

justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

Hello,

Welcome to this fortnightly roundup of news on justice and conflict in Sudan. Hyperlinks are underlined.

Friday 25 Jun 2021

BIG STORIES FIRST

- In televised comments, Hamdok [warned](#) that “fragmentation between components of the revolution, which left a vacuum exploited by its enemies and elements of the former regime” can “lead to a situation of chaos.” In particular, Hamdok highlighted the [urgent need](#) for comprehensive security sector reform. His comments come amid continued reports of a widening [split](#) between the army and [RSF](#).
 - The transitional government announced plans to create a new [joint security force](#) to tackle “insecurity” in Sudan. The force is set to include the army, police, General Intelligence Service (formerly NISS), and “representatives” from the parties to the peace process and the Public Prosecution. As Human Rights Watch [noted](#), “the formation of this nationwide joint force . . . has no legal basis neither under Sudan’s constitutional charter nor under the October 2020 Juba peace agreement.”
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GOVERNMENT REVOLUTION, TORTURE, RSF

No peace deal reached between government and SPLM-N al-Hilu

Despite some forward progress made in negotiations between the transitional government and SPLM-N al-Hilu, the latest round of talks have [ended](#) without a peace deal. A security advisor to South Sudan’s president said that the parties had reached “significant understandings.” Sudanese papers reported that the [integration](#) of the RSF into a single national army is a key [sticking point](#) in the negotiations. No time frame has been given for a return to talks.

Journalist detained, tortured

Abdel Moneim Madibo, a journalist with the “Darfur24” paper,” reported that he was [arrested and tortured](#) by SPLM forces (led by Sovereign Council member Tahir Abu Bakr Hajjar). Madibo was arrested while photographing the looted UNAMID site in South Darfur, and was allegedly severely beaten and held at gunpoint for hours.

Former governor of Central Darfur reportedly arrested

Sudanese officials [announced](#) the arrest of Jaafar Abdel Hakam on the basis of his alleged involvement in crimes against humanity in Darfur. Hakam was among those [listed](#) in the Commission of Inquiry (COI) on Darfur report.

Foreign minister warns (again) of mercenaries returning from Libya

In a meeting with her Libyan counterpart, Sudanese foreign minister Mariam al-Mahdi [warned](#) of the danger of “possible armed mercenaries returning from Libya to Sudan,” noting that this could threaten the “entire region’s security.”

Empowerment Removal Committee freezes 500 bank accounts

Salah Manna announced the [recovery](#) of roughly \$140 million in assets from individuals accused of money laundering, currency trading, and tax evasion. Relatedly, in his most recent briefing to the UN Security Council, the head of the UN’s Sudan Sanctions Committee [reaffirmed](#) the need for targeted sanctions in Sudan, including against former *Janjaweed* leader Musa Hilal.

IMF HIPC decision expected next week

The managing director of the IMF announced that the IMF has secured sufficient financial [pledges](#) to allow the Fund to provide comprehensive debt relief to Sudan; 101 IMF member countries have pledged more than \$1,415.7 million in financing. Separately, Sudan [eliminated](#) its customs exchange rate (the final step in a devaluation of its local currency) and has signed 9 concession [agreements](#) for gold and copper mining with 8 local and foreign companies.

Al-Burhan issues decree granting autonomy to the Two Areas

The head of the Sovereign Council, Lt. General al-Burhan, [issued](#) a constitutional decree granting the Blue Nile and South Kordofan regions autonomy, in line with the Juba Peace Agreement. In a statement, the SPLM-N [welcomed](#) the decision, saying it was an “important step in addressing the roots and causes of war,” and that the “autonomy system comes within the framework of strengthening Sudan’s unity.”

NEIGHBORS ETHIOPIA, EGYPT, DAM, MEDIATION

Dispute over the GERD continues to escalate

17 foreign ministers from the Arab League met in Doha to discuss the GERD; the Secretary-General [announced](#) during a press conference that “Arab countries strongly support the downstream countries [Egypt and Sudan],” and the foreign ministers backed calls for UN Security Council [intervention](#). Sudan’s irrigation minister said that Sudan is open to a partial [interim agreement](#), but has not provided more details.

Conflict in border areas still simmers

Just as tensions surrounding the GERD are steadily mounting, so is the potential for armed conflict in the disputed al-Fashaga area (on the border with Ethiopia and Sudan). The International Crisis Group’s latest [report](#) describes a “tense standoff with tanks and heavy weaponry” between Sudanese and Ethiopian troops. Elsewhere, it was reported that Sudan’s

foreign minister, Mariam al-Mahdi, has renewed Sudan's [request](#) for the removal of Ethiopian forces serving as peacekeepers in the Abyei region.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION CONFLICT, DISPLACEMENT, AID

Humanitarian aid reaches Two Areas for first time in a decade

UN humanitarian agencies, including the World Food Programme, UNICEF, UNHCR, and OCHA, have participated in [aid missions](#) to five SPLM-N al-Hilu controlled areas in the Blue Nile and South Kordofan states. International organisations have not been able to access communities in these areas since 2011, when conflict broke out between the government and SPLM-N al-Hilu.

Deteriorating security situation in South Kordofan

Violence in South Kordofan has escalated in recent weeks. The Sudanese Human Rights and Development Organisation (HUDO) reported that [armed groups](#) wearing RSF and Popular Defence Force (PDF) uniforms have looted markets, robbed civilians, and attacked civilians; at least 6 people have been killed, and an unknown number of others injured. The [governor](#) of the state has declared a state of emergency.

More than 63,000 refugees from Ethiopia have crossed into Sudan

According to Doctors without Borders (MSF), more than [63,000 refugees](#) from Ethiopia have crossed into Sudan as of late June. MSF has reported that nearly 14,000 refugees are located in the border area of Hamdayet, while 40,000 others are spread equally across camps in Um Rakuba and al-Tanideba (in al-Gedaref state).

**weekend
read**

The "[forgotten crisis](#)" in Darfur; Sudan [qualifies](#) for the FIFA Arab Cup 2021; women's political [participation](#), [perspectives](#) on peace; and Russia's [plans](#) in Sudan.

Thanks for reading, and see you in two weeks.

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