



### [Egregious Human Rights Violations Being Committed by Both Sides During the Ongoing Civil War in Sudan](#)

The calamitous ongoing civil war in Sudan, which broke out back in April of 2023, has seen both sides commit appalling human rights abuses. The now 22-month-long conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has not only been rampant with war crimes and serious human rights violations, but it has also brought about what many have deemed to be the world's worst humanitarian and displacement crisis. More than 30 million people in Sudan – a whopping nearly 60% of the country's total population – are in need of humanitarian assistance. Aid operations themselves have been severely hampered by the unstable and hazardous circumstances across the country, which has additionally led to the mass displacement of civilians fleeing their homes for safe havens. It is estimated that close to 9 million have been internally displaced within Sudan since the onset of the conflict, with a further 3 million escaping to neighboring countries. Sudan is also experiencing a major food insecurity crisis that has afflicted over half of its population.

The United Nations and various humanitarian organizations have documented the array of gross human rights violations committed by both the SAF and RSF. Reports detail numerous indiscriminate attacks in densely-populated areas that have often times even included sites sheltering displaced civilians, hospitals, and schools. Independently gathered evidence in the form of videos, photographs, and satellite imagery has demonstrated the use of explosive weapons in these attacks as well. A few months ago, the 'United Nations Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan' outlined widespread human rights abuses and war crimes that extend far beyond indiscriminate attacks. The SAF and RSF have also regularly engaged in arbitrary detainment, sexual violence, obstruction of humanitarian access, pillaging, destruction of property, persecution and violence on the basis of ethnicity, and torture. All of this has prompted rights groups to warn that a sense of "entrenched impunity" is fueling the grave human rights violations and abuses that are plaguing Sudan. As such, many are calling for a comprehensive global effort to ensure accountability and curtail the flow of weapons to the country's warring parties.

While the current conflict in Sudan erupted back in April of 2023, several notable developments took place between 2019 and 2023 that preceded the outbreak of fighting which has continued until today. In April of 2019, longtime despot Omar al-Bashir was ousted from power in a military coup following large-scale popular protests demanding his removal. A few months later in August, Sudan's main opposition coalition and the ruling military council signed a power-sharing agreement to rule as a transitional government for a period of three years' time, paving the way for future elections and civilian-led government. However, in October of 2021, the Sudanese military took control of the country's government, derailing the transitional process and ultimately creating the political climate which descended into the outbreak of fighting in 2023 between rival armed factions, the SAF and the RSF.

Over the past week, the SAF has retaken large segments of the capital city of Khartoum and the surrounding areas from the RSF, while the latter has been lambasted for carrying out a multiple-day assault that killed hundreds in villages near the town of El Geteina. As a result of them losing ground to the SAF in Khartoum, the RSF are believed to be trying to tighten their grip on strongholds that they have retained in places like Darfur and other parts of western Sudan. The SAF's regaining of territory has cut crucial supply routes for the RSF. Amid the intense fighting,

civilians are caught in the middle, often unable to escape or even killed when trying to do so. Those who are fortunate enough to survive can be subjected to targeting at the hands of the SAF and RSF if either perceives that they are potential sympathizers or spies for the other side. In fact, according to local human rights monitoring groups, hundreds of people have been killed based on the suspicion that they supported one of the warring factions due solely to their ethnic backgrounds.

Both of Sudan's warring parties have been condemned for their major human rights violations, and the United States has imposed sanctions on the leaders of the two factions. In early January of this year, the outgoing Biden administration accused the paramilitary RSF of engaging in systematic atrocities against the Sudanese people and sanctioned its leader, Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo. About a week later in mid-January, the U.S. also imposed sanctions on the head of the SAF, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, expressing that the army under his command had committed lethal attacks on civilians and was responsible for the routine denial of humanitarian access.