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World Report 2025 - Sudan

Conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) continued with the warring parties, in particular the RSF, committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other violations of international humanitarian law.

The conflict has provoked one of the world's biggest humanitarian catastrophes, with famine confirmed in the largest displacement camp in Darfur in August and looming in other regions. Sudan reached the world's highest level of internal displacement, [over 10.8 million people](#) as of September, including 8.1 million displaced since 2023. As of September, [over 25 million people faced acute food insecurity](#), yet [only](#) about half of the humanitarian response plan was funded. More than 17 million [children](#) are out of school. People with disabilities faced additional challenges, given the limited humanitarian response.

The conflict spread to North Darfur and to Sudan's southeastern states, with fighting persisting in Khartoum, Bahri, and Omdurman. From April, the RSF conducted large-scale attacks in and around El Fasher, North Darfur. In June, the RSF also took over [Sinja](#), Sinnar state. From late September the SAF and allies launched offensives in Khartoum and Darfur.

The RSF and allies committed widespread unlawful killings, including mass executions, sexual violence, targeted civilian property, and repeatedly used heavy explosive weapons in densely populated areas. The SAF and allied forces indiscriminately bombed populated areas and deliberately destroyed civilian infrastructure, committed acts of sexual violence and summary executions, torture of detainees, and mutilated bodies.

Both parties willfully obstructed aid. The country's health system has been decimated, with repeated attacks and incursions into hospitals as well as ongoing occupations of healthcare.

Both parties have violently attacked, harassed, and unlawfully detained local volunteers. These violations and crimes occurred in a context of impunity given the parties' ongoing failure to hold their forces accountable.

The [United States](#) and [European Union](#) imposed sanctions against entities fueling the conflict and individuals responsible for abuses. The [United Kingdom](#) sanctioned six entities but no individuals. The United Nations and African Union's respective security councils passed resolutions calling for civilian protection plans; at time of writing, neither had resulted in concrete steps to deploy a protection force. The International Criminal Court (ICC) investigations in Darfur continued. The UN [Independent International Fact-Finding Mission \(IFFM\) for the Sudan](#) released its first [report](#) in September, and had its [mandate extended by the UN Human Rights Council](#) in October.

Conflict and Abuses in Khartoum

The capital, Khartoum, remained an [epicenter of fighting](#). Both the RSF and SAF carried out attacks using explosive weapons in populated areas. According to Armed Conflict Location and Event Data ([ACLED](#)), the international data gathering organization, 110 artillery fire incidents were recorded in August alone.

The Sudan Doctors Union [said](#) an airstrike on a market in an RSF-controlled area south of the capital left at least 46 dead on September 10; the SAF and the RSF exchanged blame on the incident. In SAF-controlled parts of Omdurman, shelling, [reportedly](#) by the RSF, impacted two healthcare facilities in [June](#) and [August](#), killing at least three people. Another [reported](#) RSF shelling on September 23 hit a market in Omdurman, killing at least 15 civilians according to SAF aligned health officials.

Human Rights Watch [verified](#) two videos posted on pro-SAF accounts in January and March showing drones attacking unarmed people in civilian clothes in Bahri, then under RSF's control; the two incidents killed at least one, possibly two people, and injured four or five others.

Both warring parties have deliberately [targeted](#) local responders through intimidation, [unlawful detentions](#), violent attacks, and other abuses. Dozens of local responders [were killed](#). The RSF [have](#) in several instances sexually assaulted local responders.

Conflict and Abuses in Darfur

From April, North Darfur experienced intense bouts of fighting. The RSF and allied militias first attacked villages near El Fasher, the state capital. At least 43 villages were [burned](#) by June. They then imposed a siege on areas under their control around El Fasher, still in place at time of writing, contributing to a catastrophic humanitarian situation.

The fighting pitting the RSF and allied militias, against the SAF and joint forces from Darfuri armed groups, has killed hundreds and forced tens of thousands of civilians to flee. The parties have engaged in [heavy fighting](#) in and around the Abu Shouk internally displaced people's camp in northwestern El Fasher. On June 8, at least one mortar projectile and two other explosive weapons hit a volunteer-run emergency clinic injuring four or five people inside, including a child.

Thousands of houses have been burnt in the city. Following heavy fighting on May 22, houses southwest of Abu Shouk camp were [burned](#), apparently by the RSF. Human Rights Watch was able to geolocate videos of RSF forces by the blaze in residential areas.

The warring parties have repeatedly shelled, [bombed](#) and in the case of the RSF, targeted, healthcare facilities.

On June 8, the RSF attacked MSF-supported South Hospital, a key emergency care health facility, forcing its closure, an incident which amounts to a war crime. The forces also [looted](#) medical supplies and equipment. The hospital was [hit](#) at least four times by explosive weapons from May 25 to June 3 alone, killing a total of 2 patients and injuring 14.

In May, the AU Peace and Security Council requested that the [High-Level Panel on the Resolution of the Conflict in Sudan](#) with the new [AU special envoy for the prevention of genocide](#) develop a civilian protection strategy.

In June, the UN Security Council [tasked](#) the UN Secretary-General with providing options on civilian protection, as international and Sudanese groups increasingly called for a physical protection force in Sudan.

The SAF [reportedly](#) carried out airstrikes in multiple RSF controlled territories in Darfur, leaving civilian casualties.

Conflict and Abuses in Other Parts of Sudan

The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) killed scores of civilians, and injured, raped, and abducted many others in waves of attacks in Habila and Fayu, two towns in Sudan's South Kordofan state, between December 2023 to March 2024. Satellite imagery shows signs of looting and burning in Habila and Fayu, and apparently deliberate fire damage in four other villages. Both towns appear to have since been abandoned. These atrocities, which mostly targeted ethnic Nuba residents, amount to war crimes. Tens of thousands of people fled their homes as a result.

Willful Obstruction of Humanitarian Assistance, Attacks on Aid

The warring parties have willfully obstructed aid movement in violation of international humanitarian law. International humanitarian presence in the conflict-affected areas remained minimal. UN experts [accused](#) both forces in June of using starvation as a weapon of war.

Authorities affiliated with SAF including its military intelligence [in particular](#), have imposed a multitude of arbitrary bureaucratic restrictions that have hampered the work of humanitarian organizations and their ability to reach those in need. In September, the Sudan NGO forum [said](#) that between August and September, “nearly 7 million people could not access humanitarian assistance due to access constraints, including arbitrary denials.” The UN conducted its first mission into Greater Khartoum, reaching Omdurman which was partially taken over by SAF in early 2024, in [March](#).

The SAF-aligned authorities imposed a de facto [blockade](#) on medical supplies in RSF-controlled areas of Khartoum. The RSF’s ongoing presence and incursion into hospitals and widespread looting of aid, prevented civilians from accessing aid. MSF suspended its activities in the Turkish Hospital in Khartoum following repeated violent incidents at the hospital and ongoing obstruction.

Both parties have prevented aid from reaching civilians in Darfur.

On August 1, the Famine Review Committee [determined](#) that famine was happening in North Darfur’s Zamzam camp, which hosts an estimated 400,000 displaced people including many fleeing from El Fasher.

In July, MSF [condemned](#) the blockage of its trucks, two by the RSF, in separate locations in Darfur. In August, following US-led talks in Geneva, the SAF aligned authorities [agreed](#) to open a key border crossing with Chad for three months. Since February, they had denied [authorization](#) to the UN to use the crossing. In September, the Security Council [reiterated](#) calls for unfettered access to North Darfur amid ongoing aid blockage by both SAF and RSF.

Conflict-Related Sexual Violence

Sexual violence primarily against women and girls remained widespread.

The RSF subjected women and girls in areas under their control in Khartoum, Bahri, and Omdurman to widespread sexual violence, and to forced and child marriages. Sexual violence by SAF was reported as they took over parts of Omdurman in early 2024.

The Strategic Initiative for Women in Horn of Africa (SIHA), a regional women rights group, [reported](#) that the RSF employed sexual violence as an “instrument of war” in Al Gezira state in central Sudan following the RSF takeover of the state in December 2023. The UN FFM [reported](#) similar trends of rape and gang rape by the RSF in Nyala and Zalingei, capital of South Darfur.

Survivors’ access to urgently needed post-rape care and support has been severely hampered by warring parties’ attacks on health care and on local responders, as well as the ongoing aid obstruction.

Torture, Ill-Treatment and Other Grave Abuses Against Detainees

Both the SAF and the RSF have mistreated detainees in a context of widespread unlawful detention and [enforced disappearances](#) of hundreds. The UN FFM for the Sudan [said](#) both warring parties are

committing widespread arbitrary detention, using unofficial locations as detention sites. Human Rights Watch [analyzed](#) videos posted between August 2023 and July 2024 showing the RSF and the SAF, and allied forces, executing prisoners, torturing, and ill-treating them. In the case of the SAF, the videos also showed the forces mutilating bodies.

Refugees and Migrants

By September 2024, the conflict in Sudan had displaced [over 10.5 million people](#). Over [2 million](#), both Sudanese and others, sought refuge in neighboring countries. The spread of the fighting in central and eastern states placed hundreds of thousands of refugees at risk. Ethiopian refugees were detained during [mass arrests](#) by SAF-aligned authorities in Gedaref state. [Eritreans fleeing repression](#) and [indefinite forced conscription](#) at home [continued](#) to arrive at the camps in Kassala state. The RSF also raped refugee women and girls in Khartoum.

Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers experienced threats, abuses, forced returns, and unsustainable living conditions in multiple receiving countries. Egypt unlawfully expelled an estimated 800 Sudanese without access to asylum between January and March 2024, according to [Amnesty International](#). In Ethiopia's conflict-affected Amhara region, Sudanese refugees hosted in camps there faced violent attacks by government forces and non-state armed actors and insufficient protection from Ethiopian authorities.

In Chad, hosting over 600,000 Sudanese refugees arriving as the conflict unfolded, MSF repeatedly raised concerns around limited funding and [said](#) uncertainties about future funding was leading to food cuts for refugees.

Countries outside Africa offered scant avenues to protection, [resettling](#) only around 2,200 Sudanese refugees between January and August 2024. .

Accountability

Despite ongoing international investigations, impunity remained the norm as warring parties failed to credibly investigate or prosecute their forces.

The UN FFM [identified](#) this impunity as among the key root causes of decades of rights abuses and violations, and made recommendations to advance accountability, including through the expansion of ICC's jurisdiction to cover all of Sudan and urgent consideration of the establishment of a separate international judicial mechanism. The UN FFM's own mandate to support and make recommendations for advancing accountability for grave abuses was [extended](#).