

justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

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

Friday 5 Nov 2021

MILITARY HOLD ON POWER CONTINUES FOR SECOND WEEK

Like [last week](#), this edition of the Justice + Conflict newsletter deviates from the usual format and provides a day-by-day picture of key events over the past week; this is not a comprehensive account.

Saturday (30 Oct)

- While exact numbers are unknown, at least [several hundred thousand](#) people took to Khartoum's streets to [protest the coup](#) in Sudan; other protests took place across Sudan, including in Bahri, Omdurman, Nyala, Port Sudan, Kassala, Gedarif and Dongola. Globally, protests were held in more than 50 cities—and the [North Pole](#). See [here](#) and [here](#) for a useful summary of the primary demands of several prominent neighbourhood resistance committees.
- At around 5 pm, several hours after the protests began (at 1 pm local time), security forces began using tear gas and [live gunfire](#). In Omdurman, witnesses said that the army prevented people from being transported to nearby hospitals.
- The [Central Committee of Sudan Doctors](#) reported that [three protestors](#) were killed, and tallied a number of other injuries, including cases of paralysis as a result of a beating with the butt of a gun, suffocation, and protestors being run over by “Thatcher” vehicles (Land Cruiser pickups, historically used by NISS and the RSF).
- In Darfur, military intelligence arrested several activists, including the political secretary of the state Umma Party, members of the local professional associations, and the Director General of the Ministry of Urban Planning, Director General of the Ministry of Finance, and the Director General of the Ministry of Health.
- In the evening, reports circulated on social media that Prime Minister Hamdok had been re-arrested and transported to an unknown location. These reports were [false](#).
- Internet outages [continue](#).

Sunday (31 Oct)

- Credible sources reported on Sunday that key NCP members were [released](#) from prison, including [Ibrahim Ghandour](#) (former head of the NCP and foreign minister under al-Bashir), Islamist leader Mohamed Ali al-Jazouli, and former security officials Mohamed Hamed Tabidi and Alshazali Almadih. Other Bashir allies, including former health minister Mamoun Humeida and businessman Abdalbasit Hamza are also thought to have been released last week.
- Security forces are said to have [raided the al-Shajara](#) and al-Hamadab districts in southern Khartoum, beating and [detaining](#) members of the resistance committees.
- Al-Burhan dismissed the acting Public Prosecutor, Mubarak Mohammed Osman, as well as the Deputy Governor of the Bank of Sudan, Farouk Kambrisi.
- International media reports on a possible [mediation proposal](#), which would give Prime Minister Hamdok broader powers, including the ability to appoint his own technocratic cabinet. The proposal under discussion would also reportedly replace the 14-member Sovereign Council with a three-person honorary council, and a legislative council would be composed of members from all political parties, rebel groups, and the military; the military would continue to lead a Security and Defense Council. Activists have responded with dismay to any calls for a return to the pre-coup status quo.
- Some telephone and SMS services are restored, but mobile Internet data is still out.
- Resistance committees are slated to release localised “schedules of resistance escalation” (eg, [Khartoum North](#)). See here for links to various resistance committees’ Facebook [pages](#).

Monday (1 Nov)

- One day after his apparent release, Ibrahim Ghandour is reportedly [re-arrested](#).
- In east Sudan, the High Council of Beja Nazirs said that it would temporarily lift the six-week blockade of Port Sudan (Sudan’s main seaport). A secretary for the High Council announced that barricades would be removed for a month to allow for the establishment of a new government. The group had [demanded](#) the replacement of the civilian government and called for the dissolution of the Eastern Track of the Juba Peace Agreement.
- Al-Burhan announced that three ministers aligned with the JEM rebel group would retain their positions, including Gibril Ibrahim (Minister of Finance), and the ministers of minerals and infrastructure.
- 48 countries [called](#) for the UN Human Rights Council to host a special session on Sudan, noting that a “special session is needed because of the importance and urgency of the situation.” Last week, in a [joint letter](#), NGOs had urged the HRC to take this urgent step.
- Security forces used live ammunition during raids in Omdurman, injuring at least four people. Raids also continued in the al-Shajara and al-Hamadab districts in southern Khartoum, with arrests of members of the local resistance committees.

- Security forces reportedly arrested the Acting General Manager of the Sudan National Petroleum Corporation in Khartoum, while arrests continued in eastern Darfur. The HUDO Centre also released a [statement](#) highlighting a campaign of arrests in Blue Nile State.
- In Kassala, 21 reports were filed against participants in the 30 October protests.
- In The Hague, the ICC Appeals Chamber [rejected](#) the defence's jurisdictional challenge in the Ali Kushayb case, finding that the Court is properly exercising jurisdiction over Kushayb on the basis that he was in a position to know and comply with international humanitarian law and customary law obligations. The Appeals Chamber also rejected the defence's argument regarding the illegality of UN Security Council Resolution 1593.

Tuesday (2 Nov)

- Arrests of activists, members of the Forces of Freedom and Change, and resistance committee members continue across Sudan, particularly outside of Khartoum. Other sources reported that [large numbers](#) of military forces, including some plainclothes forces, were dispersed throughout south Khartoum and using live fire against civilians.
- At least five professors and deans at al-Gezira University were reportedly [arrested](#).
- The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to peaceful protest and assembly, Clément Voule, urged the military in a [statement](#) to "immediate cease its clampdown on peaceful protests." The Special Rapporteur also noted that the arrest and incommunicado detention of activists, including journalists, students, human rights defenders, and lawyers is "considered as enforced disappearance."
- Mediation efforts continue on a variety of fronts. Some sources [report](#) that "one proposal under discussion would see Hamdok given greater powers but with a new cabinet more palatable to the army."
- The UN Human Rights Council [announced](#) that it would hold a special session on Friday 5 November, following a request made by 48 countries on Monday (including 18 members of the HRC). Sudan's Universal Period Review, scheduled for Wednesday 3 November, was postponed until January 2022.

Wednesday (3 Nov)

- The Ministry of Culture and Information said in a brief statement on [Facebook](#) that "Prime Minister Dr. Abdalla Hamdok, who is detained in his residence by the order of the coup authorities, adheres to the conditions for releasing all detainees and resorting constitutional institutions prior to 25 October, before engaging in any dialogue" (reiterating comments [publicised](#) on Monday 1 November).
- Saudi Arabia, the UAE, the United States and the UK called for the restoration of Sudan's civilian-led government. The [joint statement](#) was the first in which UAE and Saudi Arabia made this call; notably, Egypt did not join.
- On Wednesday evening, media [reported](#) that al-Burhan visited Egypt on November 24, the evening before the coup (and just after US Special Envoy Jeffrey Feltman left Sudan). Sources familiar with the meeting between al-Burhan

and al-Sisi said that “al-Sisi reassured his fellow general.” The US is also said to have asked the [Israeli government](#) to urge the military to restore the civilian government.

- Al-Burhan [said](#) that some of the political detainees would be released on Thursday “in order to allow dialogue.” A Sudanese investigative journalist [reported](#) that a high-ranking military doctor, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that “some of the political detainees suffer from wounds, visible swelling of the face and injuries to the bone as a result of beatings and severe torture,” and that some of them are unable to walk. The same doctor said that two of the detainees are in intensive care. Lawyers attempting to speak to detainees have not been able to ascertain their whereabouts or any charges against them.
- Arrests continue throughout Sudan, including in [Darfur](#), where at least 47 individuals were detained in Zalingei, Nyala, and Aldi’ein (including lawyers, government officials, and members of the professional associations). Many individuals are also arrested in Blue Nile State.
- The Sudanese Professionals Association issued a [statement](#), saying it had presented a proposal for a political declaration which is being discussed with “our partners in the revolutionary forces in the resistance committees, movements and other revolutionary forces.”
- The Darfur Bar Association, along with nearly 40 other lawyers, has submitted a [memorandum](#) to the Public Prosecution, demanding the release of 43 detainees in Darfur and (accurately) describing their continued incommunicado detention as enforced disappearance.
- Internet connectivity remains largely disrupted for the 10th day.

Thursday (4 Nov)

- The Consumer Protection Agency, with the help of several lawyers, filed a lawsuit against telecommunications companies concerning the Internet blackout. One source suggested that the Sudanese [telecommunications companies](#) have “staff seconded to them by the security services, and that it is they who switch off the Internet on the orders of the national telecoms council.”
- The Association of Sudanese Mental Health Specialists announced that it would provide mental health services for the families of those who have been killed since 25 October, as well as for all those injured.
- Resistance committees continue to reject any power sharing agreements with the military (see, for example, this [joint statement](#) from resistance committees in the greater Omdurman area).
- Several individuals were arrested from the [Khartoum State Water Authority](#), according to a statement from the Sudanese Engineers Association.
- Al-Burhan ordered the release of [four civilian ministers](#): Hamza Baloul (Minister of Information and Culture), Hashem Hasab al-Rasoul (Minister of Communications), Ali Gedou (Minister of Trade), and Youssef Adam (Minister of Youth and Sports). The other ministers not said to be slated for released are supposedly facing criminal charges, though no details on the possible charges have been released.

- Media reported several [prominent new arrests](#) in Khartoum: Taha Osman Isahaq, a member of the Empowerment Removal Committee, and Sudanese Congress Party members Sharif Mohammed Otham and Hamza Farouk. The three were arrested after meeting with UN Special Representative to the Secretary General Volker Perthes, near the UNITAMS headquarters; Perthes issued a [statement](#) condemning the arrests, as did [UNITAMS](#). Mohamed Abdelbasit, the head of the preliminary committee of the PetroEnergy Workers Union, was also [arrested](#).
- Reports continue to emerge of the use of summary trials and [arbitrary detentions](#) across Sudan, as well as reports that individuals are being transported to once-defunct NISS ghost houses for interrogations. A spokesperson for the Sudanese Professionals Association said on Thursday that the Internet blackout has made it difficult to know how many people have gone missing, but that the figures are in the hundreds.
- A draft resolution presented by the UK, Germany, Norway and the US for discussion at Friday's special session of the UN Human Rights Council would create a special rapporteur to monitor ongoing human rights violations.
- UN envoy Volker Perthes said that ongoing [negotiations](#) had yielded the outline of a potential deal on a return to power-sharing, including the reinstatement of Hamdok, and urged an agreement in "days not weeks."

Friday (5 Nov)

- The Association of Sudanese Lawyers and Legal Practitioners in the UK (ASLLP), supported by Doughty Street Chambers, [filed complaints](#) with UN Special Rapporteurs for freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly, calling for action to be taken in relation to Sudan's repeated shutdowns of its cellular and mobile internet networks.
- The UN Human Rights Council met in a [special session](#) to discuss the human rights situation in Sudan. The Council [adopted](#) a resolution tasking the UN Commissioner for Human Rights with designating an expert on human rights in Sudan, to report on the country "until its civilian-led government is restored." The Council also requested that the Commissioner report to it, and hold public debates, on the situation in Sudan. NGOs are still calling for "more robust action," such as an [independent investigative](#) mechanism to ensure accountability for abuses.

Thanks for reading, and see you in one or two weeks.

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