

Satellite Sentinel Project

THE RAZING: INTENTIONAL BURNING CONFIRMED AT EL-FEID, NUBA MOUNTAINS

HUMAN SECURITY INCIDENT

PREPARED BY



Harvard
Humanitarian
Initiative

19 APRIL 2011

The Satellite Sentinel Project (SSP) has confirmed that at least 356 structures in the town of el-Feid, located in the Nuba Mountains region of South Kordofan State, Sudan, have been razed. There is evidence that an area in Um Barmbita has also been burned, but no visible structures appear to have been destroyed. SSP cannot confirm based on the imagery collected whether the scorched area in Um Barmbita was intentionally burned. There is evidence of scorching at several points between and around the two communities, which are an estimated 15 to 20 kilometers apart. The razing of el-Feid underscores the rising tensions in the Nuba Mountain region as next month's South Kordofan State gubernatorial elections approach.

Abdelaziz al-Hilu, the Deputy Governor of South Kordofan State, claimed in a statement that Popular Defense Force (PDF) militias attacked the towns in the early morning of 13 April 2011, allegedly burning between 300 to 500 houses and reportedly killing more than 20 people, including women and children. El-Feid is Hilu's hometown. Hilu claimed that the forces were under the command of Ahmed Haroun, Governor of South Kordofan, whom the International Criminal Court indicted in 2007 for alleged war crimes in Darfur.

SSP analysis of DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows evidence consistent with the intentional burning of structures at el-Feid in both the absence of intervening scorch marks between the buildings, and the presence of burned structures set apart from the main clusters of burned buildings. Ground vegetation in the northern part of the town also appears to have been burned, most likely due to the spread of fires from the southern section of the town. April marks the height of the dry season in this region of South Kordofan, and the evidence of widespread scorching suggests that the dry ground cover caused the fires to spread.

The National Congress Party (NCP), the governing party of north Sudan, has denied involvement in the attack on el-Feid and the surrounding area, promising to launch an investigation into the incident. One NCP official, Haj Magid Siwar, alleged that the NCP had intelligence that the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), the party with which Hilu is affiliated, instigated the attacks. Haroun and Hilu are running against each for the governorship of South Kordofan in the gubernatorial elections slated to take place at the beginning of May 2011.

FINDINGS

- At least 356 structures appear to have been burned in the town of el-Feid, South Kordofan, including ground cover to the north of the destroyed buildings.
- An area in the southern section of Um Barmbita, South Kordofan has been recently burned. However, no destroyed structures were visible.

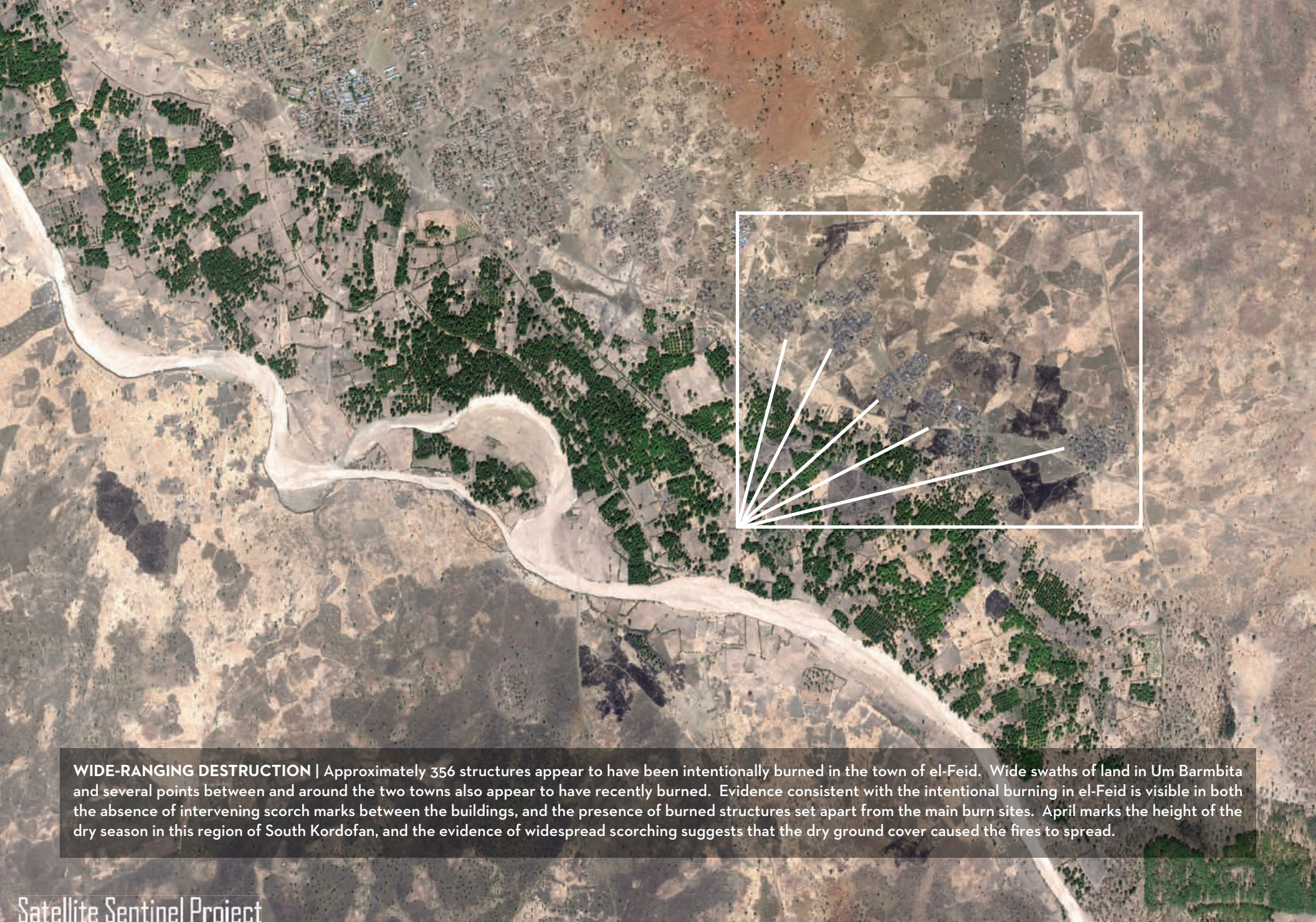
CONCLUSION

- The lack of intervening scorch marks between structures, coupled with evidence of burned buildings situated away from the primary burn sites, confirms reports that el-Feid has been intentionally burned as of 16 April 2011.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

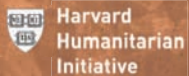
Satellite Sentinel Project conducts regular, intensive monitoring of Sudan to assess the current human security situation and identify potential threats to civilians.

Analysis prepared by Harvard Humanitarian Initiative and UNITAR/UNOSAT. Imagery and additional analysis provided by DigitalGlobe.



WIDE-RANGING DESTRUCTION | Approximately 356 structures appear to have been intentionally burned in the town of el-Feid. Wide swaths of land in Um Barmbita and several points between and around the two towns also appear to have recently burned. Evidence consistent with the intentional burning in el-Feid is visible in both the absence of intervening scorch marks between the buildings, and the presence of burned structures set apart from the main burn sites. April marks the height of the dry season in this region of South Kordofan, and the evidence of widespread scorching suggests that the dry ground cover caused the fires to spread.

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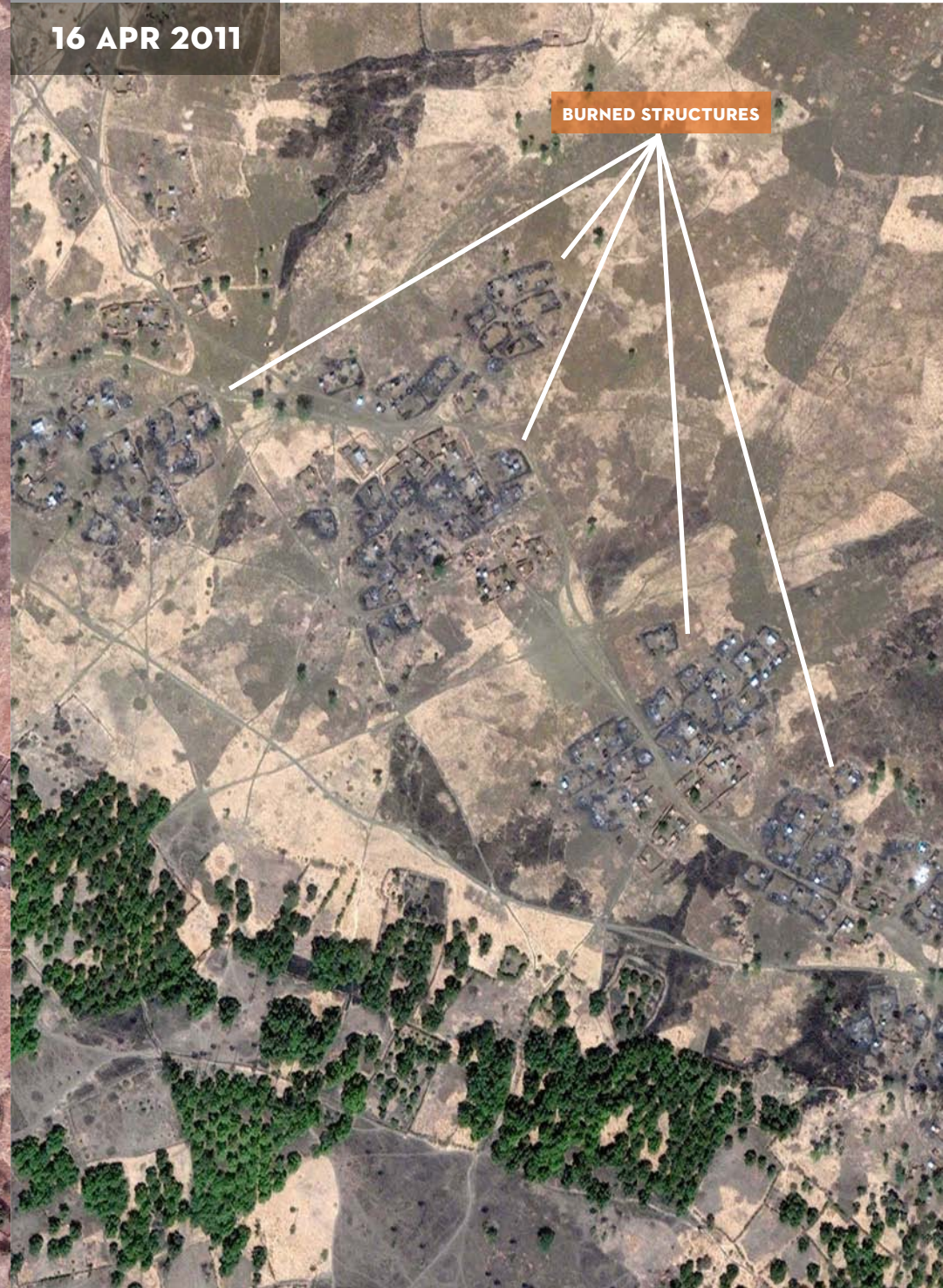
EVIDENCE OF INTENTIONAL BURNING AT EL-FEID | NUBA MOUNTAINS, SOUTH KORDOFAN

16 APRIL 2011 | FIG 1

30 DEC 2010

16 APR 2011

BURNED STRUCTURES

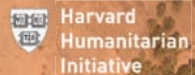


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FIRE SCARS NORTH
OF EL-FEID, LIKELY
IGNITED BY BURNING
HOUSES TO SOUTH

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16 APRIL 2011 | FIG 3
EVIDENCE OF BURNING AT EL-FEID | NUBA MOUNTAINS, SOUTH KORDOFAN

UM BARMBITA

DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO AREAS
17KM

EL-FEID

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16 APRIL 2011 | FIG 4

INTENTIONAL BURNING AT EL-FIED AND VICINITY | NUBA MOUNTAINS, SOUTH KORDOFAN



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ABOUT THE PROJECT AND THE PARTNERS

THE WORLD IS WATCHING BECAUSE YOU ARE WATCHING.

George Clooney initiated the Satellite Sentinel Project (SSP) while on an October 2010 trip to Southern Sudan with Enough Project Co-founder John Prendergast. SSP combines satellite imagery analysis and field reports with Google's Map Maker technology to deter the resumption of war between North and South Sudan. The project provides an early warning system to deter mass atrocities by focusing world attention and generating rapid responses on human rights and human security concerns.

This project is the result of an unprecedented collaboration between Not On Our Watch, the Enough Project, Google, the United Nations UNITAR Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT), DigitalGlobe, the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, and Trellon, LLC.

The project works like this: Commercial satellites passing over the border of northern and southern Sudan are able to capture possible threats to civilians, observe the movement of displaced people, detect bombed and razed villages, or note other evidence of pending mass violence.

UNOSAT leads the collection and analysis of the images and collaborates with Google and Trellon to design the web platform for the public to easily access the images and reports. Harvard Humanitarian Initiative provides system-wide research and leads the collection, human rights analysis, and corroboration of on-the-ground reports that contextualizes the satellite imagery. The Enough Project contributes field reports, provides policy analysis, and, together with Not On Our Watch, and our Sudan Now partners, puts pressure on policymakers by urging the public to act. DigitalGlobe provides satellite imagery and additional analysis.

The Satellite Sentinel Project marks the first sustained, public effort to systematically monitor and report on potential hotspots and threats to security along a border, in near real-time (within 24-36 hours), with the aim of heading off humanitarian disaster and human rights crimes before they occur.

Not On Our Watch -- co-founded by Don Cheadle, George Clooney, Matt Damon, Brad Pitt, David Pressman, and Jerry Weintraub -- has provided seed money to launch the project.

Press Inquiries: Contact Jonathan Hutson at jhutson@enoughproject.org | 202.386.1618



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