

Environmental Resistance (Nierteti Sit-In)

A Sit-in between Demands and Achievements

The city of Nierteti, known for its picturesque nature, is located in Central Darfur State, on the slopes of the volcanic Marra Mountain, which sits at the center of the region and stretches over 12,000 kilometers. Its peak rises more than 3,000 meters above sea level, and it enjoys a Mediterranean climate.

The sit-in began in June 2020 with several demands, including:

- The dismissal of the Executive Director.
- The removal of members of the local Security Committee (the Chief of Police, the military commander, the Rapid Support Forces commander, and the head of intelligence).
- The collection of weapons from militias.
- Provision of security and protection for the agricultural season.
- Arresting and bringing to justice those against whom complaints were filed.
- Opening of routes to prevent clashes between herders and farmers.
- Banning motorcycles.

However, during a series of meetings between a delegation led by Mohamed Hassan Eltaishi (composed of members from the Sovereignty and Cabinet Councils, as well as the Forces of Freedom and Change) and representatives of the protesters (comprising the youth of the Resistance Committees, representatives of the displaced, and local community leaders), several agreements were reached.

Decisions were made to dismiss the local police chief, the Executive Director, and the head of intelligence, along with removing the military commander and one of the judges. Additionally, 152 four-wheel-drive vehicles were allocated to secure the area, 100 of which came from the Rapid Support Forces. The joint force would include the army, police, and Rapid Support Forces. It was agreed that issues related to nomads would be addressed through the peace agreement via the Nomads Commission.

The Minister of Social Welfare and Development, Dr. Lina El-Sheikh, committed to conducting studies related to water resources in Nierteti, along with organizing conferences on peaceful coexistence.

However, several points were still under discussion, such as:

- Disarmament of civilians and securing the agricultural season.
- **Marra Mountain Agricultural Project:** Protesters demanded the revival of the project to improve agricultural practices and orchards.
- **Lands and "Hawakeer" (communal lands):** This was responded to by Mr. Mohamed Hassan Eltaishi, who provided an update on the agreements made during the Juba peace negotiations regarding the establishment of a Land Commission in Darfur, along with a special court for land disputes.
- **The issue of artisanal mining:** Protesters did not overlook discussing the dangers of unregulated mining that threatens both the environment and the lives of the residents. They demanded the appointment of a general manager for the Sudanese Mineral Resources Company in the state to address the issues of unregulated mining.
- **Environmental issues and deforestation:** Protesters called for the return of Marra Mountain Project, the protection of forests from illegal logging, and the prevention of armed forces from engaging in the trade and cutting of trees. They also called for the establishment of strict laws and regulations to protect the environment and ensure their enforcement.
- **The Nomads Commission:** Regarding the issues of herders and nomads, the delegation agreed that these would be addressed through the peace agreement via the Nomads Commission.
- **Technical studies on Nierteti's water resources:** Among the demands were development projects and initiatives for social peace. Minister Dr. Lina El-Sheikh committed to undertaking studies related to water resources in Nierteti and organizing conferences on peaceful coexistence.

If we look at most of the demands, we find that they are clearly environmental. So, can we define this sit-in as an environmental sit-in?

➤ Sources:

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3. <https://raseef22.net/article/1079024-أبناء-اعتصام-يطلبها-لم-السودان-في-حدث-الذي-التغيير-دارفور-في-نيرتتى-مدينة>
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➤ For photos:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/whGpFcvK9HqbzQUa/?u>

