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COI QUERY RESPONSE - SUDAN

Political developments and security situation in Sudan between 1 September 2020 – 31 August 2021

1. Overview of major political developments during the reference period

Sudan's former president Omar al-Bashir was ousted in a 'military coup in April 2019 following a pro-democracy protest movement that began in late 2018', and a Transitional Military Council (TMC) assumed power after al-Bashir's removal. In August 2019, negotiations between the TMC and the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC), an 'opposition alliance', resulted in the Constitutional Declaration¹, a power-sharing agreement, whereby an 11-member Transitional Sovereignty Council (TSC) was formed. The TSC, described as a 'hybrid civilian-military Government' was 'to govern Sudan until elections could be held after a 39-month interim period, with the military and the FFC each naming five members and agreeing on the final member, a civilian'. Meanwhile, Abdulla Hamdok was named as Prime Minister of the transitional Government.²

In August 2020, an agreement was reached between the Government and a significant number of Sudanese armed groups, which was formalized in Juba on 3 October 2020.³ The Juba Peace Agreement, which was incorporated 'as an integral part'⁴ into the Constitutional Declaration of August 2019, had the effect of 'restarting the 39-month transition period prior to national elections'⁵, meaning that elections are now expected to be held in early 2024. Under the agreement, the armed groups were allocated three seats on the TSC, as well as 25 % of ministerial posts in the cabinet.⁶

The Juba Peace Agreement was described as a 'collection of accords setting out principles covering power and wealth sharing, land reform, transitional justice, security arrangements and the return of displaced persons'. Some of its provisions envisage, *inter alia*, that rebel fighters will be 'absorbed into security agencies [...] through a disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) program that will help them find civilian livelihoods', while also 'suggesting that Sudan adopt a federal system of governance', and aiming to 'restore Darfur's former status as a single region, improving national representation for Darfuri tribes [...] while also granting greater autonomy to the Two Areas'.⁷

A September 2020 UN report covering developments in the Sudan between 3 June-8 September

¹ Sudan, Draft Constitutional Charter for the 2019 Transitional Period, 4 August 2019, [url](#)

² Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2021, 3 March 2021, [url](#); International Crisis Group, The Rebels Come to Khartoum: How to Implement Sudan's New Peace Agreement, 23 February 2021, [url](#)

³ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 December 2020, [url](#), paras. 3, 4

⁴ UNSC, Report on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur pursuant to Security Council resolution 2525 (2020), 1 December 2020, [url](#), Annex, para. 3

⁵ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2021, 3 March 2021, [url](#);

⁶ International Crisis Group, The Rebels Come to Khartoum: How to Implement Sudan's New Peace Agreement, 23 February 2021, [url](#); Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2021, 3 March 2021, [url](#); UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 December 2020, [url](#), para. 3

⁷ International Crisis Group, The Rebels Come to Khartoum: How to Implement Sudan's New Peace Agreement, 23 February 2021, [url](#)

2020, highlighted that the Government ‘continued to [...] make progress in the peace process’.⁸ A statement by Human Rights Watch, issued on 9 September 2020, also highlighted some of the improvements that had taken place in Sudan ‘in the last 20 months’, referring to August 2019 agreement, to the creation of the TSC and to the appointment of the Government led by Hamdok.⁹ However, the 300-seat Transitional Legislative Council (TLC) that was created by the 2019 constitutional document, and whose composition was revised in October 2020 (with ‘75 seats to the signatory armed groups, 60 to the military, and 165 to the FFC’), had yet to be functional, as its members had not been selected by the end of 2020.¹⁰ A subsequent May 2021 UN report, referring to the period 16 February-1 May 2021, highlighted the ‘limited progress in advancing key elements of the political transition’,¹¹ while a 1 September 2021 UN report focusing on the period 2 May-20 August 2021, stated that by the end of the reporting period, the TLC had not yet been established.¹²

Two important groups, the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid faction (SLA/AW), and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM/N) Abdelaziz Al-Hilu faction, did not participate in the Agreement. Furthermore, the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan also quoted the complaints of the Fur community in Darfur, of IDPs and of ‘some Arab communities’, regarding their lack of representation in the negotiations leading to the Juba Agreement.¹³

Referring to SLA/AW, media reports stated that SLA/AW’s refusal to participate was based on the fact that the power-sharing deal did not ‘address the root causes’¹⁴ of the Darfur conflict.¹⁵

A January 2021 report of the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan also noted that initially ‘Abdul Wahid tried to discredit and undermine’ the Juba Peace Agreement ‘by reaching out to leaders of the Fur community and internally displaced persons organizations to convince them to reject it [...] including by intimidation and attacks’.¹⁶ Although SLA/AW did not sign the agreement, it was announced that the movement had its own ‘initiative aimed at the achievement of comprehensive peace in the Sudan’, to be made public at a later stage.¹⁷ On 16 November 2020, local media reported that the SLA/AW was expected to join negotiations with the Sudanese Government in South Sudan capital Juba in the days that followed.¹⁸ More recent negotiations between Abdul Wahid and the Government’s ‘chief mediator of the Darfur conflict’ took place in Paris on 8 July 2021, however no agreement was reached, except the commitment to ‘continue consultations’.¹⁹

With regards to the SPLM/N Al-Hilu, on 3 September 2020, the Sudan Government and the armed

⁸ UNSC, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 17 September 2020, [url](#), para. 2

⁹ Human Rights Watch, The Human Rights Council should support systemic human rights reforms in Sudan, 9 December 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2021, 3 March 2021, [url](#)

¹¹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 2

¹² UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 September 2021, [url](#), para. 4

¹³ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), paras. 26, 27

¹⁴ Sudan Tribune, SLM-Nur supporters reject Juba agreement for peace in Sudan, 6 September 2020, [url](#)

¹⁵ Asharq Al-Awsat, Abdul Wahid al Nur to Asharq Al-Awsat: Juba Agreement Deepens Crisis, 4 October 2020, [url](#);

Sudan Tribune, SLM-Nur supporters reject Juba agreement for peace in Sudan, 6 September 2020, [url](#)

¹⁶ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 24

¹⁷ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 5

¹⁸ Radio Dabanga, Holdout Darfur rebel movement willing to negotiate peace, 16 November 2020, [url](#)

¹⁹ Radio Dabanga, Paris meeting: Abdel Wahid steps cautiously toward negotiating table, 12 July 2021, [url](#)

group separately agreed on ‘maintaining the cessation of hostilities’²⁰ during the peace process.²¹ On 6 October 2020, local media quoted the Sudanese chief mediator Tut Gatluak stating that the Government would resume peace talks with SPLM/N Al-Hilu later during that month.²² Subsequently, it was reported that between 29 October-1 November 2020, representatives of the transitional Government and SPLM/N Al-Hilu participated in a workshop in Juba, discussing ‘outstanding issues pertinent to the negotiations, such as the issue of religion and the State, with a view to finalizing the joint agreement on principles signed on 3 September [2020] and allowing formal negotiations to begin’.²³ On 28 March 2021, the Chairperson of the TSC and the commander of the SPLM/N Al-Hilu ‘signed a declaration of principles affirming the parties’ commitment to engage in negotiations in Juba’, while acknowledging that a permanent ceasefire would follow only after broader security arrangements are agreed upon as part of a comprehensive settlement’.²⁴ On 15 June 2021, Sudanese authorities stated that they had reached an agreement with SPLM/N Al-Hilu ‘on more than three-quarters of a framework peace deal’.²⁵ On 29 July 2021, SPLM/N Al-Hilu and SLA/AW, ‘announced the signing of a political declaration in Kauda, South Kordofan’. The announcement acknowledged that the ‘two movements agreed on the need for the unity of the Sudanese State based on secularism, democracy, liberalism, equal decentralized citizenship and balanced development’, while upholding ‘the right of all Sudanese people to determine their fate and their administrative and political future’.²⁶

On 12 November 2020, the Chair of the TSC ‘granted a general amnesty to all people who fought in Sudan’s armed conflicts, in line with the Juba Peace Agreement’, but excluding those for whom the International Criminal Court had already issued arrest warrants, or ‘who were wanted for genocide and crimes against humanity, or for war crimes falling under the jurisdiction of the Special Court for Crimes Committed in Darfur’ established by the Peace Agreement.²⁷ As such, ‘Minni Minawi and Gibril Ibrahim of JEM were recipients of the amnesty proclamations’, as were some of the members of the Transitional Council. According to the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan, it was not clear if Abdul Wahid ‘who did not participate in the peace talks, will benefit from the amnesty’. The Panel of Experts however, reported that many civilians in Darfur, including IDPs, ‘were adamant that they needed redress and justice in order to have closure and rebuild their lives, and that perpetrators should be brought to justice for reconciliation to happen’.²⁸

Another development during the reference period was the withdrawal of the United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) from Darfur. On 9 December 2020, Amnesty International highlighted that as the mandate of UNAMID was soon coming to an end, its successor, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) was at that time ‘still not yet staffed or operationalized’, and expressed concern about ‘future civilian protection in Darfur, particularly given the national security forces’ failure to step up and protect civilians from attacks in

²⁰ UNSC, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 17 September 2020, [url](#), para. 9;

²¹ UNSC, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 17 September 2020, [url](#), paras. 8-9; AJ, Sudan signs peace deal with rebel groups from Darfur, 31 August 2020, [url](#)

²² Sudan Tribune, Sudan, SPLM/N Al-Hilu to resume peace talks in October, 5 October 2020, [url](#)

²³ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 December 2020, [url](#), para. 12

²⁴ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 5

²⁵ Reuters, Sudan says progress made in peace talks with rebel leader, 15 June 2021, [url](#)

²⁶ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 September 2021, [url](#), para. 5

²⁷ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 December 2020, [url](#), para. 6

²⁸ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 112

recent months', pointing out that at least '70 people, including farmers and the internally displaced people (IDPs), were killed by members of armed groups between July and September 2020' in three Darfur states.²⁹

On 22 December 2020, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) formally decided to close down UNAMID, and to replace it with UNITAMS. According to the UNSC, the withdrawal of UNAMID personnel was expected to begin on 1 January 2021, and 'all uniformed and civilian UNAMID personnel' were to be withdrawn by 30 June 2021.³⁰

On 6 January 2021, Human Rights Watch argued that the withdrawal of UNAMID from Darfur was 'leaving the local population vulnerable to continuing attacks', and noted the December 2020 protests of some of the IDPs in South Darfur against the planned withdrawal.³¹ Human Rights Watch subsequently stated, following the 16 January 2021 violence in West Darfur, that the UNSC had 'ended UNAMID's mandate without ensuring that civilians had reliable protection', as UNITAMS had 'no mandate to provide physical protection' and was 'still not fully operational' at that time. Human Rights Watch also highlighted that 'Sudanese Government forces' in charge of community protection had 'problematic rights records, notably in Darfur', and had been 'largely absent' on the ground during the violence, 'allowing Arab militias to attack unchecked'.³² A March 2021 UN report stated that the transitional Government faced challenges in implementing 'institutional and security sector reforms, including the establishment of a force for the protection of civilians in Darfur', pointing out the 'increased tensions and violence in many parts of the Sudan, including in the Darfur region', as well as the episodes of intercommunal violence, which continued to 'threaten the lives of civilians, with a rise in the number of incidents in January 2021 leading to the death or injury of hundreds of civilians, including a humanitarian worker.'³³

On 4 February 2021, the TSC increased its membership to 14 members by adding three signatories of the Juba Peace Agreement: the 'Chair of the Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) and head of the SLA/TC faction, El Hadi Idris; head of the SPLM/N Malik Agar faction, Malik Agar; and leader of the Sudan Liberation Force Alliance, Al-Taher Abu Bakr Hagar'.³⁴

On 4 March 2021, the Chairperson of the TSC, Fattah al-Burhan, 'issued a constitutional decree outlining the broad parameters of a federal system of Government', conforming with the Constitutional Declaration 'which calls for the establishment of a federal Government in the Sudan, and with elements of the Juba Peace Agreement'.³⁵

On 21 June 2021, Human Rights Watch expressed concern at the announcement by Sudan's transitional Government earlier that month, 'to create a new joint security force tasked with ensuring the rule of law and fighting security threats across the country'. According to Human Rights Watch, the envisaged security force had 'no legal basis neither under Sudan's constitutional charter nor the October 2020 Juba Peace Agreement'. Moreover, the force, which would 'include Sudan's Armed Forces (SAF), the police, the General Intelligence Service (GIS), and several rebel groups that

²⁹ AI, Sudan: UN must extend Darfur peacekeepers mandate by at least six months, 9 December 2020, [url](#)

³⁰ UNSC, Resolution 2559 (2020) / adopted by the Security Council on 22 December 2020, 22 December 2020, [url](#), paras. 1, 2, 8

³¹ Human Rights Watch, The UN cannot abandon Darfuris amid rising violence, 6 January 2021, [url](#)

³² Human Rights Watch, Deadly Darfur Attack Just Days After Last Peacekeepers Leave, 22 January 2020, [url](#)

³³ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 13

³⁴ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 3

³⁵ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 4; Bloomberg, Sudan Moves to Give More Authority to Regional Governments, 4 March 2021, [url](#)

signed a peace agreement' was 'riddled with problems', while some of the 'constituent forces have poor rights records'.³⁶

With regards to international developments affecting Sudan, on 14 December 2020, the United States of America removed Sudan's designation as a State sponsor of terrorism.³⁷ Meanwhile, a UN report underlined that tensions had 'escalated between the Sudan and Ethiopia concerning the Fashaqah area on their border', as on 15 December 2020, 'militias from Ethiopia allegedly killed three Sudanese soldiers and one officer', while on 12 January 2021, 'Sudan accused militias from Ethiopia of killing five women and one child'. On 13 January 2021, following a statement by Sudan that 'its airspace had been breached [...] by an Ethiopian military aircraft', a no-fly zone was declared over the area.³⁸ A subsequent May 2021 UN report pointed out that on 28 February 2021, SAF troops 'clashed with Ethiopian armed groups in the Ibra and Taldi areas of Fashaqah, Gedaref state', while 'on 3 and 7 March [2021], similar clashes occurred in the Barakat area of Fashaqah, and thereafter on 29 March [2021] close to the Gedaref-Sennar border'.³⁹ On 20 June 2021, the two countries 'agreed to reopen their border crossing, which had been closed for several months'.⁴⁰

Sudan continues to host Ethiopian refugees, who fled due to fighting that began on 4 November 2020 in Ethiopia's Tigray region, between the Ethiopian federal army and troops of the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF). According to data published by UNHCR, some 55 493 Ethiopian refugees had arrived in Sudan, as of 31 July 2021.⁴¹

2. Overview of the Darfur region

Referring to the period 1 September-23 November 2020, a December 2020 UN report highlighted the existing 'pockets of violence' in Darfur, and described the 'overall security situation' in the Darfur region as 'marked by persistent intercommunal conflict in West, South and Central Darfur, intermittent clashes in the Jebel Marra area between SLA/AW and forces of the Government, and infighting between SLA/AW factions'. The same source highlighted 'the civil unrest caused by the deteriorating economic situation' as well as the 'limited capacity of local authorities to protect' civilians, including IDPs and farmers, from attacks.⁴² According to the report, between 1 September-23 November 2020, some '21 incidents of armed conflict were recorded that resulted in 23 fatalities', as SLA/AW 'attacked the base of the Sudanese Armed Forces in Boulay, south of Sortony, the observation post of the Sudanese Armed Forces on Arafat hill, south of Golo, and Boldong base near Nertiti'.⁴³ At the same time, fighting between SLA/AW factions continued, as 'the Mubarak Aldouk and Saleh Borsa factions' clashed 'between 1 and 6 September [2020] in Hussein, Flow, Komy and other villages near Golo, resulting in one civilian fatality', while on 30 September 2020 and 12 October 2020 fighting between the same factions took place 'in Dwo and surrounding villages in East

³⁶ Human Rights Watch, Sudan's Planned Joint Force Threatens Rights-Abiding Transition, 21 June 2021, [url](#)

³⁷ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 8; DW, US removes Sudan from terror sponsors list, 14 December 2020, [url](#)

³⁸ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 7

³⁹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 15

⁴⁰ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 September 2021, [url](#), para. 9

⁴¹ UNHCR, Ethiopian Emergency Situation Update, 31 July 2021, [url](#)

⁴² UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 December 2020, [url](#), Annex, para. 5

⁴³ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 December 2020, [url](#), Annex, para. 6

Jebel Marra', resulting in the death of seven civilians.⁴⁴

On 6 September 2020, hundreds of SLA/AW supporters demonstrated in Zalingei, Central Darfur against the Juba Peace Agreement.⁴⁵ Similarly, on 1 September 2020, Abdul Wahid of the SLA/AW armed group spoke 'by audio link to over 1 500 supporters' gathered at Humaira camp in Kass, South Darfur, rejecting the Juba Peace Agreement while announcing 'his own peace initiative'. Later, on 17 September 2020, 'a proposal attributed to Abdul Wahid' was made public, calling for 'an internal dialogue on the peace process to allow Darfuris' and IDPs to 'voice their opinions on resolving longstanding grievances and root causes of the conflict'. According to the source, IDPs in Kass and Menawashei 'also expressed their rejection of the Agreement to UNAMID'.⁴⁶

According to the January 2021 report of the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan, land ownership 'remained the main issue fuelling intercommunal violence', as highlighted by 'the numerous attacks throughout Darfur targeting IDPs and voluntary returnees engaged in seasonal farming and other livelihood activities'.⁴⁷ The same source addressed the additional risks related to the Juba Peace Agreement that could affect the Darfur region. The UN Panel of Experts noted the 'large-scale enrolment' of fighters in Darfuri armed groups, 'as many unemployed, destitute Darfurians were attracted by the prospect of obtaining a job in the security forces or benefits under the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes to be created under the Agreement'. Nevertheless, the risk that adequate funding will not be found to finance the new forces could pose on stability in the region.⁴⁸ A threat related to the 'return of the movements to Darfur' was the desire of the returning fighters to protect 'their own ethnic communities'. According to the UN Panel of Experts, 'this alignment of armed groups with certain communities could pose a threat to the local security environment'.⁴⁹

Referring to the situation of the SLA/AW, the UN Panel of Experts on Sudan stated that the SLA/AW had benefited from the 'exploitation of the Torroye gold mine in south-eastern Jebel Marra', and had recruited new fighters. However, according to the same source, the group has been 'undermined by severe internal fighting', referring to clashes that began since 20 May 2020 between 'forces loyal to General Commander Abdelgadir Abdelrahman Ibrahim, known as "Gaddura" [...] and rival commander Mubarak Aldouk (former SLA/AW head of operations)'. Moreover, the source stated that, from 'early September' 2020, fighting has taken place 'between Gaddura's forces and a commander allied with Aldouk, Zanon Abdulshafi (commander of the movement's Sultan Terab Brigade), in the area between Feina and Deribat (eastern Jebel Marra)'.⁵⁰ At the same time, fighting between SLA/AW and Government forces had decreased, reportedly 'as a result of the meeting between Abdul Wahid and Prime Minister Hamdok in Paris on 29 September 2019, as well as informal arrangements between Abdul Wahid and the Rapid Support Forces'.⁵¹

⁴⁴ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 December 2020, [url](#), Annex, para. 7

⁴⁵ Asharq Al-Awsat, Abdul Wahid al Nur to Asharq Al-Awsat: Juba Agreement Deepens Crisis, 4 October 2020, [url](#)
Sudan Tribune, SLM-Nur supporters reject Juba agreement for peace in Sudan, 6 September 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁶ UNSC, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 13 November 2020, [url](#), para. 7

⁴⁷ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 106

⁴⁸ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 32

⁴⁹ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 33

⁵⁰ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), paras. 35,36

⁵¹ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 40

Additional issues that were flagged by the UN Panel of Experts on Sudan included disputes over 'many sectors of the borders' between Sudan and South Sudan, including in South Darfur and East Darfur. Moreover, activities such as 'illegal mining and smuggling' in the same border regions, had the potential to 'put bilateral relations at risk in future, affecting some areas of Darfur'.⁵² The same source also addressed the relations between Sudan and Chad, which 'remained stable and, overall, positive', but highlighted 'several cross-border incidents in the Darfur-Chad border areas, including clashes between Chadian and Sudanese communities, which might pose a threat to future peacebuilding in Darfur'.⁵³

A March 2021 UN report focusing on the period 24 November 2020-15 February 2021, described the security situation in that period as 'characterized by major armed clashes in some areas of Darfur'. The report highlighted the fighting between SLA/AW factions in the Jebel Marra region, 'which had resulted in the deaths of several fighters and civilians in the area'. According to the source, fighting took place between two parties, whose leaders 'Saleh Borsa and Mubarak Aldouk, reportedly have divergent positions on the peace process. The former is opposed to the peace process and remains a proponent of the mainstream SLA/AW position on negotiations, while the latter supports the peace process'. In the same report, the UN stated that the 'infighting' had displaced more than '13 000 people across 30 villages in the Golo locality', of which four villages were allegedly 'completely destroyed', while civilians were 'apprehended, beaten or killed on suspicion of belonging to the other faction'.⁵⁴

On 23 December 2020, the SAF reportedly 'withdrew from Sabanga Base in Golo town'. While the reasons for this action were not clear at that time, the UN Protection Cluster stated that, 'given the strategic importance of the area', it could have been viewed as a 'confidence building measure and attributed to possible agreement' between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the SLA/AW.⁵⁵ However, on 24 and 31 January 2021, the SAF attacked SLA/AW positions at Sabanga, in the Jebel Marra area, leading to 14 fatalities and some 22 000 people being displaced.⁵⁶

On 29 April 2021, Minni Minawi was appointed as Governor of the Darfur region, as authorized by the Juba Peace Agreement, 'which granted the authority for this appointment to the Darfuri armed groups that participated in the peace process'.⁵⁷ On 3 May 2021, Central Darfur's Governor criticized Minni Minawi's appointment, stating that the decision should have been taken following consultation, while also expecting that the appointment 'would hamper efforts to reach a peace agreement' with SLA/AW.⁵⁸ On 8 May 2021, the Secretary-General of the National Umma Party (NUP) stated that Minni Minawi's appointment 'would create a power overlap between the region's governor and the governors of Darfur five states', and demanded 'clear laws to clarify matters of jurisdiction'.⁵⁹

More recently, a May 2021 UN report referring to the period 16 February-1 May 2021, noted that

⁵² UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 12

⁵³ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), paras. 15-16

⁵⁴ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 11

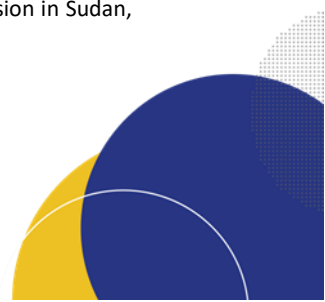
⁵⁵ Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Protection Situation Updates December 2020, 31 December 2020, [url](#), p.1

⁵⁶ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 11

⁵⁷ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 2

⁵⁸ Sudan Tribune, Central Darfur governor criticizes Minnawi's appointment, 4 May 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁹ Sudan Tribune, Sudan's DUP criticizes appointment of Darfur governor, 9 May 2021, [url](#)



‘no incidents of armed clashes between SLA/AW and Sudanese security forces’ had been recorded in the Darfur area during that period.⁶⁰

Impact on Civilians

According to the January 2021 report of the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan, during the reference period March-December 2020, ‘cases of rape, killings, intimidation, physical assaults and attacks on internally displaced persons, looting and arson were widespread’. With regards to perpetrators, the report attributed most of the incidents to ‘armed nomadic tribesmen, Government of the Sudan security forces – Sudanese Armed Forces, police and Rapid Support Forces – and militias’.⁶¹ The same source highlighted the ‘weakness of police, the only security force body with a presence in rural areas’, which ‘meant that perpetrators frequently acted with a total sense of impunity and disdain for law and order’.⁶²

The report of the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan also highlighted incidents of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), ‘including conflict-related sexual violence against women and girls’ which, however, ‘were not adequately investigated, if at all’. According to the source, ‘groups of victims and survivors have been attacked during intercommunal violence, while going to school and/or engaging in livelihood activities outside of internally displaced persons camps’, and pointed out that ‘alleged perpetrators included members of the security forces, armed men often from nomadic communities and occasionally members of SLA/AW’.⁶³ The UN Panel of Experts also quoted reports of ‘several occurrences’ in which rape was used as a method of punishing ‘local communities accused of siding with the opposite faction [...] including by targeting the wives of rival commanders’.⁶⁴

More specifically, a December 2020 UN report referring to the period 1 September-23 November 2020, stated, during September and October 2020, UNAMID had recorded ‘47 alleged human rights violations and abuses involving 169 victims’. According to the same source, between 1 September-23 November 2020, UNAMID recorded 21 cases of SGBV and ‘conflict-related sexual violence affecting 22 survivors’.⁶⁵

Subsequently, a 1 March 2021 UN report focusing on the period 24 November 2020-15 February 2021, stated that during the reporting period, ‘at least nine incidents of sexual and gender-based violence had been perpetrated in West Darfur, North Darfur and Central Darfur by members of the Sudanese Armed Forces or other armed actors’.⁶⁶

The UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan further addressed the hostilities between factions of the SLA/AW, which were ‘marred by various international humanitarian law and human rights abuse, including attacks on civilians, extortion, abduction and summary executions’.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 19

⁶¹ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 79

⁶² UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 80

⁶³ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 82

⁶⁴ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 95

⁶⁵ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 December 2020, [url](#), Annex, para. 8

⁶⁶ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 27

⁶⁷ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 93

Moreover, the internal SLA/AW conflict caused large-scale displacement, with the UN Panel of Experts quoting reports by UNAMID, whereby ‘fighting between Zanoun and Gaddura’s forces in September–November [2020] resulted in the displacement of tens of thousands of civilians of Eastern Jebel Marra to the villages of Jawa, Deribat and Suni’.⁶⁸ The same source highlighted incidents of ‘abduction by the various groups [...], usually targeting civilians having alleged links with a rival faction’.⁶⁹

A July 2021 report by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, referring to the period October 2020–June 2021, stated that ‘the volatile situation and tensions throughout Darfur [...] remain a source of concern’. The report identified as the root cause of conflict the ‘competition over access to water resources and pastoral land’, as well as the ‘proliferation of weapons’ as an aggravating factor, along with ‘decades of political manipulation and interference in local tribal affair’, which have ‘stoked tensions and exposed civilians to a significant risk of attacks, killings and sexual violence’. Addressing the termination of UNAMID’s mandate of December 2020, the report stated that it ‘deprived civilians of the physical protection of peacekeepers, led to continued delays in the operationalization of dedicated national joint security forces to civilian protection and added to prevailing impunity for human rights violations’.⁷⁰

With regards to violations against children, a November 2020 AU-UN report referring to the period June–October 2020 stated that ‘human rights violations against children in Darfur remain prevalent’, with the ‘majority of the violations’ taking place during ‘intercommunal violence or conflicts between nomads and farmers in rural areas’. The same source referred to the fighting in Jebel Marra between SLA/AW factions, which had ‘exacerbated violations against children, including rape, killing and maiming, and abduction, and the recruitment and use of child soldiers’. Moreover, the report highlighted that around ‘one third of the total violations against children were attributed to Government security forces, often in the context of military operations, attacks against civilian populations or excessive use of force against demonstrators’.⁷¹

A December 2020 UN report stated that, between 1 September–23 November 2020, ‘UNAMID verified 17 incidents of grave violations affecting 36 children’.⁷²

In March 2021, a UN report stated that between 24 November–31 December 2020, UNAMID and UNICEF had ‘received reports of mass recruitment of children in Kabkabiyah, North Darfur, and Nertiti, Central Darfur, by armed groups that are signatories to the Juba Agreement’, while pointing out that the Sudan Liberation Movement/Transitional Council armed group had recruited and used 10 boys in armed conflict. The same source also highlighted the rape of two girls during the same time period, and the ‘killing of three boys and the maiming of two boys, all by the Rapid Support Forces’.⁷³

At the same time, the July 2021 report by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights,

⁶⁸ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 96

⁶⁹ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), paras. 93, 94

⁷⁰ UNGA, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, 27 July 2021, [url](#), para. 6

⁷¹ UNSC, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union–United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 13 November 2020, [url](#), para. 29

⁷² UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 December 2020, [url](#), Annex, para. 8

⁷³ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 28

referring to the period October 2020-June 2021, highlighted 55 cases of grave violations against children, of which 52 'were verified involving State and non-state actors'. According to the report, the 'killing and maiming of children continued to be the most prevalent violation, with 53 cases reported, mostly in Darfur'.⁷⁴

Intercommunal violence

According to a November 2020 AU-UN report focusing on the period June-October 2020, 'UNAMID recorded 146 fatalities (111 in July alone) as a result of 31 clashes and disputes'. The fatalities figures were more than four times higher compared 'with the same period in 2019, which saw 31 fatalities as a result of 23 incidents (...)'.⁷⁵ Meanwhile, 'land-related conflicts, predominantly involving crop destruction by pastoralists' resulted in '32 fatalities from 134 incidents' between June-October 2020, 'compared with 49 fatalities from 171 incidents during the same period in 2019 (...)'. According to the source, the 'areas most affected by land-related incidents are Kutum, Sortony and Saraf Umrah in North Darfur, El Geneina, Masteri and Jebel Moon in West Darfur, Golo and Nertiti in Central Darfur, and Kass and Graidia in South Darfur'.⁷⁶

Addressing the causes of violence, the AU-UN report noted that 'while tensions between nomadic and farmer communities usually heighten during the farming season, from May to November [2020], the escalation of intercommunal violence in 2020 appears to be linked to the ongoing national transition process'. Protests by farmers and IDPs in Darfur demanding 'basic services, as well as the disarming of militias and armed nomads and protection from them, and the removal of herders from their lands', are no longer sporadic but 'sustained'. According to the report, in response, 'some of the protests came under attack by armed militias'.⁷⁷

In its report focusing on the period March-December 2020, the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan also pointed out that intercommunal relations had 'deteriorated sharply in several areas of Darfur during the reporting period'. The source argued that some communities had become 'much more assertive in trying to recover the traditional lands' that belonged to them, which led to 'several large-scale clashes and attacks on civilians, with a frequency, scale and number of casualties unseen in recent years'.⁷⁸ Indeed, land ownership remained the 'main issue fuelling intercommunal violence', as evidenced by the attacks on IDPs 'and voluntary returnees engaged in seasonal farming and other livelihood activities' in the Darfur region.⁷⁹

Referring to the period 1 September-23 November 2020, a December 2020 UN report stated that 15 intercommunal clashes had been recorded during that period, with 29 fatalities, while 'land-related conflicts also persisted, with 57 incidents and 14 fatalities'.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ UNGA, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, 27 July 2021, [url](#), para. 10

⁷⁵ UNSC, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 13 November 2020, [url](#), para. 13

⁷⁶ UNSC, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 13 November 2020, [url](#), paras. 13, 14

⁷⁷ UNSC, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 13 November 2020, [url](#), para. 16

⁷⁸ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 103

⁷⁹ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 106

⁸⁰ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 December 2020, [url](#), Annex, para. 8

A subsequent May 2021 UN report referring to the period 16 February-1 May 2021, confirmed that intercommunal clashes remained ‘a major source of insecurity in the Sudan, especially in the Darfur region, while criminality affected the local population and humanitarian actors’.⁸¹ According to the report, the intercommunal clashes that had occurred during that period in West, South and North Darfur ‘resulted in 170 fatalities and over 230 injuries’.⁸²

3. Overview of the security situation in the Darfur States

3.1. North Darfur

In October 2020, ‘widespread human rights violations and abuse’ against IDPs ‘and other civilians in Sortony and surrounding areas by Sudanese Armed Forces commander Al-Sadiq Foka’ were recorded by UNAMID, as quoted in a January 2021 report by the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan. The same source stated that, during the reference period March-December 2020, ‘cases of arbitrary arrest and detention, inhumane treatment amounting to torture, kidnap for ransom, expulsion of internally displaced persons, extortion and intimidation were highlighted. Most victims were suspected of affiliation with SLA/AW’.⁸³

On 24 January 2021, ‘inter-communal conflict between Fur and Arab tribes’ took place in East Jebel Marra and Tawila localities. According to IOM, fighting in ‘numerous Fur villages’ from East Jebel Marra resulted in people being displaced to North Darfur. The same source reports that, on 27 January 2021, ‘an armed attack was launched at a local water-source in Dobo Umda village in Tawila’, where some of the IDPs from East Jebel Marra were taking shelter, and who reportedly fled ‘to the nearby village of Katur’.⁸⁴

Between 8-10 February 2021, ‘violent protests, including riots, vandalism, arson and looting’ were reported in locations including in North Darfur, leading to a declaration of a state of emergency and to the imposition of a night curfew.⁸⁵ The protests were reported to have taken place after two ethnic Barti farmers were killed, to which parts of the Barti community responded by blocking roads and burning several building..⁸⁶ On 10 February 2021, the local authorities announced that ‘schools would be closed for a period of 72 hours and gatherings in El Fasher will be forbidden’.⁸⁷

On 3 March 2021, at least ‘10 people were killed and 32 others were injured’⁸⁸ during inter-communal fighting between the Fur and the Tama tribes in Saraf Omra locality, allegedly due to a dispute over land ownership.⁸⁹ An overnight curfew was imposed, and on 6 March 2021 a media

⁸¹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 19

⁸² UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 20

⁸³ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 92

⁸⁴ IOM DTM, Conflict in Tawila, North Darfur Update 1, 7 February 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁵ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 16

⁸⁶ MEMO, Sudan: Demonstrations, detentions in Darfur, North Kordofan, 11 February 2021, [url](#); Garda, Sudan: Protests and increased security likely to continue in El-Fasher, North Darfur, into mid-February following deaths of two Barti farmers, 10 February 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁷ Radio Dabanga, Violent protests and looting in Darfur, 10 February 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁸ Sudan Tribune, 10 killed in tribal clashes in North Darfur, 3 March 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁹ IOM DTM, Conflict in Saraf Omra, North Darfur Update 1, 8 March 2021, [url](#)



report quoted local authorities claiming that ‘calm in the area’ had been restored.⁹⁰

During the same month, beginning with 31 March 2021, ‘local community groups clashed in Sereif, North Darfur, resulting in 10 fatalities and 20 people injured’.⁹¹

Between 11-18 July 2021, fighting took place in Sortony town, in Kabkabiya locality, between ‘the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)/El Fuka faction against SLA/AW’ faction.⁹² According to the UN, SLA/AW ‘succeeded in dislodging a Sudanese Armed Forces unit from the area and reportedly took control’ between 11-17 July 2021⁹³, while on 18 July 2021, the ‘SAF took control of Sortony’.⁹⁴

Moreover, according to media reports, Sortony IDP camp was hit by an artillery attack during 17-18 July 2021, which resulted in at least 17 people being killed, and another nine being injured.⁹⁵ On 20 July 2021, hundreds of protesters demonstrated in El Fasher against the attack on Sortony camp and the general state of insecurity.⁹⁶

Between 30 July-1 August 2021, new incidents of ‘inter-communal violence between Arab Nomads and the Zagawah tribe in Tawila locality [...] over the issue of land ownership’ were recorded.⁹⁷ A media report quoting one of the victims stated that, on 30-31 July 2021, armed men ‘attacked the villages of Kolgi, Gallab, Kadarek, Um Siyala, Adara, Um Arda and East Um Ghubeysha’. According to the same source, one person was wounded and five children were missing.⁹⁸

On 1 August 2021, ‘a farmer was killed and four others were injured’ by gunmen in the Gallab area of Tawila.⁹⁹ On 3 August 2021, ‘gunmen attacked villages in the area of Kushna near Tabit’, killing a farmer. On the same day, ‘militants also attacked Tangerara village and burned it completely’.¹⁰⁰

On 7 August 2021, a committee comprising ‘representatives of the Attorney General, the Sudan Armed Forces, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), the Sudanese Police Forces, the General Intelligence Service, as well as the rebel movements that signed the Juba Peace Agreement’ in October 2020 arrived in El Fasher, in order to investigate the recent violence in North Darfur.¹⁰¹ The same day, the North Darfur State Security Committee announced that it had ‘formed a joint force made up of army soldiers, RSF militiamen, Central Reserve Forces (Abu Teira), policemen, and former rebel combatants’¹⁰² to protect civilians and farmers. The same source revealed that a section of the joint force consisting of ‘former rebel fighters’ was attacked in an ambush by unknown gunmen in the area of Kolgi.¹⁰³

⁹⁰ Garda, Sudan: Several casualties in Saraf Omra, North Darfur, following tribal conflict in early March; night-time curfew implemented, 6 March 2021, [url](#)

⁹¹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), Annex II, para. 11

⁹² UNOCHA, Sudan: Sortony (North Darfur) Flash Update No. 01, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

⁹³ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 September 2021, [url](#), para. 13

⁹⁴ UNOCHA, Sudan: Sortony (North Darfur) Flash Update No. 01, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁵ Radio Dabanga, Hundreds protest deadly attack on North Darfur displaced, 22 July 2021, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Deadly Darfur attacks leave eight dead, 12 injured, 19 July 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁶ Radio Dabanga, Hundreds protest deadly attack on North Darfur displaced, 22 July 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁷ IOM DTM, Tawila, North Darfur Update 1, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁸ Radio Dabanga, Armed men attack villages in North Darfur’s Tawila, 2 August 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁹ Radio Dabanga, Violence continues as occupying militants refuse to leave North Darfur farms, 3 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁰ Radio Dabanga, Attacks on North Darfur villages continue, leave three people dead, 4 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰¹ Radio Dabanga, North Darfur violence: Rebels ambushed, high-level delegation arrives in El Fasher, 9 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰² Radio Dabanga, North Darfur violence: Rebels ambushed, high-level delegation arrives in El Fasher, 9 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰³ Radio Dabanga, North Darfur violence: Rebels ambushed, high-level delegation arrives in El Fasher, 9 August 2021, [url](#); Darfur 24, North Darfur State Security Committee Issues Communique on Kolgi Incident, 7 August 2021, [url](#)

On 20 August 2021, a media source reported that ‘the IDPs of El Salaam, Zamzam and Abu Shouk camps in North Darfur’ met with the new Darfur Governor Minni Minawi, and protested against ‘the lack of security around the camps, [and] the attacks they face on their farms’.¹⁰⁴

Some of the indicative incidents that occurred in North Darfur during the reference period include:

- On 13 September 2020, ‘a woman was physically assaulted and a 15-year-old girl raped by a Rapid Support Forces member’ in Bargo IDP camp in Tawila. According to the source, they were targeted due to the ‘family’s alleged affiliation with the SLA/AW faction’.¹⁰⁵
- On 18 September 2020, a young Fur man was abducted from Sortony IDP camp ‘to nearby Borgo village where, for two days, he was tied and hung from a tree with stones weighted on his back while being beaten’. According to the source, he was released on 10 October 2020, after a ransom was paid by the man’s family.¹⁰⁶
- Between 31 March-2 April 2021, ‘violent clashes’ took place in As Serief town, as reported by IOM, and displaced some 3 405 individuals, without providing any other details.¹⁰⁷
- On 15 August 2021, an IDP was kidnapped by ‘an armed group’ from Zamzam camp. He was later found dead in El Fasher, North Darfur’s capital. The incident led to demonstrations in El Fasher on 18 August 2021, as people protested against the murder.¹⁰⁸
- On 25-26 August 2021, gunmen attacked ‘people in Jabir and neighbouring villages’ in Kutum locality, killing one herder and stealing livestock and other property.¹⁰⁹

Violent Incidents

Data on violent incidents provided below is based on EASO analysis of publicly available curated datasets from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED).¹¹⁰ For the purpose of this COI Query Response, the following types of events were included as violent incidents in the analysis of the security situation: battles; explosions/remote violence; and violence against civilians.

The figures published reflect the situation regarding violent incidents as it was up to and including the extraction date. According to its methodology, ‘the ACLED project often reviews specific periods of conflict or instability [...]. This means that users may find changes to the data in their selected countries or targeted conflicts throughout the year’.¹¹¹

According to data collected by ACLED, between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021 there were 90 violent events recorded in North Darfur, of which 17 were coded as battles, two were coded as explosions/remote violence, and 71 were coded as episodes of violence against civilians.

In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, there were 77 violent events recorded in North Darfur, of which 13 were coded as battles, and 64 were coded as episodes of violence against civilians.¹¹²

Civilian fatalities

Accurate and comprehensive estimates regarding the number of civilian deaths in Sudan during the reference period were not available. It should be noted that ACLED data below on civilian fatalities

¹⁰⁴ Radio Dabanga, Darfur displaced: we are willing to return if security and protection are in place, 20 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 83

¹⁰⁶ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 92

¹⁰⁷ IOM DTM, Kebkabiya, North Darfur Update 1, 16 June 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸ Radio Dabanga, Protests against violence and insecurity in South Kordofan and North Darfur, 19 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁹ Radio Dabanga, Two killed during attacks on villages in North Darfur’s Kutum, 27 August 2021, [url](#)

¹¹⁰ ACLED (Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project), Dashboard, n.d., [url](#)

¹¹¹ ACLED (Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project), Methodology, April 2019, [url](#), pp. 1-2

¹¹² EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

resulting from episodes of violence against civilians are only a subset of the total figure of civilian deaths, since such deaths are also highly likely to occur during other violent incidents.

Between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, ACLED recorded 40 civilian deaths, due to 71 incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in North Darfur. In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, ACLED recorded 36 civilian deaths, due to 64 incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in North Darfur.¹¹³

Displacement

According to UNHCR, at the beginning of September 2020 there were some 24 477 asylum-seekers and refugees in North Darfur.¹¹⁴ According to the latest data available, there were around 31 471 asylum-seekers and refugees identified in the state, as of 31 July 2021.¹¹⁵

With regards to internal displacement, in North Darfur, IOM identified 933 320 IDPs residing in the state, as of August 2021.¹¹⁶

3.2. East Darfur

In January 2021, UNHCR reported the ‘increased theft of animals/livestock’ that had occurred in ‘recent months’ in Al Mazrub village, and which had resulted in a ‘breakdown of social cohesion in the village’ between the Malia community and South Sudanese refugees. Tensions escalated on 17 January 2021, after the ‘alleged murder of a Malia tribesman by a South Sudanese’. According to the source, revenge attacks on ‘the refugee population in Al Mazrub and neighbouring villages’ resulted in ‘seven deaths and the burning of dozens of shelters and homes’.¹¹⁷

In March 2021, the UN quoted reports of ‘violent protests, including riots, vandalism, arson and looting’ that occurred between 8-10 February 2021 in several Darfur states, including in East Darfur.¹¹⁸ Local authorities went on ‘to declare a state of emergency’ and imposed a 48-hour curfew on 11 February 2021.¹¹⁹ According to media reports, unrest was recorded in several areas including El Daein, while a child was shot and killed by cross-fire between protesters and security forces.¹²⁰ Among the reasons for the demonstrations were listed the poor economic situation and the dissatisfaction over the prices of basic products.¹²¹ Additionally, the UN quoted unnamed Sudanese officials, who blamed ‘elements of the former regime of instigating the violence, given the coordinated timing of the violent outbursts and the traditionally peaceful nature of the Sudanese protest movement’.¹²²

Some of the indicative incidents that occurred in East Darfur during the reference period include:

¹¹³ EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

¹¹⁴ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 August 2020, [url](#)

¹¹⁵ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Overview of Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 July 2021, [url](#)

¹¹⁶ IOM DTM Sudan, Mobility Tracking Sudan Round 2, August 2021, [url](#), p. 4

¹¹⁷ Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Protection Situation Updates January 2021, 31 January 2021, [url](#), p. 1

¹¹⁸ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 16

¹¹⁹ Garda, Sudan: Authorities declare state of emergency, curfew in East Darfur, 11 February 2021, [url](#)

¹²⁰ Radio Dabanga, East Darfur: Tighter security measures under State of Emergency, 20 February 2021, [url](#)

Garda, Sudan: Authorities declare state of emergency, curfew in East Darfur, 11 February 2021, [url](#)

¹²¹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 16; Garda, Sudan: Authorities declare state of emergency, curfew in East Darfur, 11 February 2021, [url](#)

¹²² UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 16

- On 12 October 2020, local media reported that a police officer who had raped a girl in Abu Jabra city, had been sentenced to death by hanging.¹²³
- On or around 23 February 2021, Adila refugee camp was ‘attacked and torched by a militia’, while ‘two South Sudanese refugees were killed’, as reported by Insecurity Insight quoting information published by ACLED.¹²⁴

Violent Incidents

According to data collected by ACLED between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, there was one violent event recorded in East Darfur, coded as an episode of violence against civilians.

In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, there were five violent events recorded in East Darfur, of which three were coded as battles, and two were coded as episodes of violence against civilians.¹²⁵

Civilian fatalities

Between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, ACLED recorded two civilian deaths, due to one incident in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in East Darfur.

In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, ACLED recorded one civilian death, due to two incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in East Darfur.¹²⁶

Displacement

According to UNHCR, at the beginning of September 2020 there were some 69 704 asylum-seekers and refugees in East Darfur.¹²⁷ According to the latest data available, there were around 93 336 asylum-seekers and refugees identified in the state, as of 31 July 2021.¹²⁸

With regards to internal displacement, in East Darfur, IOM identified 99 697 IDPs, as of August 2021.¹²⁹

3.3. South Darfur

At the start of the reference period it was reported that, on 1 September 2020, the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC) in South Darfur had signed a Charter of Cooperation with the new governor Mousa Mahdi, committing ‘to work together [...] to restore security and improve basic services in the state’.¹³⁰ Meanwhile, during the same day, supporters of the SLA/AW gathered in Humaira IDP camp, in Kass, and expressed their rejection of the Juba peace agreement.¹³¹

An African Union (AU) and United Nations’ report referring to the period May-October 2020, highlighted ‘clashes between SLA/AW factions’, which were ‘concentrated in [...] the Torong Tonga,

¹²³ Darfur 24, A policeman sentenced to death in East Darfur for raping a girl, 12 October 2020, [url](#)

¹²⁴ Insecurity Insight, Protection in Danger Monthly News Brief, January 2021, [url](#)

¹²⁵ EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

¹²⁶ EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

¹²⁷ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 August 2020, [url](#)

¹²⁸ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Overview of Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 July 2021, [url](#)

¹²⁹ IOM DTM Sudan, Mobility Tracking Sudan Round 2, August 2021, [url](#), p. 4

¹³⁰ Radio Dabanga, South Darfur FFC to cooperate with new governor, 2 September 2020, [url](#)

¹³¹ UNSC, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 13 November 2020, [url](#), para. 7

Deribat and Kidingir areas', and had caused internal displacement to Kidingir and Layba.¹³² The same source stated that intra-SLA/AW clashes had taken place 'since 30 September' 2020 in the Dwo area 'north-west of Menawashei' over 'local gold mines and tax collection'.¹³³ A subsequent December 2020 UN report confirmed that the fighting on 30 September 2020 and on 12 October 2020 around Dwo had taken place between 'the Mubarak Aldouk and Saleh Borsa factions' of the SLA/AW, in order to gain control over 'artisanal gold mines near Kidingir and illegal tax collection in East Jebel Marra'. The same source stated that at least seven civilians had been killed during the clashes, which also caused internal displacement.¹³⁴ According to the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan, the disputed gold mine lies 'in the area of Torroye, between Kidineer and Feina', and has, for 'almost two years', been 'the largest source of financing' of SLA/AW, 'enabling it to significantly enhance its income'.¹³⁵

Another challenge to the local security situation was underlined by the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan in its report focusing the period March-December 2020. According to the Panel, intercommunal fighting in the Central African Republic had 'led to a sizeable growth in the presence of refugees from the Central African Republic in the adjacent areas of South Darfur', while 'flows of fighters and weapons across the border continued to be reported'. The same source pointed out an incident in November 2020, when 'several hundreds of heavily armed Misseriya forces from South Darfur attacked Boromata' in the Central African Republic (CAR) and 'clashed with the local Gula community'.¹³⁶

Referring to intercommunal violence, the November 2020 AU-UN report, referring to events during June-October 2020, listed Kass and Gereida among the 'areas most affected by land-related incidents' between the Fallata and Masalit communities.¹³⁷ A December 2020 UN report also highlighted episodes of violence between the Fallata and Masalit in Gereida during October 2020, which 'affected 16 villages' and displaced around 20 000 people, while 'several homes were burned'. The same source reported that on 20 October 2020, 'a group of Masalit also burned several houses and shops in Dika village, South Darfur, over the return of a number of Fallata families, with the Fallata retaliating by attacking the Masalit in Gereida East'. There were seven members of the Masalit community killed, '25 injured, several Masalit houses [...] burned, and Government security forces [...] deployed'.¹³⁸

In December 2020, 'largely peaceful demonstrations against the exit of UNAMID' were held, as 'various communities' and IDPs expressed concern about their security following UNAMID's withdrawal. According to the UN, a 'four-week-long demonstration at Kalma' IDP camp was held during that month.¹³⁹ On 26 December 2020, 'intercommunal clashes resulted in the killing of 13

¹³² UNSC, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 13 November 2020, [url](#), para. 10

¹³³ UNSC, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 13 November 2020, [url](#), para. 11

¹³⁴ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 December 2020, [url](#), Annex, para. 7

¹³⁵ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 142

¹³⁶ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para.13

¹³⁷ UNSC, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 13 November 2020, [url](#), para. 14

¹³⁸ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 December 2020, [url](#), Annex, para. 10

¹³⁹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the

people [...], suspension of humanitarian activities in Gereida locality and relocation of humanitarian workers to Nyala'.¹⁴⁰ Meanwhile, on 28 December 2020, three boys were killed and two others were injured in Kass by the Rapid Support Forces. A March 2021 UN report stated that, by that time, 'no accountability actions [were] known to have been taken in these cases'.¹⁴¹

In 2021, clashes between communities in areas including South Darfur were described by the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect as having 'escalated' since the beginning of the year.¹⁴²

The Global Protection Cluster, referring to the month of January 2021, highlighted the 'violent clashes between the Fallata and Taisha, Fallata and Masalit, Fallata and Rezigat tribes, as well as Fur and Arab tribes across numerous villages in Gereida and Sharg Al Jebel (East Jebel Marra)'. According to the same source, the violent incidents 'resulted in the displacement of thousands of persons, including nomads' as well as in the 'killing of over 100 and injuring of 50 persons'.¹⁴³

More specifically, on 18 January 2021, fighting took place 'between the Fallatta and Rizeigat tribes in Tawil village', and led to the internal displacement of around 20 000 people, according to a UN report. In response to the incident, 'joint security forces comprising the Sudanese Armed Forces, the police and the Rapid Support Forces were deployed and established security buffer zones between the two communities'.¹⁴⁴ A subsequent report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR) indicated that 72 people had been killed, and another 73 had been injured, in the events of 18 January 2021.¹⁴⁵ Moreover, intercommunal fighting was also reported 'in late January 2021 in several villages in the East Jebel Marra locality in South Darfur', resulting in some 7 800 new IDPs.¹⁴⁶

In a January 2021 report, the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan also highlighted the ongoing 'armed attacks by members of Arab communities' on IDPs and returnees, 'especially in areas such as [...] southern fringes of Jebel Marra'. According to the source, there are fears among Arab communities that, after the fall of the al-Bashir regime, they might have 'to return the lands belonging to internally displaced persons that they have been occupying for years', which led them to increase the 'attacks on farmers in order to dissuade them from trying to return to their land'.¹⁴⁷

In February 2021, a decrease in 'the frequency of inter-communal violence and factional fighting' across the whole of Darfur, compared to January 2021, was reported by the Global Protection Cluster, although during that month 'popular demonstrations turned into violence and riots' in areas including South Darfur. Moreover, the same source highlighted fighting 'between Fallata and Massalit in Gereida locality', without mentioning the precise date.¹⁴⁸ Between 8-10 February 2021, violent protests, including riots, vandalism, arson and looting were reported in areas including South

United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), Annex Report on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur pursuant to Security Council resolution 2559 (2020), para. 8

¹⁴⁰ Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Protection Sector Update December 2020, 31 December 2020, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁴¹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 28

¹⁴² R2P Monitor, Issue 56 (15 March 2021), 15 March 2021, [url](#), p. 21

¹⁴³ Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Protection Sector Update January 2021, 31 January 2021, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁴⁴ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 15

¹⁴⁵ UNGA, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, 27 July 2021, [url](#), para. 7

¹⁴⁶ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 30

¹⁴⁷ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 98

¹⁴⁸ Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Protection Situation Updates February 2021, 28 February 2021, [url](#), p. 1

Darfur.¹⁴⁹ In response, on 11 February 2021, the governor of South Darfur declared a State of Emergency.¹⁵⁰

On 1 March 2021, fighting was reported ‘between Fallata and Masalit tribes in Gereida locality’, allegedly over a local water source.¹⁵¹ On 3 March 2021, ‘Fallata and Masalit tribesmen clashed in Dikka [...], resulting in seven Masalit tribesmen being killed and 35 people from both communities being injured’, while a local aid worker was also injured, according to the UN.¹⁵²

On 17 March 2021, fighting between ‘armed Fallata and Rezeigat tribesmen’ was reported in Tulus. Other clashes between the Fallata and Rezeigat subsequently took place on 24 and 29 March 2021, according to the report of the Global Protection Cluster.¹⁵³ On 30 March 2021, the conflict-induced displacement of some 2 800 people ‘from Gereida, Sharg al-Jebel and Tullus localities’ took place, according to a UN report, quoting the Government’s Humanitarian Aid Commission, but without giving more details.¹⁵⁴

On 23 April 2021, ‘violent clashes’ were recorded ‘between an armed militia and the Fur tribe in As Salam locality’. The fighting affected villages inhabited by Fur tribe members including ‘Gussa Jammatt, Mansoura, Serseera, Bilili, Miro Kabar, Habanyia and Dambo Dambo’.¹⁵⁵ An unknown number of fatalities and injured people were recorded, without any other details.¹⁵⁶

On 4 May 2021, residents of Kalma IDP camp protested ‘against the repeated attacks on the camp’, while also ‘accusing the governor of South Darfur of planning to dismantle the camp’.¹⁵⁷ On 26 May 2021, South Darfur’s authorities announced that a ‘joint military force [had] been deployed in Nyala’, in order ‘to improve security in the state’ as well as ‘to implement the measures authorised by the State of Emergency’ imposed in February 2021.¹⁵⁸

Intercommunal fighting was later reported in June 2021. According to several sources, on 5 June 2021, ‘tribal clashes between the Taisha and Fallata tribes’ took place in Mandwa village, in Umm Dafog locality. The number of fatalities reported varies among the sources, from 35 people to ‘up to 48’.¹⁵⁹ Responding to the incidents, ‘the State Security and Defense Council held an emergency meeting on 6 June and issued decisions to strengthen security in conflict-prone areas and to expand governance and institutional presence’, according to a September 2021 UN report.¹⁶⁰

¹⁴⁹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 16; Radio Dabanga, Violent protests and looting in Darfur, 10 February 2021, [url](#)

¹⁵⁰ Radio Dabanga, Seven Sudanese states declare State of Emergency, 14 February 2021, [url](#)

¹⁵¹ IOM DTM, Sudan – Emergency Event Tracking Report Gereida, South Darfur 005, 22 March 2021, [url](#)

¹⁵² UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 20

¹⁵³ Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Protection Situation Updates March 2021, 31 March 2021, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁵⁴ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 20

¹⁵⁵ IOM DTM Sudan - Displacement Tracking Matrix, Emergency Event Tracking: As Salam, South Darfur Update 1, 10 May 2021, [url](#)

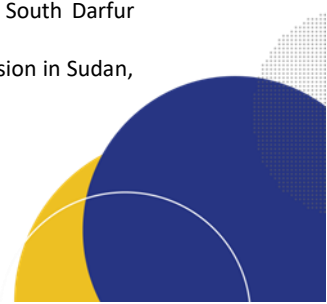
¹⁵⁶ IOM DTM Sudan - Displacement Tracking Matrix, Emergency Event Tracking: As Salam, South Darfur Update 1, 10 May 2021, [url](#); Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Protection Situation Updates April 2021, 30 April 2021, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁵⁷ Radio Dabanga, South Darfur displaced fear dismantling of Kalma camp, 5 May 2021, [url](#)

¹⁵⁸ Radio Dabanga, Joint force to enforce emergency security measures in South Darfur, 26 May 2021, [url](#)

¹⁵⁹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 1 September 2021, [url](#), para. 11; UNGA, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, 27 July 2021, [url](#), para. 7; Radio Dabanga, At least 36 die in South Darfur clashes, 8 June 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶⁰ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 1 September 2021, [url](#), para. 11



In July 2021, another incident of fighting between the Maslite and Fallata tribes was recorded on 14-15 July 2021 in Habouba village, Gereida locality. At least two people were killed, and two others were injured, while some 1,632 people were displaced.¹⁶¹

On 5 August 2021, armed men again attacked Habouba village, killing seven people and injuring 16 others. A local non-Government group attributed the attack to the Janjaweed militia.¹⁶²

Some of the indicative events that took place during the reference period in South Darfur include:

- In October 2020, 'a policeman and one gunman were killed when gunmen attacked the police station in East Jebel Marra locality in South Darfur'.¹⁶³
- On 13 March 2021, unidentified perpetrators vandalised and looted the base of the UNAMID in Manashawi area, Mershing locality.¹⁶⁴
- On 16 March 2021, an 'armed militia' attacked Kalma IDP Camp in Nyala city, 'from three directions.' An IDP woman was shot and injured in the attack.¹⁶⁵
- On 16 July 2021, in Dagama, 'unidentified armed men attacked' five passengers in a vehicle, killing 'a 25-years old IDP man'.¹⁶⁶
- On 7 August 2021, armed men attacked an IDP woman and her daughter 'while on her farm in the area of Amaka Sara', west of Nyala. The woman was shot and killed, while 'her daughter was severely beaten and assaulted'.¹⁶⁷

Violent Incidents

According to data collected by ACLED between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, there were 66 violent events recorded in South Darfur, of which 23 were coded as battles, one was coded as explosion/remote violence, and 42 were coded as episodes of violence against civilians.

In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, there were 65 violent events recorded in South Darfur, of which 23 were coded as battles, and 42 were coded as episodes of violence against civilians.¹⁶⁸

Civilian fatalities

Between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, ACLED recorded 91 civilian deaths, due to 42 incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in South Darfur.

In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, ACLED recorded 78 civilian deaths, due to 42 incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in South Darfur.¹⁶⁹

Displacement

According to UNHCR, at the beginning of September 2020 there were some 45 382 asylum-seekers

¹⁶¹ Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Monthly Protection Update (July 2021), 31 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1; IOM DTM Sudan - Displacement Tracking Matrix, Emergency Event Tracking: Gereida, South Darfur Update 1, 28 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶² Garda, Sudan: Several killed and wounded following armed clashes in South Darfur State Aug. 5-6, 11 August 2021, [url](#); Reuters, Seven Sudanese killed in an attack on a village in Darfur –group, 10 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶³ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 80

¹⁶⁴ Radio Dabanga, North Darfur village attacked by gunmen, 15 March 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶⁵ Radio Dabanga, North Darfur: Warnings about deteriorating security situation, 18 March 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶⁶ Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Monthly Protection Update (July 2021), 31 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁶⁷ ACJPS, South Darfur: Urgent call for investigations into the killing of a 55-year-old woman by armed militia, 11 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶⁸ EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶⁹ EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

and refugees in South Darfur.¹⁷⁰ According to the latest data available, there were around 53 743 asylum-seekers and refugees identified in the state, as of 31 July 2021.¹⁷¹ With regards to internal displacement, in South Darfur, IOM identified 797 081 IDPs, as of August 2021.¹⁷²

3.4. West Darfur

Referring to the period March-December 2020, the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan described West Darfur as ‘the biggest hotspot for intercommunal violence’. According to the source, after the December 2019 attack on Krinding IDP camp that led to at least 90 deaths, ‘tensions between Masalit, who see themselves as traditional owners of land, and local Arab communities continued to increase’.¹⁷³

The UN Panel of Experts also highlighted as an ‘aggravating factor’ for the violence the ‘perceived bias of the authorities, including the security forces’. According to the source, some communities saw the police as ‘predominantly pro-Masalit’, while the Fulani community complained that the Rapid Support Forces were ‘biased towards the Rizeigat’.¹⁷⁴

On 15 January 2021, violence broke out ‘between the Masalit and Mahameed tribes’ in El Geneina and in Krinding IDP camp. During the violence, at least 162 people were killed, including three aid agency workers, while some 300 people were injured.¹⁷⁵ The exact number of fatalities remains unclear: a 21 January 2021 press release by international aid agency Save the Children stated that some 200 people had been killed¹⁷⁶, while on 22 January 2021, UNHCR stated that around 250 people had lost their lives.¹⁷⁷ Moreover, approximately 149 000 people had been displaced ‘across El Geneina and surrounding villages’, including some 3 500 people who had fled to neighbouring Chad’. Following the violent incident, ‘the main roads into El Geneina were blocked by a sit-in by members of the Arab community’.¹⁷⁸ On 16 January 2021, the Governor of the State imposed a curfew, to begin on 18 January 2021.¹⁷⁹ According to a 17 January 2021 media report, representatives of civil society organizations ‘condemned the inaction of the security forces’ and ‘their failure to protect civilians’.¹⁸⁰ The same day, the UN Secretary-General expressed ‘deep concern’ about the incidents.¹⁸¹

On 30 January 2021, Rapid Support Forces troops were deployed to the area, but were ‘unable to

¹⁷⁰ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 August 2020, [url](#)

¹⁷¹ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Overview of Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁷² IOM DTM Sudan, Mobility Tracking Sudan Round 2, August 2021, [url](#), p. 4

¹⁷³ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 104

¹⁷⁴ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 107

¹⁷⁵ UN, Statement by the Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. for Sudan, Babacar Cissé, on 20/01/2021 about the recent killing of three aid workers, 20 January 2021, [url](#); UNGA, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, 27 July 2021, [url](#), para. 7; UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), para. 14

¹⁷⁶ Save the Children, Sudan: Calls for an end to the violence as three aid workers die and 90,000 people displaced, 21 January 2021, [url](#)

¹⁷⁷ UNHCR, Over 100,000 displaced by resurgence of violence in Sudan’s Darfur region, 22 January 2021, [url](#)

¹⁷⁸ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), paras. 30, 31

¹⁷⁹ UNOCHA, Sudan Conflict Ag Geneina, capital of West Darfur State, 18 January 2021, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁸⁰ Sudan Tribune, 83 people killed in West Darfur tribal attacks: medical group, 17 January 2021, [url](#)

¹⁸¹ UNSG, Secretary-General expresses concern over rising violence in Sudan’s West Darfur, 17 January 2021, [url](#)



disperse the protesters, who blocked supply of goods into El Geneina town for two weeks'.¹⁸²

Responding to the violence, on 4 February 2021, the Prime Minister sent a 'high-level delegation' to El Geneina, 'to mediate between the two conflicting communities'. According to a UN Human Rights Council report, the Arab tribes demanded 'the removal of the state Governor (a Masalit) and the closure of the Krinding camp', as well as for the humanitarian assistance for IDPs to be stopped.¹⁸³ The blockade subsequently ended on 7 February 2021.¹⁸⁴ Referring to the violent incidents, Amnesty International stated in March 2021 that UNAMID's withdrawal had 'created a security vacuum in Darfur and exposed civilians to violence', and argued that the events that had taken place in January 2021 were 'another disturbing reminder of the Sudanese security forces' systemic failure to protect civilians and the fragility of the situation'.¹⁸⁵

In May 2021, a UN report referring to the period 16 February-1 May 2021, highlighted the 'most significant' episodes of intercommunal clashes during that time, that began on 3 April 2020 in El Geneina. According to the source, 'unknown assailants shot at a group of Masalit tribesmen, killing two and injuring one. The incident triggered the mobilization of armed fighters by Masalit and Rizeigat Arab tribes and within four days violence peaked.' The same source stated that at least 144 people had been killed and 232 others had been injured, while 'homes, private property and civilian infrastructure were destroyed [...], including a hospital building and a United Nations compound'.¹⁸⁶ On 6 April 2021, UNOCHA reported that 'shooting continues to be heard' across El Geneina town.¹⁸⁷ The same source subsequently reported on 8 April 2021 that Abuzar and Al Sadaga IDP camp, and four gathering sites, had been 'partially burnt'.¹⁸⁸

The UN quoted the statement of the Governor of West Darfur, who claimed on 8 April 2021, that 'militias from neighbouring countries' were 'collaborating with local militias and instigating the fighting aimed at fomenting instability'. Meanwhile the UN also pointed out that inter-communal conflict in West Darfur was 'linked to land, water resources, pasture rights and years of sectarian manipulation along tribal lines by the former regime', while ongoing displacement of the Masalit, among others, was evidence of 'a lack of accountability and entrenched impunity as major factors contributing to Darfur's cycles of violence'.¹⁸⁹ According to the same source, 'during the first two days of clashes, there was no intervention by Government forces, which were in El Geneina at the time of the violence'.¹⁹⁰ A July 2021 UN HRC report stated that the 'clear identification of perpetrators' remained 'a challenge' at the time.¹⁹¹

On 1 July 2021, violent incidents took place 'between the Tama and Ora tribes across villages in Kereinik locality', according to IOM. The same source reported that some 1 632 IDPs had been

¹⁸² UNGA, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, 27 July 2021, [url](#), para. 12

¹⁸³ UNGA, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, 27 July 2021, [url](#), para. 12

¹⁸⁴ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 March 2021, [url](#), paras. 30, 31; UNOCHA, Sudan: Conflict – Flash Update #8 West Darfur and South Darfur, 8 February 2021, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁸⁵ AI, Sudan: Horrific attacks on displacement camps show UN peacekeepers still needed in Darfur, 1 March 2021, [url](#)

¹⁸⁶ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 21

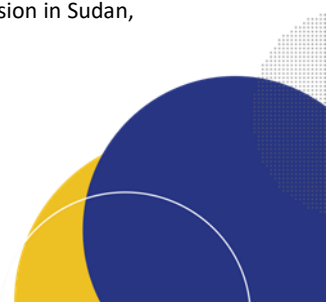
¹⁸⁷ UNOCHA, Sudan: Conflict – Flash Update #11 West Darfur, 6 April 2021, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁸⁸ UNOCHA, Sudan: Conflict – Flash Update #12 West Darfur, 8 April 2021, [url](#), p.1

¹⁸⁹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 22

¹⁹⁰ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 33

¹⁹¹ UNGA, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, 27 July 2021, [url](#), para. 7



displaced by fighting from their villages in Kereinik.¹⁹²

On 3 and 4 July 2021, fighting was reported in ‘the villages of Kafani and Tangaki’ between the Tama and Gimr tribes, reportedly ‘over land ownership issues’, and ‘resulting in the deaths of five people’ and internal displacement.¹⁹³

Some of the indicative incidents that took place during the reference period in West Darfur include:

- On 26 December 2020, ‘a university student was killed and another one seriously wounded’ after being shot by ‘unknown armed men’ in El Geneina city.¹⁹⁴
- On 12 January 2021, a woman IDP ‘was killed by gunmen’ in an area ‘south-east of Misterei’.¹⁹⁵
- On 20 March 2021, three people were ‘beaten and stabbed’ while exiting a vehicle in El Geneina.¹⁹⁶
- On 21 March 2021, ‘at least two people were injured in an armed attack on a mosque in Azirni’, in Kereinik locality.¹⁹⁷
- On 29 May 2021, one person was killed ‘and five others were seriously injured after a group of armed men opened fire in the market of Foro Baranga’. According to the source, ‘hundreds of residents’ of Foro Baranga locality ‘gathered in protest against the violence, and closed the main roads in the town’, while burning the buildings of several local administration offices.¹⁹⁸

Violent Incidents

According to data collected by ACLED between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, there were 70 violent events recorded in West Darfur, of which 34 were coded as battles, and 36 were coded as episodes of violence against civilians.

In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, there were 52 violent events recorded in West Darfur, of which 15 were coded as battles, and 37 were coded as episodes of violence against civilians.¹⁹⁹

Civilian fatalities

Between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, ACLED recorded 112 civilian deaths, due to 36 incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in West Darfur.

In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, ACLED recorded 65 civilian deaths, due to 37 incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in West Darfur.²⁰⁰

Displacement

According to UNHCR, at the beginning of September 2020 there were some 426 asylum-seekers and

¹⁹² IOM DTM, Kereneik, West Darfur Update 1, 12 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁹³ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 September 2021, [url](#), para. 11

¹⁹⁴ Darfur 24, Unidentified gunmen kill university student in Darfur, 27 December 2020, [url](#)

¹⁹⁵ Radio Dabanga, Violent incidents continue as Darfur court is accused of ‘double standards’, 17 January 2021, [url](#)

¹⁹⁶ Radio Dabanga, Darfur witnesses more violence as authorities reaffirm the importance of disarmament, 23 March 2021, [url](#)

¹⁹⁷ Radio Dabanga, Darfur witnesses more violence as authorities reaffirm the importance of disarmament, 23 March 2021, [url](#)

¹⁹⁸ Radio Dabanga, Angry protests follow deadly West Darfur market attack, 31 May 2021, [url](#)

¹⁹⁹ EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

²⁰⁰ EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

refugees in West Darfur.²⁰¹ According to the latest data available, the same number of asylum-seekers and refugees were identified in the state, as of 31 July 2021.²⁰² With regards to internal displacement, in West Darfur, IOM identified 337 801 IDPs residing in the state, as of August 2021.²⁰³

3.5. Central Darfur

On 10 September 2020, two people were shot and killed by police officers during ‘a protest against insecurity in Nerteti’.²⁰⁴ The demonstrations took place after two young people were killed by gunmen in a location close to Nertiti earlier that day.²⁰⁵

On 28 September 2020, fighting between the Sudan Armed Forces and SLM/AW took place in ‘the area of Boldon’ in western Jebel Marra. According to local media, the two sides accused each other of beginning the attack.²⁰⁶

On 5 November 2020, the Governor of Central Darfur announced the commencement of an ‘enforced collection of unauthorised weapons’ from ‘all unauthorised arms carriers’.²⁰⁷ According to the media source, the campaign is part of the authorities’ response to security concerns in the area, following violent incidents in Central Darfur and community protests against ‘recurrent violence’.²⁰⁸

On 7 November 2020, fighting was recorded ‘in Sabi in Central Darfur’s Jebel Marra’, between the SLA/AW and a SLA splinter group.²⁰⁹

On 30 December 2020, ‘hundreds’ of IDPs ‘marched from local camps in Central Darfur to the UNAMID headquarters in Zalingei’, demanding that UNAMID troops remain in Darfur. A media report quoted some of the protestors who stated that the withdrawal of UNAMID would add to the ‘deterioration of the security situation’.²¹⁰

Referring to intercommunal violence in the Darfur region between March-December 2020, the January 2021 report by the UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan highlighted the ‘perceived bias of the authorities, including the security forces’ in some of the incidents, as an ‘aggravating factor’ for the violence. Referring to the situation of Central Darfur specifically, the Panel of Experts stated that Rapid Support Forces troops deployed following incidents in mid-2020, ‘mostly Arabs from Darfur, received little acceptance from the local Fur, who criticized their alleged bias towards local Arabs’. The same source highlighted that the situation was improved once those troops ‘were replaced by Rapid Support Forces from communities outside Darfur.’²¹¹

In February 2021, according to UNHRC, episodes of ‘random shootings’ outside Zalingei, as well as

²⁰¹ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 August 2020, [url](#)

²⁰² UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Overview of Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 July 2021, [url](#)

²⁰³ IOM DTM Sudan, Mobility Tracking Sudan Round 2, August 2021, [url](#), p. 4

²⁰⁴ Radio Dabanga, Police kill two protestors in Central Darfur, 12 September 2020, [url](#)

²⁰⁵ Radio Dabanga, Two people shot dead in Central Darfur, 11 September 2020, [url](#)

²⁰⁶ Radio Dabanga, Sudan army, rebels blame each other for Central Darfur clash, 29 September 2020, [url](#)

²⁰⁷ Radio Dabanga, Central Darfur governor calls for total disarmament of state, 6 November 2020, [url](#)

²⁰⁸ Radio Dabanga, Darfur: Six dead in Jebel Marra attacks, 9 October 2020, [url](#)

²⁰⁹ Radio Dabanga, Violent clashes in Central Darfur blamed on Sudan govt, 9 November 2020, [url](#)

²¹⁰ Radio Dabanga, Protests against withdrawal of Darfur peacekeeping mission UNAMID, 30 December 2020, [url](#)

²¹¹ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 107

‘sexual abuses and assaults’ were reported during that month, without giving any other details.²¹²

On 12 May 2021, violence ‘between factions of the SLA/AW in Shamal Jebel Marra’ was recorded, as well as related internal displacement. According to IOM, fighting began ‘in Fanga Suk due to tensions over land accessibility’.²¹³ Meanwhile, on 18 May 2021, similar clashes over land accessibility took place between RSF troops and ‘SLA/AW factions [...] in Fanga Suk’.²¹⁴

On 12 June 2021, ‘inter-communal conflict between Fur and Arab tribes in Shamal Jebel Marra’ was recorded, leading to the displacement of some 16 898 people, as of 15 June 2021.²¹⁵

On 24 July 2021, clashes took place between the SLA/AW Ghadura faction and the SLA/AW Mubarak Aldouk faction in Fara and Kome, which resulted in internal displacement from those areas to the Sabanga IDP camp.²¹⁶

Some of the indicative incidents that took place during the reference period in Central Darfur include:

- On 10 September 2021, an ‘armed group attacked farmers working their fields [...], killing two people and seriously wounding one in Kibi, north of Nertiti, in West Jebel Marra’.²¹⁷
- On 21 September 2020, a Fur woman was raped and killed by ‘a group of men reported to be Arabs, during a night-time attack on the Ludang farming area for returnees in the outskirts of Nertiti’.²¹⁸
- In October 2020, a woman was ‘gang raped by two armed nomads while engaging in livelihood activities in Fuji’.²¹⁹
- Between 5-8 October 2020, ‘two villagers were killed on their farms’ in Nertiti, while another two ‘were shot dead’ while travelling to Nyala.²²⁰
- On 28 November 2020, ‘a 14-year-old girl with a mental disability was allegedly raped at gunpoint by a Sudanese Armed Forces soldier near Thur market’. The same source highlighted that, while the incident was reported, the ‘local military commander [...] took no action’.²²¹
- On or around 2 February 2021, a girl was raped in a location ‘half a kilometre west of Rokoro’, while two other women were shot and wounded by gunmen in ‘Koure Fenegi, 10 kilometers southeast of Rokoro’. In a third separate incident, an IDP from Nierteti South Camp was stabbed by gunmen in a location ‘two kilometres west of Nierteti’.²²²
- On 9 August 2021, two IDPs were ‘seriously injured’ on Sunday after being shot by unknown gunmen ‘on the road between Kajali and Salgoub in Azum locality, Central Darfur’.²²³

²¹² Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Protection Situation Updates February 2021, 28 February 2021, [url](#), p. 1

²¹³ IOM DTM, Shamal Jebel Marra, Central Darfur, Update 1, 6 June 2021, [url](#)

²¹⁴ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 September 2021, [url](#), para. 13

²¹⁵ IOM DTM, Shamal Jebel Marra, Central Darfur, Update 1, 20 June 2021, [url](#)

²¹⁶ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 1 September 2021, [url](#), para. 14

²¹⁷ AI, Sudan: UN must extend Darfur peacekeepers mandate by at least six months, 9 December 2020, [url](#)

²¹⁸ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 83

²¹⁹ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 83

²²⁰ Radio Dabanga, Darfur: Six dead in Jebel Marra attacks, 9 October 2020, [url](#)

²²¹ UNSC, Letter dated 13 January 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 13 January 2021, [url](#), para. 83

²²² Radio Dabanga, Girl raped, young women shot, man stabbed in Central Darfur, 3 February 2021, [url](#)

²²³ Radio Dabanga, Weekend of violent banditry claims five lives in Darfur, North Kordofan, 10 August 2021, [url](#)

Violent Incidents

According to data collected by ACLED between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, there were 45 violent events recorded in Central Darfur, of which 9 were coded as battles, and 36 were coded as episodes of violence against civilians.

In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, there were 69 violent events recorded in Central Darfur, of which 14 were coded as battles, 1 was coded as an explosion/remote violence, and 54 were coded as episodes of violence against civilians.²²⁴

Civilian fatalities

Between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, ACLED recorded 18 civilian deaths, due to 36 incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in Central Darfur.

In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, ACLED recorded 36 civilian deaths, due to 54 incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in Central Darfur.²²⁵

Displacement

According to UNHCR, at the beginning of September 2020 there were some 10 085 asylum-seekers and refugees in Central Darfur.²²⁶ According to the latest data available, there were around 10 151 asylum-seekers and refugees identified in the state, as of 31 July 2021.²²⁷

With regards to internal displacement, in Central Darfur, IOM identified 422 877 IDPs, as of August 2021.²²⁸

4. Overview of the Two Areas

While many armed groups are active in Kordofan and Blue Nile states, the SPLM/N Al-Hilu is one of the most prominent.²²⁹ Although it initially withdrew from the peace talks in August 2020, the group went on to sign, on 3 September 2020, 'a declaration of principle with the Prime Minister, Abdalla Hamdok [...] to support the democratization of the Sudan on the basis of the separation of religion and State and later started to engage in the peace process'²³⁰, with negotiations for a peace agreement continuing as of June 2021.²³¹ At the same time, on 3 October 2020, 'a coalition of eight splinter rebel groups issued a statement to criticize the Juba Agreement as incomplete, having excluded certain groups from the negotiations'.²³²

Meanwhile, a report by the Sudanese Human Rights and Development Organisation (HUDO) referring to incidents within the Government-controlled territories of South Kordofan and Blue Nile during 2020, stated that 'towards the end of the year 2020, armed robberies were rampant' mainly

²²⁴ EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

²²⁵ EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

²²⁶ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 August 2020, [url](#)

²²⁷ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Overview of Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 July 2021, [url](#)

²²⁸ IOM DTM Sudan, Mobility Tracking Sudan Round 2, August 2021, [url](#), p. 4

²²⁹ RULAC, Non-international armed conflicts in Sudan, last updated 17 May 2021, [url](#); AJ, Sudan gov't and SPLM/N sign agreement to pave way for peace talks, 28 March 2021, [url](#)

²³⁰ UNSC, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 13 November 2020, [url](#), para. 8

²³¹ Reuters, Sudan says progress made in peace talks with rebel leader, 15 June 2021, [url](#)

²³² UNSC, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 13 November 2020, [url](#), para. 8

in South Kordofan, with the source attributing the incidents to the ‘presence of very many troops of RSF and Popular Defence Forces (PDF) soldiers’.²³³

While the transitional Government had removed, in early 2020, the humanitarian operational restrictions regulation aid activities in Sudan, access to the areas in Blue Nile and South Kordofan that were controlled by non-state armed groups remained restricted during 2020.²³⁴ On 13 June 2021, several UN aid agencies announced that they had been able to access for the first time in ten years, conflict-affected communities in the five non-Governmental areas controlled by the SPLM/N al- Hilu in South Kordofan and Blue Nile.²³⁵

On 21 June 2021, ‘Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, head of Sudan’s Transitional Sovereign Council issued a constitutional decree’ granting autonomy to Blue Nile and South Kordofan regions²³⁶, in accordance with the provisions of the Juba peace agreement.²³⁷

5. Overview of the security situation in the Two Areas States

5.1. South Kordofan

A UNOHCHR report focusing on the period October 2020-June 2021, described the security situation in South Kordofan as ‘volatile’, highlighting the fact that ‘the recurrence of violent incidents ha[d] heightened the vulnerability of the population and exposed serious protection gaps and challenges’.²³⁸

On 30 October 2020, fighting was reported ‘between the Kenana Arifab and Hawazma Dar Ali herders’ clans’ in Gedir area of Talodi locality.²³⁹

Between 22-26 November 2020, ‘three armed robberies’ had occurred on ‘the road linking Talodi and Kologi’, according to Radio Dabanga.²⁴⁰ On 26 November 2020, a man was robbed ‘by gunmen wearing RSF uniforms in Abu Kershola’.²⁴¹

In December 2020, the ‘security situation remained volatile in the eastern corridor of South Kordofan due to continued communal clashes’, while internal displacement was recorded ‘from SPLM/N Al-Hilu controlled area of Umbeheileeb administrative unit’, according to a report by the Global Protection Cluster. The same source highlighted the ‘tribal conflicts between Kinana and Dar Ali and between farmers and pastoralists’ during December 2020, which displaced people from Alsahal. In response, the ‘South Kordofan Governor activated the peace and reconciliation committee in mid-December [2020] to reconcile ongoing conflict in Abu Jubayhah,’ and SAF troops

²³³ HUDO Centre, Report On the Human Rights Situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States of Sudan January - December 2020, 28 January 2021, [url](#), p. v

²³⁴ ACAPS, SUDAN-Humanitarian impact of multiple protracted crises, 24 November 2020, [url](#), p. 4

²³⁵ UNOCHA et al., Joint UN Press Release, Un Agencies in Sudan Reach Conflict-affected Communities In Non-Government-controlled Areas For First Time In A Decade, 13 June 2021, [url](#)

²³⁶ Sada El Balad, Sudan Grants Autonomy to Blue Nile, South Kordofan Regions, 21 June 2021, [url](#);

²³⁷ Sada El Balad, Sudan Grants Autonomy to Blue Nile, South Kordofan Regions, 21 June 2021, [url](#); Al Taghyeer, Constitutional decree grants Blue Nile and South Kordofan autonomy, 21 June 2021, [url](#)

²³⁸ UNGA, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, 27 July 2021, [url](#), paras. 6, 9

²³⁹ Radio Dabanga, Herders clans clash violently in South Kordofan, 1 November 2020, [url](#)

²⁴⁰ Radio Dabanga, Spate of highway robberies in Sudan’s South Kordofan, 26 November 2020, [url](#)

²⁴¹ Radio Dabanga, Attacks and robberies in South Kordofan continue, 8 December 2020, [url](#)



were 'to control the situation'.²⁴²

In January 2021, 'hundreds of civilians' demonstrated in Kadugli against the 'deteriorating security situation, including attacks against civilians by state security forces', according to a UNOHCHR report.²⁴³ On 30 January 2021, armed gunmen stole livestock from Julud (Dilling County), according to a HART report.²⁴⁴

A UN report, referring to incidents between 16 February-1 May 2021, highlighted ongoing intercommunal clashes during that period. One such incident took place on 21 March 2021, when fighting 'erupted between Nuba and Arab Baggara tribesmen in Seraf Eldyi', as 'a group of Arab Baggara tribesmen looted livestock'. According to the source, 'the Arab tribesmen returned with reinforcements, resulting in a heavy exchange of fire and several casualties'.²⁴⁵ During March 2021, HART also reported four separate incidents of livestock theft, in Kumbur and Sabat payams.²⁴⁶

Several episodes of intercommunal clashes were recorded throughout April 2021. According to UNOHCHR, during that month 'dozens of civilians were killed and many more were reportedly injured during clashes between rival tribal communities in the El Hamid district of Gedir' that 'lasted several days'.²⁴⁷ At the same time a Global Protection Cluster report stated that, on or around 11 April, 'intercommunal clashes/killings were reported in Habila and Kadugli localities. In Habila, farmers and nomad tribes had ethnic killings resulting in arson of nomad settlements in the locality'. The same source reported that 'in Kadugli, Nuda tribesmen were killed, possibly by communal revenge/motivations, while collecting firewood and producing charcoal'.²⁴⁸ Meanwhile, the number of recorded instances of cattle theft rose to seven across April 2021, in Counties such as Heiban, Dallami, Talodi, and Dilling. Among the more serious incidents, on 22 April 2021, 'Gradud village was burnt down reportedly by Arabs cattle raiders, resulting into a displacement of 43 households', while on 25 April 2021, Kunekara village in Dilling County was raided 'by a SAF-aligned militia group'.²⁴⁹

In May 2021, 'inter-communal conflicts and cattle raids continue[d] to threaten the security of communities living or cultivating near government-controlled areas', according to a report by HART. The source highlighted an incident in Julud payam, Dilling county, when 'two farmers returning from outlying farms were killed by gunmen', without providing the exact date.²⁵⁰

On 26 May 2021, 'members of the Armed Reserve Department, formerly known as the Popular Defence Forces (PDF) militia, killed four farmers and injured three others near Julud village' while 'returning to the village from their farms', according to a report by Radio Dabanga, quoting the HUDO.²⁵¹

Intercommunal fighting was also reported in June 2021. According to a UN report, on 9 June 2021 '39 people were reported killed and around 5 700 displaced following an attack by Nuba Logan, Kenana and Kawahlah tribesmen against the Hawazmah tribe in Kalogi locality'. The source stated

²⁴² Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Protection Sector Update December 2020, 31 December 2020, [url](#), pp. 1-2

²⁴³ UNGA, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, 27 July 2021, [url](#), para. 9

²⁴⁴ HART, SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update January 2021, 5 March 2021, [url](#), p. 6

²⁴⁵ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 17 May 2021, [url](#), para. 20

²⁴⁶ HART, SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update, March 2021, 6 May 2021, [url](#), p. 5

²⁴⁷ UNGA, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, 27 July 2021, [url](#), para. 9

²⁴⁸ Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Protection Sector Update April 2021, 30 April 2021, [url](#), pp. 1-2

²⁴⁹ HART, SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update April 2021, 8 June 2021, [url](#), p. 5

²⁵⁰ HART, SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update May 2021, 31 May 2021, [url](#), p. 5

²⁵¹ Radio Dabanga, HUDO: Four farmers killed in South Kordofan, 27 June 2021, [url](#)



that the conflict was due to issues regarding 'land ownership and the control of local gold mining sites'.²⁵² Also on 9 June 2021, fighting was reported 'between Dar Ali, Kenana, and Logan in the Shabakah area of Gedir locality which killed at least five people and wounded several others'. In response, on 11 June 2021 the governor of South Kordofan declared a state of emergency, 'along with a curfew from 17:00 to 6:00, in Gedir locality'.²⁵³ On 21 June 2021, 'clashes between Tira and Otoro tribes' were recorded in Heiban, which led to 'displacement of populations and paralysis of activities'.²⁵⁴

In July 2021, the Global Protection Cluster noted that 'tribal conflicts and the presence of armed individuals in military uniform around the displacement sites have increased, compared to previous month', in South Kordofan. According to the source, on 23 July 2021, fighting broke out 'between Arab and Nuba Angolo tribes' in Kadugli Um-Battah market, and one Angolo tribesman was killed. On 25 July 2021, 'in West of Abu Jubaiha – Awlad Simaih farming area, unidentified perpetrators (suspected to be Hawazma)' killed one Kenana farmer and seriously injured two others. On 27 July 2021, 'Hawazma herders escorted by GoS security forces' were attacked by four 'Kenana perpetrators in West of Abu Jubaiha'. In response, on 28 July 2021 a curfew was imposed from 22:00 to 05:00 in Kadugli, together with 'military night foot patrols'.²⁵⁵

Also referring to July 2021, HART highlighted the ongoing 'Inter-community violence and cattle rustling', which threatened 'people living or farming close to crossline areas in Dilling and Al Sunut'.²⁵⁶

Some of the indicative incidents that occurred in South Kordofan in the reference period include:

- On 22 November 2020, 'more than twenty passengers on a commercial vehicle travelling from Abu-Jibaiha to Talodi were robbed' at Gardood Torro by armed men wearing Rapid Support Force (RSF) uniform, according to a report by HUDO Centre. The source added that the victims reported the incident 'at Gardood Torro military intelligence (MI) office and filed the case at Talodi police office [...] but no further investigation was carried out'.²⁵⁷
- On 2 December 2020, 'two farmers were shot dead and another one was seriously injured by RSF soldiers at Elefain village near Kadugli', after refusing to allow cattle to graze in their gardens.²⁵⁸
- On 6 December 2020, some 20 passengers 'on a truck from Haiban to Khartoum were blocked by Sudan Armed Force/ Military Intelligence at Al-Abbasiya town', and were subsequently detained in the town's military base. While on 7 December 2020 the women and children among the passengers were released, the men remained under detention.²⁵⁹
- Between 16-18 December 2020, 'a group of SAF and RSF soldiers attacked Bobaya village twice', injuring three people, according to reports by the HUDO Centre.²⁶⁰
- On 13 July 2021, 'a delegation of Hawazma tribe coming from Al-Faid Um Abdullah' was attacked 'in an area between Kanjara and Al-Kurra, near Abu Jubaiha town'. As member of

²⁵² UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, 1 September 2021, [url](#), para. 11

²⁵³ Radio Dabanga, South Kordofan gov describes situation after clashes as 'dangerous', 13 June 2021, [url](#)

²⁵⁴ HART, SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update June 2021, 30 June 2021, [url](#), p. 4

²⁵⁵ Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Monthly Protection Update July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

²⁵⁶ HART, SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update July 2021, 23 August 2021, [url](#), p. 4

²⁵⁷ HUDO Centre, Urgent Appeal, Passengers robbed by RSF soldiers in Talodi, Sudan, 30 November 2020, [url](#), p. 1

²⁵⁸ HUDO Centre, Urgent appeal, SAF and RSF soldiers attacked and injured residents of Bobaya village, Sudan, 21 December 2020, [url](#), p. 2

²⁵⁹ HUDO Centre, Urgent Appeal, Arrest of travellers by SAF in Al-Abbasiya, Sudan, 9 December 2020, [url](#), p. 1

²⁶⁰ HUDO Centre, Urgent appeal, SAF and RSF soldiers attacked and injured residents of Bobaya village, Sudan, 21 December 2020, [url](#), p. 1

the delegation was killed, and two others were injured.²⁶¹

- On 18 August 2021, 'one person was killed and four others were seriously injured in an armed looting incident near El Hujeirat, a village west of South Kordofan's capital Kadugli', as reported by Radio Dabanga.²⁶²

Violent Incidents

According to data collected by ACLED between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, there were 99 violent events recorded in South Kordofan, of which 26 were coded as battles, one was coded as explosions/remote violence, and 72 were coded as episodes of violence against civilians.

In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, there were 56 violent events recorded in South Kordofan, of which 15 were coded as battles, and 41 were coded as episodes of violence against civilians.²⁶³

Civilian fatalities

Between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, ACLED recorded 74 civilian deaths, due to 72 incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in South Kordofan.

In comparison, between 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, ACLED recorded 50 civilian deaths, due to 41 incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in South Kordofan.²⁶⁴

Displacement

According to UNHCR, at the beginning of September 2020 there were some 37 615 asylum-seekers and refugees in South Kordofan.²⁶⁵ According to the latest data available, there were around 40 102 asylum-seekers and refugees identified in the state, as of 31 July 2021.²⁶⁶

With regards to internal displacement, in South Kordofan, IOM identified 272 781 IDPs, as of August 2021.²⁶⁷

5.2. Blue Nile

Following the beginning of the conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region on 4 November 2020, refugees from Ethiopia were recorded to have started crossing into Sudan several days later, such as in Kassala state on 6 November 2020²⁶⁸, and in Gedaref on 9 November 2020²⁶⁹. On 15 November 2020, several refugees were recorded in Wad Ali Mahl region in Blue Nile, according to a humanitarian inter-agency report.²⁷⁰ A subsequent MSF report, quoting figures shared by UNHCR, stated that of the 42 000 refugees from Ethiopia that had arrived as of 25 November 2020 in Sudan, some 2 % had entered into Blue Nile state.²⁷¹

²⁶¹ Global Protection Cluster, Protection of Civilians Advocacy Brief, 18 July 2021, [url](#); International Crisis Group, Sudan, July 2021,

²⁶² Radio Dabanga, Protests against violence and insecurity in South Kordofan and North Darfur, 19 August 2021, [url](#)

²⁶³ EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

²⁶⁴ EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

²⁶⁵ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 August 2020, [url](#)

²⁶⁶ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Overview of Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 July 2021, [url](#)

²⁶⁷ IOM DTM Sudan, Mobility Tracking Sudan Round 2, August 2021, [url](#), p. 4

²⁶⁸ UNHCR, Sudan Update – Ethiopia Situation, 6 November 2020, [url](#), p. 1

²⁶⁹ Sudan Tribune, Refugees cross into Sudan amid calls to stop hostilities in Ethiopia, 9 November 2020, [url](#)

²⁷⁰ ADRA et al., Inter-Agency Refugee Emergency Response Plan - Sudan: Refugee Influx from Ethiopia, 24 November 2020, [url](#), p. 6

²⁷¹ MSF, MSF providing medical care and assistance in Sudan to people fleeing violence in Ethiopia, 27 November 2020, [url](#)

In December 2020, intercommunal fighting was reported by HART ‘between Falatta nomads and Beeh farmers in Chali payam over the destruction of farms’, without any other details.²⁷²

In January 2021, the escalation of violence in Ethiopia’s Benishangul Gumuz region led to another influx of refugees to Blue Nile state. According to an UNHCR press release of 23 February 2021, some 7 000 Ethiopians had arrived in Blue Nile within one month’.²⁷³ The same source reported on 24 February 2021 that Ethiopian refugees had settled in Mancheleng, Menza and Yabacher.²⁷⁴

Also in January 2021, HART highlighted ‘tensions [...] along Ethiopian and Blue Nile borders near Yabus Bala due to illegal Ethiopian miners along the border’.²⁷⁵

In February 2021, an increase in livestock theft was noted. According to HART, ‘cattle raids were common in Wadaka Payam’, with hundreds of animals being stolen from Fallata nomads.²⁷⁶

On 21 March 2021, ‘tension on the border area between Yafta (Wadaka Payam) and Maban, South Sudan, left one person dead’.²⁷⁷

On 13 May 2021, ‘at least two people were killed and several others were injured’ in fighting between the Hausa and Funj tribes in Medina 11, Geisan locality, ‘following the theft of livestock, allegedly by a Hausa tribesman’.²⁷⁸

In July 2021, new incidents of Intercommunal conflict were reported. A first episode of violence, with the exact date not shared, took place ‘between Arab and non-Arab tribes (Al-Agaleein vs. Tama farmers) in Roro’, Tadamon locality, and ‘later involved Massalit and Zagawa tribe members’. The fighting reportedly led to two fatalities. In a separate incident, on 23 July 2021, in Tarfa, ‘north of Roseries locality, another tribal clash erupted between Hawsa and Kamateer tribes and spreaded to Karori, Tarfa and Shanfor areas’, and resulted in the death of 10 people, while 16 others were injured. The same source stated that ‘joint security forces (Police, SAF, and RSF) were deployed to contain the situation’, but as of 31 July 2021, tensions remained high.²⁷⁹

Some of the indicative incidents that took place during the reference period in Blue Nile include:

- On 14 February 2021, four SPLM/N soldiers shot and wounded an elderly man who was gathering gum in Oulo forest in Al Tadamon locality.²⁸⁰
- In ‘late April 2021’ the circulation of a video depicting the ‘gang rape of a 20-year-old woman’ close to Er Roseries ‘caused widespread fear among women’. The source stated that some, but not all of the suspects had been arrested by the local authorities.²⁸¹

Violent Incidents

According to data collected by ACLED between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, there were nine

²⁷² HART, SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update, December 2020, 31 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

²⁷³ UNHCR, Thousands of Ethiopians seek asylum in Sudan’s Blue Nile State, 23 February 2021, [url](#)

²⁷⁴ UNHCR, Ethiopian Influx Update of New Arrivals | Blue Nile as of 24 February 2021, 24 February 2021, [url](#)

²⁷⁵ HART, SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update January 2021, 5 March 2021, [url](#) p. 5

²⁷⁶ HART, SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update February 2021, 25 March 2021, [url](#), p. 5

²⁷⁷ HART, SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update, March 2021, 6 May 2021, [url](#), p. 4

²⁷⁸ Radio Dabanga, Tribal clashes in Sudan’s Blue Nile state leave two dead, 16 May 2021, [url](#)

²⁷⁹ Global Protection Cluster, Sudan Monthly Protection Update July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

²⁸⁰ HUDO Centre, Report On the Human Rights Situation in South Kordufan and Blue Nile States of Sudan January - June 2021, 18 August 2021, [url](#), p. 39

²⁸¹ UNGA, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, 27 July 2021, [url](#), para. 33

violent events recorded in Blue Nile, of which four were coded as battles, and five were coded as episodes of violence against civilians. In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, there were three violent events recorded in Blue Nile, all of them coded as episodes of violence against civilians.²⁸²

Civilian fatalities

Between 1 September 2020-31 August 2021, ACLED recorded four civilian deaths, due to five incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in Blue Nile.

In comparison, during the period 1 September 2019-31 August 2020, ACLED recorded two civilian death, due to three incidents in which civilians were the direct or only target of violence, in Blue Nile.²⁸³

Displacement

According to UNHCR, at the beginning of September 2020 there were some 3 578 asylum-seekers and refugees in Blue Nile.²⁸⁴ According to the latest data available, there were around 11 112 asylum-seekers and refugees identified in the state, as of 31 July 2021.²⁸⁵

Regarding internal displacement, in Blue Nile, IOM identified 81 693 IDPs, as of August 2021.²⁸⁶

²⁸² EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

²⁸³ EASO analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Sudan, 1 September 2019-31 August 2021, extracted on 19 October 2021, [url](#)

²⁸⁴ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 August 2020, [url](#)

²⁸⁵ UNHCR, Sudan: Population Dashboard, Overview of Refugees and Asylum-seekers, 31 July 2021, [url](#)

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