

## Soyinka Links Darfur Crisis to Arab Racism, Slavery

Contributed by Evan Mwangi: Afrika News Books and Arts Editor  
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Nigerian author Wole Soyinka has linked the Darfur genocide to the history of Arabs enslaving Negroid Africans in Sudan, the Harvard Crimson has reported. The first African winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature and a consistent critic of the Sudanese government asked the Arab section of Sudan to confront its enslaving past and acknowledge its current role in the violence in Darfur as racist instead of remaining in a "state of amnesia";

An articulate intellectual and dramatist, Soyinka delivered the speech "Darfur: Anything to do with Slavery?" to a full house at the Center for Government and International Studies, Harvard University. He addressed the ongoing violence that has resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths and millions of displaced refugees.

Soyinka argued that Arabs played a historic role in the African slave trade, and a feeling of supremacy still prevails among the Janjaweed, a militia terrorizing the Negroid part of the Sudan.

Soyinka said the Janjaweed are "motivated" by a mentality in which they see their victims as slaves. "You destroy a people if you treat them with disdain," Soyinka is quoted as saying.

<http://www.thecrimson.com/article.aspx?ref=518470>