



Sudan Liberation Army-Unity (1) [SLA-Unity (1)]

SLA-Unity emerged after the end of the Abuja talks as a loose, multi-tribal coalition of commanders, mainly from northern Darfur, seeking unity under new leadership but lacking structure and a clear political plan. It stressed the importance of good relations with tribal leaders and local people, many of whom had been alienated by the abuses of SLA-Minni Minawi (SLA-MM). Its leading figures are Abdalla Yahya, a popular Zaghawa commander from Amarai in North Darfur, Ahmad Kubbur, a Rizeigat commander from South Darfur, and Sherif Harir, a veteran Zaghawa intellectual with close ties to Chad and Eritrea. SLA-Unity lost commanders and fighters to the Justice and Equality Movement early in 2009, but claims many of those who left were soon disillusioned with JEM and returned. Its main areas of support are Amarai and Hashaba in North Darfur. It has received a little non-military support from Libya and has only small arms.

SLA-Unity (2)

Mahjoub Hussein (Zaghawa), former spokesman of SLA-MM and later SLA-Unity (1), claimed to have taken control of SLA-Unity, under Libyan auspices, in August 2009. Colleagues say he was responding to a Libyan demand for a show of rebel unity in Tripoli before the September anniversary of the coup that brought Col. Muammar Gaddafi to power. Hussein has close relations with a Libyan intelligence officer, Mohamed Garsala, second in charge of the Darfur file in Libya. But he has little support and virtually no military strength in Darfur. After leaving SLA-MM in 2006, accusing Minawi of tribalism, Hussein formed the grandiosely-named **Greater Sudan Liberation Movement** in January 2007, claiming the backing of seven field commanders. He demanded a 50,000-man United Nations force, with a mandate to pursue war criminals and disarm Arab militias, and 30 per cent of national oil revenue for Darfur.

Updated July 2010