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Freedom in the World 2023 - Sudan

Overview

After military commanders and a prodemocracy protest movement ousted the repressive regime of longtime president Omar al-Bashir and his National Congress Party (NCP) in 2019, Sudan was ruled by a transitional government in which military and civilian leaders agreed to share power until national elections could be held. The government began to enact reforms, and space for the exercise of civil liberties slowly opened. However, the process was thrown into turmoil in late 2021 when the military leadership dissolved the transitional government in a coup and cracked down on the ensuing prodemocracy protests. Throughout the transition period, violence involving security forces, other armed groups, and rival ethnic communities has persisted in many parts of the country.

Key Developments in 2022

- In January, civilian prime minister Abdulla Hamdok resigned, following weeks of protests by those opposing the military government, as well as the November 2021 deal that reinstated Hamdok as prime minister. The Forces of Freedom and Change coalition, the Umma party—Sudan’s largest political organization—and Sudanese people across the country rejected the November 2021 agreement, staging regular protests throughout the year to demand a full civilian government.
- In October, more than 50 Sudanese prodemocracy resistance committees—grassroots neighborhood networks of Sudanese residents that emerged during the 2019 uprising—signed a draft constitution, created as a hybrid of two separate proposals written by committees from Wad Madani and Khartoum. The document calls for a decentralized civilian government, the resignation of current military leaders, the abolition of the 2019 Constitutional Declaration, and the establishment of a new transitional constitution and legislative council. In December, the military signed a framework agreement to enable cooperation with civilian groups to draft a transitional government.
- In August, the Darfur Bar Association and its partners reported that security forces had arrested and forcibly disappeared almost 200 people in West Darfur, including local leaders who refused to partake in reconciliation efforts led by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), as well as other activists and civilians. Localized ethnic or communal conflicts and accompanying violence surged across Sudan throughout the year. Hundreds died and hundreds of thousands were displaced in communal clashes between Hausa, Berti, Hamar, Misseriya, and Hamaj tribes in the Blue Nile, Kordofan, and Darfur areas.

Political Rights

A Electoral Process

A1 0-4 pts

Was the current head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?

0 /
4

On October 25, 2021, Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, commander of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), staged a coup, declared a state of emergency, and dissolved the Transitional Sovereign Council (TSC) and transitional government that had been in place since the overthrow of Omar al-Bashir's regime in 2019. The SAF detained civilian prime minister Abdulla Hamdok and several other government ministers and advisors. On November 11, 2021, al-Burhan reconstituted the Sovereign Council, with himself as chair, including old members, new members, and Juba Peace Agreement (JPA) signatories in the body. On November 21, Hamdok was reinstated as prime minister after signing an agreement with al-Burhan that provided for the release of political detainees, a new technocratic government, and the restructuring of the Empowerment Removal Committee (ERC). However, it also retains the Sovereign Council's "oversight" role in government and excluded the civilian political coalition called the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC) from participating in the Sovereign Council. These provisions allow the military and al-Burhan to maintain significant control over the transitional government.

In January 2022, Prime Minister Hamdok resigned, following weeks of protests by those opposing the military government, as well as the November 2021 deal that reinstated Hamdok as prime minister. The FFC, the Umma party—Sudan's largest political organization—and Sudanese people across the country rejected the November agreement, staging regular protests throughout 2022 to demand a full civilian government. In December 2022, the military signed a framework agreement to enable cooperation with civilian groups to draft a transitional government.

A2 0-4 pts

Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?

0 / 4

The former parliament was dissolved as part of the 2019 revolution. The transitional constitution called for a 300-seat Transitional Legislative Council (TLC), which was to hold office until elections could be held. As of year-end 2022, the TLC was yet to be formed.

A3 0-4 pts

Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies?

0 / 4

In September 2021, the Ministry of Justice presented and held public consultations on a draft electoral commission law. However, the draft law was not passed, and an electoral commission was not created prior to the October 2021 coup.

B Political Pluralism and Participation

B1 0-4 pts

Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system free of undue obstacles to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?

1 / 4

The transitional constitution guaranteed the right to form political parties, subject to legal regulation. Security forces arrested procivilian political party, resistance committee, and FFC leaders and members following the October 2021 coup, including the heads of the Sudanese Congress Party and the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, as well as a leader in the Umma Party. The leaders have been gradually released, with the last ones leaving prisons in May 2022, after being held incommunicado and having allegedly been tortured. In December 2022, unidentified assailants fired tear gas to break up an FFC public meeting to discuss plans to counter the coup.

In the months following the 2021 coup, imprisoned allies of al-Bashir, leaders of his National Congress Party, and other Islamists have been released from detention.

B2 0-4 pts

Is there a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?

0 /
4

General al-Burhan dissolved the TSC and transitional government in the October 2021 coup, and security forces detained more than 100 government ministers and advisors and procivilian political party, resistance committee, and FFC leaders. He later reconstituted the Sovereign Council with himself as chairman and extended its oversight authority. In April and May 2022, the military government released civilian leaders and ended the state of emergency.

B3 0-4 pts

Are the people's political choices free from domination by forces that are external to the political sphere, or by political forces that employ extrapolitical means?

0 /
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The October 2021 coup was led by the SAF and supported by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and leaders of armed movements that had signed the JPA. International media organizations reported that General al-Burhan spoke with Egyptian officials prior to the coup, seeking their support for the military takeover. It followed a coup attempt on September 21, 2021, when soldiers loyal to the former regime tried to seize control of the state media building.

B4 0-4 pts

Do various segments of the population (including ethnic, racial, religious, gender, LGBT+, and other relevant groups) have full political rights and electoral opportunities?

1 /
4

The interim constitution commits Sudan to a decentralized political system in which citizens are free to exercise their rights without discrimination based on race, religion, gender, regional affiliation, or other such grounds. The new constitution proposed by the Sudan Bar Association in September 2022 kept the same provisions.

Women played an influential role in the 2019 protest movement and have since demanded greater representation at all levels of government and in peace negotiations. Although two women were named to the TSC in 2019, one resigned in May 2021 protesting the military's dominance of the Council.

LGBT+ people remain politically marginalized and same-sex sexual relations are still criminalized.

C Functioning of Government

C1 0-4 pts

Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?

0 /
4

In October 2021, General al-Burhan staged a coup, dissolved the TSC and transitional government, and detained Prime Minister Hamdok and several government ministers and advisors. Following the coup, local and regional government officials were removed and replaced, and General al-Burhan reconstituted the Sovereign Council with himself as chair. Although Prime Minister

Hamdok was later released, reinstated, and attempted to replace officials appointed by coup leaders, the military continued to control the government as of year-end 2022.

In January 2022, Prime Minister Hamdok resigned following widespread protests against his acceptance of the military's November deal that returned him to power. In May, General al-Burhan lifted the state of emergency imposed since the coup, ostensibly to prepare for a stable transition period. In October, more than 50 Sudanese resistance committees signed a draft constitution, created as a hybrid of two separate proposals written by the committees of Wad Madani and Khartoum. The document calls for a decentralized civilian government, the resignation of current military leaders, the abolition of the 2019 Constitutional Declaration, and the establishment of a new transitional constitution and legislative council. In December, the military signed a framework agreement to enable cooperation with civilian groups to draft a transitional government.

Per the JPA, in April 2021, Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) leader Minni Minawi was appointed governor of the Darfur region.

C2 0-4 pts

Are safeguards against official corruption strong and effective? | 0 / 4

Sudan is a signatory to but has not ratified the UN Convention Against Corruption and the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption. Transparency International ranked Sudan 162 of 180 countries in its 2022 global Corruption Perceptions Index.

Following the October 2021 coup, General al-Burhan suspended the ERC, which was created by transitional authorities to investigate financial crimes by former regime officials.

In April 2021, the TSC approved the Anti-Corruption National Commission Law that sets forth an anticorruption commission's powers. In September, the minister of justice issued an open invitation for nominations to the commission, though it was not established prior to the coup.

C3 0-4 pts

Does the government operate with openness and transparency? | 0 / 4

The interim constitution required members of the TSC and TLC, the cabinet, and governors to file disclosures about their personal assets, but there are no clear mechanisms for enforcement, and compliance is reportedly poor in practice.

ADDITIONAL DISCRETIONARY POLITICAL RIGHTS QUESTION:

Is the government or occupying power deliberately changing the ethnic composition of a country or territory so as to destroy a culture or tip the political balance in favor of another group?

-2

Former president al-Bashir faces outstanding arrest warrants from the International Criminal Court (ICC) on charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in Darfur, where an insurgency by members of local ethnic minority groups began in 2003. The transitional government reached an agreement with Darfuri rebel groups in February 2020 to turn over to the ICC five Sudanese suspects accused of war crimes, including al-Bashir, and signed the JPA with the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) alliance and another rebel group, the SLA Minni Minnawi faction. In August 2021, the ICC and the transitional government signed a Memorandum of Understanding that allows the international body to open an office in Sudan. Terms for al-Bashir's extradition to The Hague were in discussion at the end of 2022.

The October 2020 Juba Peace Agreement, which was meant to end ethnic insurgencies and alleged government war crimes in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States as well as in Darfur, includes

provisions to establish a transitional justice commission, a special court for war crimes, economic and land rights, the integration of rebels into security forces and political institutions, and a 10-year, \$750 million fund to address social and economic marginalization in the conflict areas and support the return of displaced persons. Implementation of these measures remained a challenge throughout 2022. Prior to the October 2021 coup, the transitional government continued negotiations with the Sudan's People Liberation Movement-North around issues of unification of their armed forces, ethnic and religious diversity, minority rights, government decentralization, and a secular state.

However, localized ethnic or communal conflicts and accompanying violence surged across Sudan in 2022. Hundreds died and hundreds of thousands were displaced in communal clashes between Hausa, Berti, Hamar, Misseriya, and Hamaj tribes in the Blue Nile, Kordofan, and Darfur areas. The government deployed additional security forces, declared states of emergencies, imposed curfews, and engaged in peacebuilding initiatives. However, government responses have at times worsened the humanitarian situation, as security forces detain and abduct people arbitrarily, and authorities are not held accountable. In August, the Darfur Bar Association and its partners reported that the RSF had arrested and forcibly disappeared almost 200 people in West Darfur, mostly local leaders who refused to partake in RSF-led reconciliation efforts, as well as other activists and civilians.

Civil Liberties

D Freedom of Expression and Belief

D1 0-4 pts

Are there free and independent media? | 1 / 4

The interim constitution guarantees freedom of the press, and the transitional government pledged to draft legislation that increases protections for journalists. In August 2021, the Ministry of Culture and Information published draft media reform laws for public consultations. The draft laws address the creation of a commission to support and protect the right to information; the independence of journalists and media organizations; the establishment of a Press Council to protect press freedom and oversee professionalism; and the creation of a Board of Governors of the Radio and Television Corporation. The laws were not approved prior to the October 2021 coup and their future remained unclear at the end of 2022.

Following the October 2021 coup, the Sudanese Journalists Association reported that coup leaders arrested journalists, shut down radio news outlets' broadcasting stations, and harassed editors, pressuring them to abstain from critical reporting. Arrests of journalists were particularly violent in 2022 after General al-Burhan imposed a state of emergency at the end of 2021.

The 2018 Law on Combating Cybercrimes, which increased the prison sentences for crimes such as disseminating false information, remains in effect.

D2 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to practice and express their religious faith or nonbelief in public and private?

| 2 / 4

Sudan's population is mostly Muslim, with a small Christian minority. The 2019 interim constitution guarantees freedom of worship and does not give Islam an official status. The TSC pledged to issue clear guidelines for those seeking permission to build new churches, and Christians welcomed the appointment of a Coptic Christian judge to one of the TSC's civilian seats.

In 2020, the transitional government adopted the Miscellaneous Amendments Act, which repealed the criminalization of apostasy, abolished corporal punishment for blasphemy, and permitted non-Muslims to trade and consume alcohol, among other provisions.

D3 0-4 pts

Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free from extensive political indoctrination?

1 / 4

Following the October 2021 coup, authorities arrested deans and professors at al-Gezira University who had criticized the military takeover. In addition, security forces attacked student protesters on university campuses. In November of that year, several universities closed their campuses and suspended classes, citing political instability.

In 2019, transitional authorities moved to disband NCP groups in higher education and dismissed 28 university chancellors and 35 vice chancellors, many of whom were affiliated with the NCP. The administrators were replaced with more independent figures.

D4 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to express their personal views on political or other sensitive topics without fear of surveillance or retribution?

1 / 4

The interim constitution affirmed the right to freedom of expression and privacy, including citizens' right to engage in private correspondence without interference. The transitional government began to dismantle the surveillance apparatus associated with the former regime, notably by replacing the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) with the General Intelligence Service (GIS)—which has more restricted powers and responsibilities—in 2019. The transitional government increased penalties for disseminating false information and other such offenses in July 2020, and officials have arrested and harassed activists for critical speech. In March 2021, activist Waad Bahjat was sentenced to a six-month suspended prison sentence and fined 10,000 Sudanese pounds (\$22) after being found guilty of “public annoyance” and “use of criminal force.” She had been arrested in 2020 after she livestreamed video on her Facebook page documenting women being harassed by police and SAF soldiers. She was initially charged with defamation, insult to a public servant exercising judicial proceedings, publishing false news, and public nuisance under the Sudanese Criminal Act of 1991, though some of these charges were dropped.

After the October 2021 coup, General al-Burhan issued a December decree expanding security forces' and intelligence agencies' powers to conduct home raids, surveil citizens, and detain suspects. Neighborhood resistance committees and human rights groups have claimed that the decree violates citizens' rights to privacy and due process.

E Associational and Organizational Rights

E1 0-4 pts

Is there freedom of assembly?

0 / 4

The TSC reaffirmed the right to assemble in the interim constitution, and citizens regularly participated in demonstrations during 2021, calling for more rapid democratic reforms, the advancement of women's rights, accountability for a 2019 massacre of protesters in Khartoum, and more.

However, violence by the authorities increased following the October 2021 coup, when NRCs began to organize regular countrywide demonstrations against the military takeover and demand

civilian rule. In 2022, security forces repeatedly used tear gas, rubber bullets, and live ammunition to break up demonstrations. Over 120 protesters have died since protests began after the coup. Women protesting reported being raped by security officers, who also blocked demonstrators' access to medical care, including by arresting doctors and patients, shooting tear gas into hospitals, and blocking access to ambulances and hospitals. To prevent demonstrations, General al-Burhan shut down the internet, blocked bridges and roads in Khartoum, arrested organizers, and banned trade unions following the coup.

In East Sudan, demonstrators engaged in months-long protests in 2021 demanding more political and economic reforms for the region and a new negotiated Eastern Sudan Track of the Juba Peace Agreement. The protesters blocked highways, closed ports, and temporarily shut the oil pipeline. The highway blockage was lifted following the October 2021 coup.

Sit-ins across the Darfur region were common in 2021 as citizens protested ongoing violence in that region, attacks on internally displaced persons (IDPs), and lack of government support. Security forces routinely responded to these acts of protest with excessive and disproportionate violence.

E2 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that are engaged in human rights– and governance-related work?

2 / 4

The transitional government has loosened the restrictions and impediments placed on civil society organizations during the al-Bashir regime. Local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are able to register, and organizations that had operated in exile are able to return to and register in Sudan. International humanitarian entities that had been denied access to conflict zones under al-Bashir have similarly been allowed to resume some activities. However, following the October 2021 coup, NGOs have reportedly been increasingly surveilled.

Though the outgoing minister of labor and social development issued a series of regulations in February 2021 that restricted the work of civil society organizations registered under the Sudan Voluntary and Humanitarian Works Act of 2006, the new minister suspended their enforcement a month later until a new legal framework was drafted and approved.

E3 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for trade unions and similar professional or labor organizations?

0 / 4

Independent trade unions were largely absent under al-Bashir; his government banned them after taking power in 1989, and instead co-opted the Sudan Workers' Trade Unions Federation (SWTUF). The independent Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA), founded in late 2016, was instrumental in the protest movement that led to al-Bashir's ouster, and it has since played a role in the transitional government, with one of its members named to the TSC.

The interim constitution affirmed workers' right to form and join trade unions. In June 2021, the TSC approved the Trade Unions Law of 2021, after months of consultations, which lays the groundwork for union organizing. As part of the transitional government's efforts to dismantle the former ruling party and affiliated institutions, it controversially dissolved the SWTUF and the Sudan Journalists Union in late 2019. In February 2021, the World Federation of Trade Unions condemned the arrest and detention of union leaders and the creation of government-appointed steering committees to oversee union affairs.

However, following the October 2021 coup, General al-Burhan dissolved all trade unions and professional associations to limit their organizing capabilities. Multiple union and association leaders were detained and assaulted during anticoup protests.

F Rule of Law

F1 0-4 pts

Is there an independent judiciary? | 0 / 4

The interim constitution envisaged the establishment of an independent judiciary to replace the politically influenced judiciary of the al-Bashir era. In May 2021, the TSC removed Chief Justice Nemat Abdullah Khair and accepted the resignation of Attorney General Taj al-Ser Ali al-Hebr, who complained of a lack of independence. That month, the ERC removed more than 20 public prosecutors from office.

Following the October 2021 coup, General al-Burhan replaced the acting public prosecutor and chief justice with former NCP officials. Al-Burhan's replacement head judge, Chief Justice Abdulaziz Fath al-Rahman Abdeen, issued a directive in December ordering the reinstatement of all judges dismissed by the ERC.

F2 0-4 pts

Does due process prevail in civil and criminal matters? | 0 / 4

Although the interim constitution enshrined the right to due process, it also contained a provision allowing the government to invoke emergency powers and suspend some due process rights. In practice, security forces continued to engage in arbitrary arrests and detentions during 2022 after the October 2021 coup and related protests. Political detainees, activists, and journalists were held incommunicado without access to legal representation and were likely subject to torture and inhumane treatment.

The interim constitution called for the establishment of a new public prosecutor's office, though the public prosecutor appointed in 2019 resigned in May 2021. In August, the new public prosecutor issued Circular No. 1 (2021), a directive that outlines measures to protect witnesses, victims, and others involved in serious criminal cases. Under this directive prosecutors are advised to use pseudonyms for witnesses and victims, include psychiatrists in sensitive interviews, and provide witnesses security if necessary.

F3 0-4 pts

Is there protection from the illegitimate use of physical force and freedom from war and insurgencies? | 0 / 4

In 2020, the transitional government banned forced confessions and the "infliction of torture" on suspects, prohibited the death penalty for defendants under age 18, and abolished the penalty of flogging for some criminal offenses, although flogging and other forms of corporal punishment were still prescribed for other crimes. In August 2021, it ratified the UN Convention Against Torture and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances. Court cases to hold perpetrators of state violence accountable continued or were resolved in 2021, and a few leaders of the police force responsible for allowing violence against protesters were dismissed throughout the year.

However, demonstrators protesting the October coup were violently repressed and detained by security forces. Political detainees released following the November 21 agreement to restore the transitional government reported being tortured or experiencing inhumane treatment while in detention. An advisor to former prime minister Hamdok, Faisal Saleh, reported he was held in solitary confinement in a military prison.

In 2019, Prime Minister Hamdok announced the creation of an independent committee to investigate the June 3 Massacre of 2019; this committee was dissolved following the coup.

Despite the Juba Peace Agreement, civilians continue to be killed and tens of thousands of people were displaced by violence in several parts of the country throughout 2021. Controversies about the disposal of the bodies of victims of ethnic violence were pressing political issues, as mass graves were discovered in Central Darfur in July, following the discovery of other mass graves in Khartoum in 2020. Hundreds of decomposed bodies were found in morgues in April 2021; some believe they are the bodies of people who disappeared during the December Revolution of 2018. In response, the National Commission for Human Rights and the public prosecutor's office both formed investigative committees.

The violence in Darfur and neighboring states continued in 2022 with hundreds dying. The fighting is caused by unresolved land ownership issues but also the increasing militarization of tribal militias.

F4 0-4 pts

Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population?

0 / 4

The 2019 interim constitution commits the transitional government to upholding the human rights of all citizens without discrimination and ensuring their equal treatment under the law. The charter also calls for accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of human rights.

Despite guarantees of equal treatment in the interim constitution and some legal improvements adopted as part of the July 2020 reforms, women continue to face disadvantages in many areas of the law, and perpetrators of widespread crimes against women—including during armed conflicts—have generally enjoyed impunity. The transitional government in April 2021 ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women but failed to endorse provisions recognizing equality in marriage, divorce, and parenting. Women are also still targeted unduly by marriage laws. In June 2022, a court sentenced a woman to death by stoning for committing adultery. (The sentence was overturned in November on procedural grounds; in December she was retried and sentenced to prison.)

Same-sex relations are illegal in Sudan, though 2020 reforms eliminated flogging and execution as potential punishments under an antisodomy law that is used to target LGBT+ people. Discrimination against LGBT+ people remains common. In 2022, the Sudanese government continued to welcome refugees; the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that the country hosted more than 1.1 million refugees as of December 2022.

G Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

G1 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy freedom of movement, including the ability to change their place of residence, employment, or education?

1 / 4

The 2019 interim constitution affirms freedom of movement and the right to travel—including overseas—for all citizens, but these rights are still impeded in practice by state security forces and other armed groups across the country, including those engaged in clashes between ethnic communities. Most of the more than 3.7 million IDPs in Sudan (as of July 2022) were concentrated in the long-standing conflict areas of Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile States.

In 2020, the transitional government abolished the need for exit permits, as well as a rule that had required women to obtain permission from a male guardian to travel abroad with children.

In 2022, the government began to limit the movement of people in some of the states affected by intercommunal conflicts. Several reports indicate that the decision has mostly affected already vulnerable and marginalized communities.

G2 0-4 pts

Are individuals able to exercise the right to own property and establish private businesses without undue interference from state or nonstate actors?

1 / 4

Weak land rights have been a chronic driver of conflict in Sudan. In a succession of opaque deals, al-Bashir's regime leased large parcels of arable land to foreign countries for export crop production. In some cases, local populations were forced from their land or had their water supplies depleted.

The 2019 interim constitution guarantees the right to own property and protects citizens from expropriation by the state without compensation. The government has stated its intention to address land-related grievances, but property seizures by security forces and communal conflicts over land rights continue to be reported.

Women are denied equal rights to property and inheritance under laws based on Sharia (Islamic law) and through discriminatory customary practices.

G3 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance?

1 / 4

Although the transitional government ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in April 2021, it failed to endorse provisions recognizing equality in marriage, divorce, and parenting, which Sharia-based laws deny women. Among other restrictions, a Muslim woman cannot marry a non-Muslim man.

In 2019, the transitional government repealed the Public Order Act, which had been used in part to punish women for dress or behavior deemed indecent. However, the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa, an Indigenous African women's rights advocacy group, reported in September 2021 that women continued to be punished for "morality transgressions."

Sexual violence against women remains a major problem. A UN report released in August 2021 claimed there were high numbers of incidents of domestic and sexual violence in households; family sexual violence against women, in informal jobs, displaced and refugee women outside of camps, children in Quranic schools, and people with disabilities; forced, arranged, and child marriages; female genital mutilation (FGM); and restricted access to financial resources and educational opportunities. In 2020, the transitional government criminalized FGM.

G4 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation?

0 / 4

Bleak economic conditions, mass unemployment, and high prices for basic goods were among the root causes of the revolution that helped topple al-Bashir's regime in 2019. Prime Minister Hamdok's government voiced a commitment to reversing these trends. In 2020, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a 12-month program to support the government in its efforts to eliminate large fuel subsidies, increase spending for health and social programs, increase its tax

base, reduce corruption, and improve the business environment. Though the country officially met the requirements to receive debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) in June 2021, international financial institutions paused assistance to the Sudanese government after the October 2021 coup, including \$500 million from the World Bank and \$150 million from the IMF.

The transitional government took early steps to clamp down on hazardous practices and working conditions in the gold-mining sector. Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and IDPs remain especially vulnerable to exploitation, including by criminal networks engaged in human trafficking. Some armed groups in the country have allegedly recruited children as fighters. In August 2021, the Sudanese government launched the 2021–23 National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking.