

SUDAN

Prime Minister's Statement on Armed Forces Changes

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[Speech by Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi on 4 September; place not given — recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, to our courageous Armed Forces in every corner of the homeland, and to the masses of our proud, loyal Sudanese people: Peace and the mercy and blessings of Allah, the sublime, be on you.

Sons of my homeland, political opinions have differed about the rebel movement which has become active in some parts of southern Sudan. However, since we took over the affairs of the country on your behalf, we have striven to clarify the positive stand of our people regarding a peaceful solution, and we have intensified efforts for that purpose and afforded a full opportunity to the rebel leaders to comply with the national, democratic, and peaceful stand.

Within 10 days of the approval by the Constituent Assembly of the government policy speech, we managed to formulate a policy on the leadership of the rebel movement and expose its true nature as a tool of aggression, undermining the Sudanese national unity by arousing racialism and tribal dissensions — an aggression launched from foreign territory, using foreign facilities and depending on terrorism and frightening women, children, old people, and unarmed men.

Our Armed Forces have confronted this aggression since it began with courage and manliness, in spite of their shortage of equipment and what befell them, namely [words indistinct]. In the name of the legitimate authority of the people of Sudan, we did not and will not spare any effort to enable our Armed Forces to carry out their sacred national duty.

We have drawn up a comprehensive, urgent program for solving those basic problems decisively, and we are resolved to present it for more consultations to the conference of commanders of

commands. This is what we will do, God willing, before hastening to implement it with the highest possibly efficiency.

It was clear, from all our studies and information, that the present command of the Sudanese Armed Forces has suffered from circumstances which prevented it from administering the Armed Forces affairs with the required efficiency at this important stage of national development.

Therefore, the National Defense Council reviewed those circumstances in its session of 31 August 1986, and decided to submit recommendations to the council of the head of state on this matter. The council of the head of state reviewed the matter in its session of 4 September 1986.

The Council used as a basis the recommendations of the National Defense Council and Article 78 of Sudan's transitional constitution for 1985. [words indistinct]

The council of the head of state decreed the retirement of the following officers:

1. General Taj al-Din Abdullah Fadl, the commander in chief of the Armed Forces.

2. General Tawfiq Muhammad Khalil,

3. Lieutenant General Umar Babikr Zaruq,

4. Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Ali Salih,

5. Lieutenant General Muhammad Muwalli al-Sayyid Karar.

It also issued a decree appointing Major General Fawzi Ahmad al-Fadil acting commander in chief of the Peoples Armed Forces.

Sons of my homeland, while I announce to you these decrees which the council of the head of state issued, I refrain from disclosing the reasons behind them, in view of the sensitive circumstances which the country is passing through. Now, I assure you that their basic motive is the creation of better circumstances for mobilizing all civil and armed [as heard] efforts in the defense of Sudan in all its components — its security, its unity, and its democratic system.

Sons of my homeland, the decrees of dismissal and retirement make me heavy hearted. We appreciate the role played by the gentlemen who retired in Sudanese public life. Hence, we wish them success in other fields. O, our Armed Forces, every effort is needed to remove the negative aspects and increase your resources. Let your acknowledged sacrificial energies be devoted to the victory of Sudan and destruction of its enemies. And O, sons of my homeland, let us unite for the sake of God and the homeland, for we are a people that have surprised the world with great achievements time and again, and we will surprise the world once more, God willing, by repulsing the aggression and by the victory of Sudan. Peace and the mercy of God, the sublime, and his blessings, be on you.