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Sudan: Türk warns of catastrophic surge in violence

GENEVA - UN Human Rights Chief Volker Türk warned today of the disastrous consequences stemming from ongoing and escalating hostilities across the North Darfur and Kordofan regions in Sudan, where civilian casualties, sexual violence, abductions and looting have been reported in multiple areas.

"The recent fighting and grave risk of further aggravation in an already brutal and deadly conflict raise severe protection concerns, amid a pervasive culture of impunity for human rights violations," the High Commissioner said.

On 15 June, after a year-long siege, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) launched a further attack on El Fasher, following months of increased mobilisation of fighters, including the recruitment of children, across Darfur. The operation, with its ground offensive to capture the city, mirrors the RSF's offensive on the Zamzam camp for internally displaced people (IDPs) in April, which led to hundreds of civilian deaths, widespread sexual violence and a humanitarian catastrophe.

In South Kordofan state, civilians also remain trapped by the fighting between the parties vying for control of the strategic town of Al Debibat. Meanwhile, in North Kordofan state, the RSF have reportedly surrounded the city of El Obeid, currently held by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and allied groups, and may attack it in the coming days, as announced by the RSF commander.

"We know where further escalation will lead," Türk said. "For too long already, the world has witnessed the unbound horrors unfolding in Sudan and the untold suffering of its people. Civilians must be protected at all costs. Violations and crimes must be thoroughly investigated and those responsible be held to account," he added.

"I urge the parties to ensure civilians can safely leave El Fasher, Al Debibat, and El Obeid, as well as other places where civilians may be trapped by the conflict. All parties must refrain from attacking civilian objects, ultimately lay down their weapons and put an end to hostilities," Türk said.

"I call on all States to exert their influence to press for a durable political solution, and to ensure respect by the parties to the conflict for international humanitarian law. I also urge them to press for an end to the flow of arms into the country, and to restrain the business interests sustaining this conflict."

ecoi.net description:

North Darfur and Kordofan regions: Civilian casualties, sexual violence, abductions and looting reported in several areas; the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have launched an attack on the city of El-Fashir after a year-long siege on 15 June 2025

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