



## [The U.S. Department of the Treasury Imposes Sanctions on a Sudanese Police Unit for Its Use of Violent Tactics Against Peaceful Anti-Coup Protesters](#)

The use of violent tactics and lethal force on peaceful protestors has prompted the United States Department of Treasury to impose financial sanctions against a Sudanese police unit. During the course of the past five months, the people of Sudan have been demonstrating in opposition to the recent military coup that took place in October of last year. The Central Reserve Police (CRP), the police unit in question, has been at the forefront of the military government's heavy-handed response to near daily protests of the destructive power grab – which impeded the democratic transition process in the country. Under the new sanctions, the CRP will not have access to any property or interests in the United States or within U.S. jurisdiction, and Americans will also be barred from doing business with the police unit or anyone affiliated with them. Security forces in Sudan have engaged in a ruthless crackdown that has included the firing of live ammunition at demonstrators, with close to 90 people being killed and at least 3,000 others injured since the October 2021 military takeover.

The sanctions package is part of a large group of such measures called the “Global Magnitsky sanctions,” which targets those accused of human rights abuses, as well as corruption and anti-democratic actions. The U.S. State Department called for an immediate end to violence against the protestors and a re-establishment of the United Nations-approved transitional government, in a statement announcing the sanctions. Brian Nelson, the Department of Treasury’s under-secretary for terrorism and financial aid, commented that “Since the October 25th military takeover, Sudan’s Central Reserve Police has used excessive force and violence intended to silence civilian activists and protestors.” A troubling 87 protestors have been killed since the military coup last October, and there are several examples of excessive force being deployed, including an instance back on January 17th when the CRP fired live ammunition into a crowd of protestors. The fleeing demonstrators were then chased down and beaten before being arrested, as the CRP has also been accused of arbitrarily detaining citizens and using torture.

The military seized control of Sudan on October 25th, 2021. This move derailed the country’s efforts to initiate a peaceful transition to democracy. Prior to the coup, there had been a power-sharing agreement between the army and civilians, with a plan to hold future elections. Sudan was previously ruled by dictator Omar al-Bashir, who was in power for nearly 30 years. Thousands of people have been taking part in pro-democracy protests on a regular basis ever since the military takeover. The coup has also led to the suspension of billions of dollars of foreign aid, further exacerbating the existing economic crisis in the country. Prices for goods such as bread and fuel have risen sharply, and it is feared that the ongoing war in Ukraine will likely deteriorate this as well.

The Central Reserve Police in Sudan have previously been accused of crimes against humanity during the war in Darfur in the early 2000s, a conflict in which an estimated 300,000 people were killed. In the aftermath of the recent October 2021 coup, the military government has relied on security forces to repress protestors and arrest or intimidate political opponents. The CRP has been heavily deployed in the capital city of Khartoum even this week, raising immediate concerns about the safety of protestors.