

Sudan: As violent clashes continue, Sudan's international partners must call for accountability and justice

Monday 17 April 2023

Khartoum, Nairobi, Paris, London, 17 April 2023. Since April 15, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, head of the Sovereign Council and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), and General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, alias Hemedti - leader of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have, in their quest for power, engaged in deadly clashes across Sudan. In two days, nearly 100 civilians have been killed according to the Central Committee of Sudan Doctors and 1,100 injured. Fights between the two factions are still raging on Monday.

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), African Center for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS), CIVICUS, Gisa, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, World organisation against torture (OMCT), REDRESS, Sudanese Human Rights Monitor (SHRM) and Sudan Human rights Hub call for an immediate end to the use of force by both parties. These organisations are deeply concerned with the deliberate attacks on the population.

“Since the October 2021 Coup, in which the two Generals further confiscated power, the deadly repression of protesters has persisted in the capital Khartoum and violence committed by multiple security forces including the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) factions - former janjaweed - in Darfur and the East of Sudan has escalated,” declared **Ahmed Elzobier, Director of SHRM**.

Civilians, calling for democracy, peace and justice, have continuously been the first victims. The international partners (UNITAMS, the African Union, and IGAD), backed by the United States, the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, have pressed for the signing of a political agreement to prepare for a civilo-military transition. Yet, at the heart of the negotiations remained the power struggle between General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, head of the Sudanese forces (SAF), supported by his close ally Egypt, and the powerful leader of the RSF, Hemedti, owing to its fierce militia and his control of the gold mines in the South of the country.

Disagreements between the two generals resurfaced over the integration of the powerful paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) into the military, as part of the framework deal. Now, the SAF and RSF are fighting to take over the country's leadership.

Air raids and violent clashes are happening in and around Khartoum but also in Meroe, Port Sudan as well as in Kassala, Kordofan and in Darfur. More than 20 people have been killed in South and North Darfur, out of 100 people and 1,100 injured across the whole country.

The signatories urge both factions to facilitate and secure safe passage to and from healthcare facilities. We further call on their duty and responsibility to respect all international laws that

protect human rights and ensure civilian protection.

“Accountability and justice have been largely neglected in this agreement. This situation serves as a further reminder that peace cannot exist without justice,” declared **Alice Mogwe, President of FIDH**.

Failure to get justice and accountability has favored repeated cycles of violence with grave human rights violations since 2019. Behind atrocities committed in Darfur during the Bashir era, the Sudanese military has been further responsible for a number of massacres since the 2019 transition. On June 3, 2019, at least 128 people were murdered, and a number of women were raped and sexually assaulted. Perpetrators of serious human right violations, including international crimes committed during the time of Omar al-Bashir’s regime, as well as crimes committed during the transitional period and since the 2021 coup have yet to be prosecuted.

“These actors cannot be a part of the solution in Sudan; the only viable option is the input of civilians. These demands include an end to the impunity that persists in Sudan,” said **Mossaad Mohamed Ali, Executive Director of ACJPS**.

“This recent escalation of armed conflict between the army and RSF, while predictable, will have devastating consequences for both human life and Sudan’s democratic transition. International and regional actors must now prioritise accountability as an essential pre-condition for ensuring stability and building democracy,” said **Rupert Skilbeck, Director of REDRESS**.

The signatory organisations call on international and regional partners and institutions to:

- condemn without further delay the conflict that results in increasing human rights violations and a humanitarian crisis throughout the country;
- call both factions to immediately stop the ongoing clashes;
- support the Sudanese people’s aspiration to consolidate democracy through civilian leadership;
- take all measures to protect the human rights of the Sudanese people and deliver humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable in partnership with UN agencies, international organisations and NGOs;
- use all legal and diplomatic means including mediation, judiciary, targeted sanctions and coercive measures to establish accountability and reparations on gross human rights violations of the past years.

P.S.

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