

Former UN Sudan chief who blew whistle on Darfur to speak in East Africa about the ongoing crisis

Ten years ago, British diplomat Mukesh Kapila became head of the UN in Sudan. Within a year of taking the post, he would publicly declare the Sudanese Government guilty of ethnic cleansing in Darfur.

In East Africa this September – at Makerere University in Kampala and the Storymoja Book Festival in Nairobi – the whistleblower who first brought Darfur to global attention will speak publicly about his memoirs, 'Against A Tide of Evil'; a no-holds-barred insider account of a crisis that still keeps rolling.

"We knew from day one what was going on," Kapila says in a short film introducing the book (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WEUWU8JwnDI>). "Hardly a day would go by without an e-mail report being sent to [UN Headquarters in] New York detailing the latest incident – including time, place, and very often we even knew which army unit was responsible. The reaction from New York – there was no reaction. It is as if the reports disappeared into a black hole."

Now Special Representative on Crimes Against Humanity for the Aegis Trust – the genocide prevention organization responsible for the Kigali Genocide Memorial in Rwanda – this year Kapila revisited the Darfur frontier and travelled 1000km through Sudan's forgotten war zones in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile State. Hundreds of thousands of people in the two areas, bombed out of their villages and farms, have been cut off from international humanitarian relief since the outbreak of hostilities between the Sudanese Government and opposition groups in June 2011.

"Omar Bashir is using the same tactics of systematic ethnic cleansing in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile that I witnessed in Darfur ten years ago," says Kapila. "The suffering of people with no access to aid has reached desperate levels, and the international community's failure to ensure relief is completing the work started by Sudanese Government bombs and bullets."

Mukesh Kapila, who is also Professor of Humanitarian Affairs at the University of Manchester in the UK, is now leading the Aegis Trust's campaign for a global parliamentary network to hold decision-makers to account for their actions on mass atrocities. "Not a single diplomat has been brought to account for the failure to act; in fact, many of them were promoted," he says. "When those who are in charge of institutions charged with the responsibility to prevent and protect fail in that duty and there is no accountability for it, then Darfur will happen again and again and again."

Taking part in a public lecture at Makerere University in Kampala on 16 September, Professor Kapila will also attend the launch of the Nairobi Storymoja Book Festival on 20 and 21 September. At the festival he will host a talk geared toward teens, entitled "Careerpedia – Human Rights" on 20 September. His short speaking tour will conclude with the Wangari Maathai Memorial Lecture on 21 September.

Mukesh Kapila's memoir 'Against A Tide of Evil' is available from all good bookshops, but 50% of every copy sold through the Aegis Trust goes to genocide prevention: www.aegistrust.org.

For more information about Mukesh Kapila and his speaking tour, please visit www.mukeshkapila.org. For more background information on the book, readers can visit www.againstatideofevil.org.

NOTES TO EDITORS

For more information about the tour, or to request footage or photographs from Mukesh Kapila's recent visits to Sudan, contact David Brown, +44 (0)7921 471985, david.brown@aegistrust.org