

justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

Hello,

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

Friday 5 Mar 2021

BIG STORIES FIRST

- Sudan's transitional government [approved the ratification](#) of the Convention against Torture and the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. This [historic milestone](#) comes after years of advocacy from Sudanese and international activists. The government must now submit instruments of ratification for both treaties.
 - The ICC [announced](#) the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Sudan. The MOU covers only the Prosecution's case against Ali Kushayb. Next up for the ICC is the confirmation of charges hearing in this case, currently set for 24 May.
 - Sudan's transitional government [devalued its currency](#) on 21 February and [announced a new regime](#) to "unify" official and black-market exchange rates. This decision was made as part of an effort to satisfy demands of foreign donors, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Other economic hurdles remain, including [cracking down](#) on gold smuggling.
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ACCOUNTABILITY TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE, DARFUR, RSF

Draft transitional justice commission bill open for public comment

After months of private wrangling, the draft transitional justice commission bill has been publicly released (available for download [here](#), along with the draft Peace and Anti-Corruption Commissions laws).

Consultations for the draft law on the National Human Rights Commission are also [underway](#).

Accountability for crimes committed in Darfur?

Sudan's attorney general, Tajelsir el Hibir, [reaffirmed](#) the transitional government's commitment to prosecuting those accused of committing serious international crimes in Darfur. Aisha Musa el Saeed, a member of the Sovereign Council, said that laws allowing for the trial of these individuals had been approved by both the Sovereign Council and Council of Ministers.

Rapid Support Forces (RSF) continue unlawful detentions

Human Rights Watch has released a new [investigation](#) detailing continued practices of detention, torture and other forms of ill-treatment by the RSF, despite the recent [directive](#) by Sudan's attorney general limiting detention and arrest authorities to the police and Public Prosecution.

New activity from the Empowerment Removal Committee

The Empowerment Removal Committee [announced](#) on 11 February that it had gathered sufficient information about the activities of former officials under the al-Bashir regime to begin [criminal proceedings](#).

1989 coup trial postponed, again

The ongoing proceedings against those accused of plotting and implementing the 1989 coup which brought Omar al-Bashir into power have been [postponed](#) until 9 March after at least one defendant, Nafeh ali Nafeh, contracted COVID-19. It remains critical that the Sudanese government ensures the health of all those in its custody.

No answer to “shadow brigades” questioning

Ahmed Haroun, former National Congress Party chairman (and one of five men wanted by the ICC), and Ali Osman Taha, former First Vice President of Sudan, [refused](#) to give statements to the Public Prosecution Office regarding the paramilitaries known as the “shadow brigades.”

NEIGHBORS ETHIOPIA, EGYPT, DAM, MEDIATION

No end in sight to dam and border disputes with Ethiopia

In late February, Sudan [accused](#) Ethiopia of an “unforgivable insult” after Ethiopia's foreign ministry [said](#) that any conflict could “only serve the interests of a third party at the expense of the Sudanese people.” This week, Sudanese forces [drew closer](#) to the Ethiopian militias stationed inside Sudan's border, and Sudan and Egypt signed a joint military cooperation [agreement](#)—none of which makes GERD negotiations any [easier](#).

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION FAMILY SUPPORT, DISPLACEMENT, VACCINES

Record numbers of displaced from conflict

The Geneva-based Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre [reported](#) that the violence in West, South, and North Darfur at the beginning of the year resulted in 183,000 displacements—the highest number of displacements in six years. More than 60 percent of those displaced are under 18.

Significant humanitarian aid needed in Sudan

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has released its latest “[humanitarian needs overview](#).” OCHA estimates that 13.4 people—29% of Sudan's population—will need humanitarian assistance in 2021, in an increase of 44 percent since 2020.

Sudan launches Family Support Program

“Thamarat,” the Family Support Program, was officially [launched](#) on 24 February. The program is designed to deliver cash transfers to support vulnerable Sudanese families who may be adversely

impacted by ongoing economic reforms. Phase I of the program will [cover](#) more than 11 million people. Donors have stepped up to provide significant funding, including the EU, which has [pledged](#) €305 million towards the program.

800,000 vaccines doses arrive in Sudan

A shipment of [COVID-19 vaccines](#) made it to Sudan on 3 March. Sudan is the first country in the Middle East and North Africa region to receive vaccines through the World Health Organization's COVAX Initiative. Vaccine distribution is set to begin [next week](#).

weekend read

International Peace Institute discusses the [path ahead for UNITAMS](#); and the International Crisis Group sets out key steps for [implementation](#) of the Juba Peace Agreement.

*Thanks for reading, and see you in two weeks.
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