** The Sudanese Brotherhood emerges from a group of students in Cairo, Egypt.
- **1949:** The Sudanese Brotherhood allies itself with Sudan’s Ansar-Umma, an Islamist political bloc in support of Sudan’s independence.
- **1963:** The Sudanese Brotherhood forms its own political party, the Islamic Charter Front (ICF).
- **1964:** Hassan Abdallah al-Turabi becomes the ICF secretary-general.
- **1969:** A military coup led by Nafar al-Numayri bans all political parties.
- **1985:** Numayri is unseated following a coup and the Sudanese Brotherhood creates the National Islamic Front (NIF).
- **1986:** The NIF comes in third place during the first democratic elections following the Numayri regime.
- **May 1988:** Turabi is appointed Sudan’s minister of justice and attorney general.
- **December 1988:** Turabi is appointed as Sudan’s minister of foreign affairs.

• **June 1989:** General Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir stages a military coup backed by the NIF.57

• **1989:** Turabi encourages Osama bin Laden to relocate his base of operations to Sudan.58

• **1990s:** Turabi implements the “Civilization Project,” a program designed to encourage Sudanese youths to carry out violence against Christians in the south.59

• **1991:** Turabi establishes the Popular Arab and Islamic Congress (PAIC), a now-defunct annual congregation of global militant leaders, including representatives from al-Qaeda, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Hamas, and Hezbollah.60

• **1998:** President Bashir dissolves the NIF and replaces it with the National Congress Party (NCP) as part of a rebranding strategy to appeal to Western countries.61

• **1999:** Turabi is elected secretary-general of the NCP.62

• **December 1999 – Early 2000s:** Bashir removes Turabi from his position as the NCP’s secretary-general in an effort to publicly distance the party from its history of violent Islamism. Turabi splits from the NCP to form the Popular National Congress Party (PNCP). Bashir subsequently establishes the NCP-affiliated Islamic Movement (IM) to serve as a counterbalance to Turabi’s Islamist PNCP.63

• **December 2000:** The NCP wins 355 out of 360 seats in the national parliament and Bashir is re-elected president with 86.5 percent of the vote.64


THE NCP IN SUDAN

- **2003**: Bashir begins funding and arming Islamist militias throughout Sudan, who begin slaughtering and raping men, women, and children. As a result, over 480,000 people are killed and over 2.8 million are displaced.65
- **March 4, 2009**: The ICC issues a warrant for Bashir’s arrest, charging him with crimes against humanity and war crimes.66
- **December 2009**: The NCP reaches 5 million in membership.67
- **2010**: NCP wins 324 out of 450 seats in the national assembly and 25 of 50 seats in the Sudanese Council of States.68
- **July 12, 2010**: The ICC issues a second warrant for Bashir’s arrest, charging him with three counts of genocide.69
- **2011**: Following the secession of South Sudan, the NCP wins 316 of 354 parliamentary seats.70
- **2013**: The majority of Sudanese Brotherhood members split from the NCP after Bashir recognizes Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, who ousted Brotherhood leader Mohammed Morsi from the Egyptian presidency, as the country’s president.71
- **April 2015**: Bashir is re-elected as president, though only a third of registered voters take to the polls.72
- **December 2016**: Bashir begins expelling Brotherhood members from the country in an attempt to improve relations with Egypt.73

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75 Shounaz Meky, “Is Sudan abandoning the Muslim Brotherhood to mend ties with Egypt?”, Al Arabiya, February 15, 2017,
• **March 2017:** Despite Sudanese efforts to disassociate from the Muslim Brotherhood and improve relations with Egypt, Egyptian officials accuse the Sudanese regime of continuing to harbor and support Brotherhood members.\(^7^4\)

• **April 2019:** Following months of growing protests against rising food prices, demonstrators begin protesting against Bashir’s rule outside the defense ministry compound in Khartoum on April 7. On April 11, military forces arrest Bashir, ending his 30-year-long rule. Bashir is reportedly held with “a number of leaders of the terrorist Muslim Brotherhood group,” according to a son of the leader of the main opposition Umma Party. Military forces raid the Islamic Movement headquarters and reportedly disband the NCP. On April 12, under Ibn Auf’s direction, Sudan’s military council invites other Sudanese parties to a dialogue on the creation of a civilian government. The council does not invite the NCP as the council blames the party “for what happened.” On April 27, military and opposition leaders reach an agreement in principle on the creation of a joint civilian-military council to govern the country.\(^7^5\)

**Violent Activities:**

The Sudanese Brotherhood has been complicit in human rights abuses and genocide in Sudan. The group’s leadership—including former NIF leader Hassan Abdallah al-Turabi, and Sudanese President and NCP leader Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir—have also been accused of carrying out widespread human rights abuses.\(^7^6\)

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Brotherhood-linked Sudanese political parties NIF and NCP have been implicated in violence throughout Sudan. The NIF launched a genocidal war in southern Sudan during its rule from 1989 and 1998. In 1993, the United States designated NIF-led Sudan as a state sponsor of terrorism for allowing al-Qaeda to operate and train within the country. Concurrent 1999 U.S. congressional bills condemned the NIF-led Sudanese government for “for terrorism, and continued human rights violations.” The congressional resolutions further accused the NIF of allowing Sudan to become a “refuge and training hub” for international terrorist groups including al-Qaeda. Following the NIF’s 1998 dissolution, the Sudanese government, led by Brotherhood-affiliated NCP, has continued to support global terrorist movements, harboring groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah to operate within Sudan.

Sudanese Brotherhood-affiliated leaders have also been linked to violence. While leading the NIF, Hassan Abdallah al-Turabi—then a close adviser to Sudanese President Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir—established ties with a number of extremist individuals, most notoriously Osama bin Laden. In 1989, Turabi invited the al-Qaeda founder to “transplant his whole organization to Sudan,” according to the U.S. 9/11 Commission report. As part of his push to implement sharia in Sudan, Turabi is reported to have carried out gross human rights violations during which non-Muslims were reportedly subjected to torture. Turabi openly referred to Sudan’s 1983–2005 civil war as “jihad” against the separatists.

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Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir has also carried out human rights violations. Specifically, the International Criminal Court has accused Bashir of carrying out crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide against religious and ethnic groups throughout Sudan.\(^84\) Alongside Turabi, Bashir launched a series of violent attacks against the country’s non-Muslim population during Sudan’s civil war in the 1990s.\(^85\) When Darfuri rebels began their uprising against the Sudanese government in 2005, Bashir backed Arab Janjaweed militias, which committed mass murder and rape against the black Christian population.\(^86\) These militias ultimately killed more than 480,000 people and displaced more than 2.8 million.\(^87\) In March 2009 and again in July 2010, the International Criminal Court issued warrants for Bashir’s arrest for crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide.\(^88\)

- **June 1989:** Bashir stages a military coup backed by the NIF.\(^89\)
- **1989:** Turabi encourages Osama bin Laden to relocate his base of operations to Sudan.\(^90\)
- **1990s:** Turabi implements the “Civilization Project,” a program designed to encourage Sudanese youths to carry out violence against Christians in the south.\(^91\)

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• **2003 - 2019:** Bashir finances and arms Islamist militias in western Sudan, who slaughter and rape men, women, and children in Darfur and western Sudan. Bashir-allied militias kill more than 480,000 people and displace more than 2.8 million others.⁹²

**Ties to Extremist Groups:**

**Al-Qaeda:** In 1989, the NIF, led by Brotherhood member Hassan al-Turabi, allied itself with Osama bin Laden, inviting him to set up a base of operations for al-Qaeda in Sudan. Al-Qaeda representatives have also attended Turabi’s now-defunct Popular Arab and Islamic Congress (PAIC), an annual conference from 1991 to 2000 that brought together global Islamist militant leaders in an effort to unite against the West.⁹³

**Hamas:** Representatives from Hamas took part in Turabi’s now-defunct PAIC, an annual congregation of global Islamist militant leaders last organized in 2000.⁹⁴

**Hezbollah:** Representatives from Hamas took part in Turabi’s now-defunct PAIC, an annual congregation of global Islamist militant leaders last organized in 2000.⁹⁵

**Designations by Governments and Organizations:** Not determined.

**In Their Own Words:** Not determined.

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