**Sudan plans nuclear program**

Reactor is for "peaceful purposes"; IAEA travels to Khartoum.\

By JPOST.COM STAFF

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Sudan plans to build a nuclear reactor for peaceful purposes by 2020, the SUNA state news agency reported Sunday.

Sudan has noted economic and political ties with Iran, which has been facing increasing sanctions and international pressure over its nuclear program.

Like Iran, Sudan is under US sanctions, and has been since 1997.

The International Criminal Court charged Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir withthree counts of genocide in Darfur last month, marking the first time the world's first permanent war crimes tribunal has issued genocide charges.

The International Atomic Energy Agency is planning to travel to Sudan on August 23 to discuss importing a nuclear reactor for “research purposes.”

SUNA said Sudan began plans to develop a nuclear program early this year.

Although Sudan has built dams along the Blue and White Nile Rivers, large parts of the country do not have regular electricity, Reuters reported.

Muhammad Ahmed Hassan el-Tayeb, director-general of the Sudanese Atomic Energy Agency, was quoted as saying “The Ministry of Electricity and Dams has already started preparing for the project to produce power from nuclear energy in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency and is expected to build the first nuclear power plant in the year 2020.”