

Arrest warrant against Sudan head delayed

by UPI

KHARTOUM, Sudan - The delay in arresting the Sudanese president for alleged war crimes could mean African leaders won't turn on their own, a published report says.

Omar el-Bashir, the president of Sudan, faces indictments by the International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur. It is said to be the first warrant sought against a sitting head of state.

But, at a recent African Union meeting, Uganda President Yoweri Museveni asked for a delay in issuing an arrest warrant against Bashir until AU investigations are completed.

Human rights activist Samuel Olara, writing in *The Weekly Observer*, criticized the delay in the face of reported evidence of serious rights violations, including mass killings committed by forces and militias allied to the state.

"Leaving it to African despots and mass murderers to investigate their own is like sealing international justice with the kiss of death," he wrote.

In arguing the case against Bashir, Olara said, the ICC chief prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, maintained that "reasonable grounds" existed for believing that Bashir bore criminal responsibility on 10 counts of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

For the ICC to gain credibility, it must desist from being used as a political tool in the prosecution of war crimes or else it is doomed, the article said.

Â© 2009 United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Arrest warrant against Sudan head delayed by UPI