

# justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

Hello,

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

Friday 20 Aug 2021

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## BIG STORIES FIRST

- Sudan's transitional government officially ratified 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. Both treaties will enter into force on 9 September 2021.
  - ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan [visited](#) Khartoum in the second week of August, meeting with leaders from the [Ministry of Justice](#), [Sovereign Council](#), and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, among others. In remarks at the end of his visit, Khan [announced](#) the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding that includes all individuals against whom warrants of arrest have been issued, including Omar al-Bashir, and said that the OTP will open an [office](#) in Sudan. Though reporting announcing the imminent [transfer](#) of Bashir and others to The Hague was premature, many ambassadors and embassies have announced their [support](#) for the work of the ICC in Sudan.
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## ACCOUNTABILITY NISS, LAW REFORM

### Mahjoub al-Taj Mahjoub trial continues

The second and third sessions in the trial of eleven NISS agents allegedly responsible for the torture and killing of medical student Mahjoub al-Taj Mahjoub [have been held](#). The detective responsible for the investigation still has not appeared; the court has issued an arrest warrant for the detective. The director general of the police has also been [notified](#) about the detective's failure to comply.

### Minister of Justice meets with lawyers to discuss reform initiatives

Representatives from the Legal Committee of the FFC, the Steering Committee of the Sudanese Bar Association, the Democratic Alliance of Lawyers and the Legal Committee of Peace Partners met with Minister of Justice Nasredeen Abdulbari to discuss how to [strengthen cooperation](#) between the groups. In particular, the meeting addressed cooperation on legal reforms, reform of the human rights and justice system, the draft law for the High Judicial Council, and other laws concerning the transition. A permanent mechanism will be created to facilitate increased cooperation.

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## GOVERNMENT SANCTIONS, GOVERNOR, ETHIOPIA

### **UN Secretary General recommends benchmarks to end Sudan sanctions**

In a [new report](#), UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has proposed four benchmarks for Sudan's transitional government to meet that could lead to the lifting of the UN arms embargo and other sanctions. The benchmarks require progress on: political and economic governance issues; transitional security arrangements in Darfur; the national action plan for the protection of civilians; and transitional justice and accountability. The report notes that the security situation in Darfur has improved, but that sexual violence, recruitment of child soldiers, and intercommunal violence remain a significant concern.

### **Prime Minister Hamdok announces new initiative to “protect transition”**

Hamdok [announced](#) in a press conference the establishment of a [mechanism](#) “because of our failure to create a national project that is agreed upon.” The mechanism, which will be chaired by Maj Gen Fadlallah Burma of the National Umma Party, has been described as a representative body tasked with engaging in national dialogue. Following the announcement, Hamdok [tweeted](#) that he has “followed with interest the reactions and divergence of opinions” on the planned mechanism, and that he would listen to all comments.

### **Wali of al-Gedaref state removed after controversial video surfaces**

Suliman Ali Muhammed Musa, the *wali* (governor) of al-Gedaref state, was [removed](#) from his position by Prime Minister Hamdok after videos were shared in which Musa vouched his [support](#) for the National Congress Party and former president al-Bashir. The Forces of Freedom and Change council in Gedaref called for Musa's removal and said that this information was not available at the time of his nomination. Elsewhere, Minni Minawi was officially [inaugurated](#) as governor of Darfur.

### **Sudan recalls ambassador to Ethiopia**

Sudan has [recalled](#) its ambassador to Ethiopia, reportedly after Ethiopia rejected Sudan's offer to mediate on the ongoing conflict in Tigray. A spokesperson for Ethiopian prime minister Abiy Ahmed recently said that Sudan is “not a credible party” and has failed to [stay neutral](#) in the dispute.

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## **HUMANITARIAN SITUATION** FLOODING, CONFLICT, DISPLACEMENT

### **UN estimates over 3 million people internally displaced in Sudan**

In its August [Mobility Tracking Sudan](#) report, IOM upwardly revised its estimate of IDPs in Sudan by over 637,000, bringing the total of IDP individuals in eight states to 3,036,593. IOM noted that the majority (57%) of those were displaced between 2003 and 2010.

### **Flooding and heavy rains continue across country**

Heavy rains and flash flooding have been reported in 11 of 18 states. UNOCHA [reported](#) that over 55,000 people were affected as of 17 August 2021; at least 3,380 homes have been damaged and another 6,270 destroyed, and many individuals, including IDPs in camps, are now at risk of vector-borne diseases as a result of stagnant rainwater. A [bridge](#) linking Ethiopia and Sudan was also swept away in rain.

### **Fighting, armed conflict ongoing in North Darfur**

A joint force (made up of army forces, the RSF, police and others) was [ambushed](#) by unidentified gunmen while en route to the area west of al-Fashir (North Darfur). At least 7 forces were reportedly [killed](#) and many others injured. A high-level government delegation subsequently traveled to North Darfur to investigate this incident and recent violence south of al-Fashir. [Attacks on villages](#) in the area continued into the second week of August, including in [South Darfur](#) (see [also](#)). Governor Minni Minawi has said

that [coordination](#) is underway to form a promised joint force for the protection of civilians. An ambush of RSF members in [West Kordofan](#) also left one person killed and others wounded.

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## weekend read

Post-revolution [cinema](#); the planned [railroad](#); normalization of [relations with Israel](#); Sudan's [youth and the transition](#); Sudan in the "Freedom in the World 2021" [report](#); and Sudanese [market trends](#).

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

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