

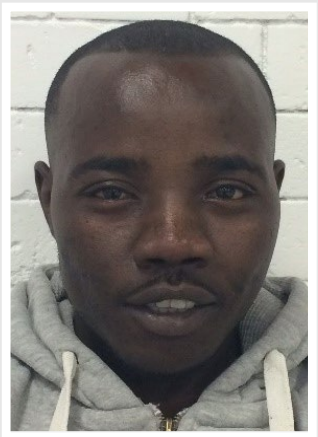
ABDUL AZIZ MUSTAFA

- EASY TO READ LIFE STORY



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY TRUST

Key terms:



Darfur: A large region of the African country of Sudan. It covers an area roughly the size of France. People from this region are from nearly 100 different tribes.

Government: A group of people who run a country making laws and rules.

Refugee camp: Somewhere for lots of people to live when they have been forced to leave their homes because they are not safe.

People smuggler: Criminals who charge large amounts of money to secretly get desperate people out of their home country and into somewhere new to live. It is dangerous and against the law.

Abdul Aziz is from **Darfur** and is a member of the Zaghawa people. This tribe mostly move around the land, herding their animals such as cattle and sheep. When Abdul was 13 years old fighting started in Darfur between the **government** and groups who were against them. Abdul's tribe, with others, were attacked by government soldiers, who burned many villages and killed thousands of people. The government said the Zaghawa people didn't belong in Darfur.

One day Abdul Aziz came home from school to discover that his father had been killed, because he was part of the Zaghawa tribe. He had done nothing wrong and was just working in the shop he owned when it happened. The soldiers also stole animals and took women and children away. The attacks carried on for months so Abdul Aziz's family decided to leave and go to a **refugee camp**.

There was no school for Abdul Aziz to go to in the camp and very little food for all the people there. The government soldiers still attacked them and killed people. When he was 15 years old, Abdul Aziz decided he wanted to escape the dangerous life in the camp. He went to a city for the first time in his life and found a **people smuggler**. He paid him to take him out of Darfur and to a new country to live.

He was taken to the sea and put into a large crate with four other people. It was loaded onto a ship. It was really hot and completely dark, but they had to stay in there, in silence, for 11 days as they travelled across the sea. They had no idea which country they were going to. Abdul Aziz was very scared.

Abdul Aziz then spent 10 days in the dark in the back of a lorry, until it reached England. When he got out he was lost and very confused. In London, a stranger who spoke his language gave him some food and water and told him what to do. He was very grateful for this kindness.

Because he was so young Abdul Aziz had to live with a new family, who helped him to learn English and about life in Britain. He had no idea if his mother was OK and he missed her very much.

He found everything in this new country strange and different and it was difficult for him to settle in. He started drinking a lot of alcohol with friends which has had a bad effect on his health.

When he was 18 Abdul Aziz heard from his brother, who also escaped Darfur and went to different country. His brother helped Abdul Aziz to contact their mother and he was so pleased to speak to her.

He still lives in Britain now and is glad to be safe. But it is hard living away from everyone he knew and having to start his life again all by himself.

Abdul Aziz says:

‘Britain is now my second home. It is good to have a new life, but it was really tough to have no contact with my family for so long.’

Find out more... Genocide in Darfur: hmd.org.uk/darfur
Other resources for educators: hmd.org.uk/educators