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Sudan: UN experts appalled by reports of mass atrocities, unlawful killings and sexual violence in El Fasher

07 November 2025

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GENEVA – UN experts* today expressed alarm over reports of widespread atrocities committed by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in El Fasher, North Darfur, including killings of civilians and the use of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls.

“We are horrified by the scale and brutality of the crimes reported in El Fasher, including widespread and systemic and sadistic levels of sexual violence as a deliberate strategy of domination and humiliation aimed at destroying communities,” the experts said. “We are appalled by reports of women being raped in front of relatives and detained for days in conditions of extreme abuse amounting to torture, inhuman and degrading treatment.”

After 540 days of siege, El Fasher fell to the RSF on 23 October 2025, with reports emerging of mass atrocities and a catastrophic humanitarian crisis. Millions remain without adequate protection or assistance. With 8.6 million internally displaced and over 3 million refugees in neighbouring countries, Sudan faces one of the world’s most severe displacement crises, placing immense strain on already fragile systems, the experts said.

They were alarmed by reports of wounded individuals, including women and girls, killed inside Al-Saudi Maternity Hospital, with reportedly 460 patients and companions killed over the weekend when RSF entered El Fasher, in addition to various other premises located in the Daraja Oula and Al-Matar neighbourhoods serving as medical centres. Over 6,000 pregnant women remain with no access to medical or reproductive health services, including for those surviving rape, according to reports received. The targeting of aid workers has rendered access to life-saving care and humanitarian assistance more challenging.

The experts were shocked by eyewitness reports that RSF forces selected women and girls at gunpoint when entering shelters for internally displaced persons (IDPs) near El Fasher University; gang-raped at least 25 of them and then forced at least 100 displaced families to flee amid gunfire. Older residents were also intimidated. According to reports, those fleeing were further subjected to invasive body searches, acts tantamount

to enforced disappearances and abductions for ransom, with women fleeing also sexually assaulted.

The experts said many survivors of violence remain missing and without access to medical or psychosocial care. Entire groups were reportedly intercepted on the road to Tawilah, beaten, and racially abused.

“We are appalled by credible reports of ethnically targeted summary executions of civilians in El Fasher by the RSF, which are prohibited under international law and constitute war crimes and may also amount to crimes against humanity. They must cease immediately and prompt independent investigations are critical,” they said.

These crimes echo the RSF’s previous military campaigns in Zamzam, El Geneina and Ardamata, where thousands were reportedly killed and women subjected to systematic rape, the experts said.

“The deliberate targeting of Sudanese belonging to the Fur, Masalit, and Zaghawa ethnic communities – including through sexual violence – is clearly being done with the intent of terrorising, displacing and destroying them in whole or in part,” they said.

The experts expressed profound concern at the confirmation of famine in El Fasher and Kadugli towns, which will only exacerbate an already devastating humanitarian crisis.

“We urge the international community to use all means available to end the bloodshed and immediately ensure the protection of civilians, establish the fate and whereabouts of those disappeared, facilitate humanitarian access and the protection of humanitarian workers, and hold those responsible for the crimes accountable – including those who have aided and abetted such crimes through arms transfers and other logistical support,” they said.

***The experts:**

- **Reem Alsalem, Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences**
- **Ashwini K.P., Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance)**
- **Morris Tidball-Binz, Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions)**
- **Paula Gaviria, Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons)**
- **Michael Fakhri, Special Rapporteur on the right to food**
- **Alice Jill Edwards, Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment**
- **Claudia Flores (Chair), Ivana Krstić (Vice-Chair), Dorothy Estrada Tanck, Haina Lu, and Laura Nyirinkindi, Working Group on discrimination against women and girls**
- **Gabriella Citroni (Chair-Rapporteur), Grażyna Baranowska (Vice-Chair), Aua Baldé, Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez, and Mohammed Al-Obaidi, Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances**
- **George Katougalos, Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order**
- **Ben Saul, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism**

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