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UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

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

Friday 12 Nov 2021

AL-BURHAN ANNOUNCES SECOND ITERATION OF SOVEREIGN COUNCIL

This edition of the Justice + Conflict newsletter provides a day-by-day picture of key events over the past week; this is not a comprehensive account.

Saturday (6 Nov)

- The Arab League announced that a high-level delegation would travel to Khartoum to “contribute to solving the crisis.” Separately, counselor Tut Galwak – the head of the Southern mediation delegation and security affairs adviser to South Sudan’s president – left Sudan. International media [reported](#) that media efforts had hit a “semi-deadlock,” and that the military had tightened restrictions on Prime Minister Hamdok (further limiting his ability to hold meetings or make political contacts). At least three Sudanese-led mediation efforts also continue.
- Saturday was the first of a two-day nationwide strike called by the Sudanese Professionals Association; a “night of [barricades](#)” was also held across Sudan. Resistance committees released their schedule of activities for the next week; the Karari resistance committee, for example, called for a night of barricades on Saturday, to be continued through the week (with a break on Tuesday for a return to work and public speeches). Another “march of millions” is announced for [Saturday 13 November](#).
- In Kalakla, Khartoum, the local resistance committee [organised](#) a series of speeches and discussions regarding the coup. Similar discussions were held in Bahri, al-Shajara and al-Hamadab to educate the public on how to continue nonviolent resistance activities.
- The Sudanese Professionals Association announced the creation of a [new political platform](#), including a demand for the formation of a purely civilian transitional authority over a four-year period. The new platform also calls for the dissolution of the RSF and restructuring of the military, and for the dissolution of the constitutional charter.
- The Council of Deans of the University of Khartoum announced the [indefinite suspension](#) of studies, “in rejection of the military coup.”

Sunday (7 Nov)

- Security forces fired tear gas at teachers protesting the coup in Khartoum. The Sudanese Teachers Committee [reported](#) that 87 teachers were arrested, though other lawyers put the figure at [110 individuals](#) – all detained without possibility of release on bail because they were arrested under Sudan’s emergency law. A pregnant teacher and member of the Teachers Committee was reportedly beaten to the extent that she suffered a miscarriage.
- Other protests were held in Medani, Nyala, and Atbara, where crowds protested the reappointment of Bashir loyalists in local government. Security forces continue to carry out a campaign of arrests in Darfur and throughout Sudan.
- In his first public remarks since 25 October, Hemedti made a [televised statement](#) in which he said that the coup “came to correct the course of the people’s revolution, and preserve the security and stability of the country.”
- Al-Burhan announced the dismissal of the Vice Chancellor of the University of Khartoum, Fadwa Abdulrahman.
- Some reports indicated that GIS (formerly NISS) had agreed to receive and transmit some care packages to political detainees who are being held incommunicado. Separately, activists estimate that the arrests of 400-600 people have been confirmed since the coup.
- In televised comments, al-Burhan [announced](#) that he would not run for office in the elections planned (by al-Burhan) in July 2023. In the same interview, al-Burhan also said that security forces were not responsible for the death of any protestors.
- Media [reported](#) that al-Burhan asked three FFC leaders to deliver a proposal to Hamdok, suggesting that they appoint Hamdok as head of the Sovereign Council and choose an alternative for him in the Council of Ministers through consensus. The FFC leaders rejected the proposal, adhering to the same conditions set out by Hamdok (ie, the release of all political detainees and return to the pre-25 October configuration before negotiations).
- Political detainees in Wad Madani began a [hunger strike](#) in protest of prison conditions.

Monday (8 Nov)

- Internet remained largely disrupted in Sudan for a 15th day.
- US Secretary of State Antony Blinken [met](#) with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry; Blinken said that the [two countries](#) have a “shared interest in getting the country’s democratic transition back on track.” Egypt has not joined other States in calling for a return to a civilian-led transition.
- A UN [memorandum](#) circulated on Monday advising UN agencies on how to interact with the military-led government. The memo cites the UN Security Council’s 28 October statement, treating “Prime Minister Hamdok as continuing to be Prime Minister and the Ministers that were in his Government prior to 25 October as continuing to be in place.” Accordingly, the memo states that all “UN Agencies are cordially advised to conduct meetings . . . with persons claiming to be taking over the position of Ministers, Commissioners, Governors and other members of PM Hamdok’s Government only when necessary” for several stated reasons.
- Al-Burhan and deputies continue to take steps to consolidate the coup, including by terminating the [positions of civil servants](#) across Sudan. On Monday alone, for example,

the acting governor of Khartoum issued a decision terminating the assignments of the Director-General of the Khartoum State Ministry of Social Development, the Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, the Director-General of the Khartoum State Television and Radio Corporation, the Director of the General Administration of Transport, Petroleum and Communications, and the positions of advisers to the Governor for the service sector and strategic planning.

Tuesday (9 Nov)

- A Sudanese court ordered the country's three main telecommunications providers (Zain, MTN, Sudani) to [restore Internet access](#), following a lawsuit filed on behalf of the Sudanese Consumer Protection Agency. There was no indication that the Internet had been restored following the decision, though some reports suggested that between five and eight plaintiffs in the case regained service. The Consumer Protection Agency said it would file a new lawsuit on 10 November if telecommunications companies failed to comply with the court order.
- Al-Burhan has reportedly created a committee to recover funds and assets from the Empowerment Removal Committee. According to local activists, members of the Empowerment Removal Committees in Kassala, Gedarif, East and Central Darfur continue to be arrested. In Darfur, in particular, there were also accounts of committee records being carted away by security forces.
- In an interview, Gibril Ibrahim (Hamdok's finance minister, who has retained his position post-coup) [said](#) that the world will "move on" and that Sudan is "heading towards a new government of technocrats and will expand political participation."
- The steering committee for judicial workers announced a civil disobedience campaign, to continue on Wednesday 10 November, while the Democratic Alliance of Lawyers condemned the arbitrary arrest and detention of teachers.
- Military Intelligence [arrested](#) Mohamed Elkhatim, a prosecutor for the Empowerment Removal Committee in Sinja (Sennar State); Elkhatim was reportedly held for several hours in solitary confinement.

Wednesday (10 Nov)

- Worrying accounts have emerged of intimidation of witnesses in key investigations, including the 3 June investigation led by lawyer Nabil Adib. Sudanese NGOs have reported that at least three female witnesses have been detained and interrogated.
- The Central Committee of Sudan Doctors (CCSD) said in a [statement](#) that security forces attacked a protest organised by El Obeid's resistance committee. Protestors were reportedly beaten with batons and met with tear gas; 17 civilians were detained and taken into custody, including Dr. Nazifa Awad, a member of the CCSD. Awad was "beaten, detained, and tortured during the way to the police station."
- Lawyers have submitted a request to the Public Prosecution concerning the status and whereabouts of political leaders detained since 25 October, highlighting that the detainees' families still do not know their places of detention – likely constituting enforced disappearances.
- Attacks on teachers in Darfur continued, with at least 13 teachers arrested to-date in South Darfur. Other teachers were arrested in North Kordofan after a protest organised by schoolchildren.

- At least five [detainees](#) in East Darfur are reported to have contracted COVID-19. The CCSD stated that none of the detainees had received medical treatment, and that an effort to transfer the individuals to a better-equipped hospital was denied after administrators cited the [withholding](#) of approval from RSF command.
- The Ministry of Information released a directive to local media outlets, instructing them to “highlight harm caused to national institutions because of the negative actions of some protestors,” and “showing that life is returning to normal,” among other talking points.
- At its first press conference since the coup, the FFC publicly [rejected](#) any negotiation with the military.

Thursday (11 Nov)

- On Thursday afternoon, al-Burhan announced the [reconstitution](#) of the dissolved [Sovereign Council](#), re-appointing himself head and Hemedti as deputy. The other military members of the pre-coup Sovereign Council have also retained their seats; the 14-member body includes some civilians representing armed movements from Sudan’s regions, but none from the FFC. It was not immediately clear whether the ex-rebel leaders (Malik Agar, [Alhady Idris](#), and Altaher Hagar) agreed to their appointment. Al-Burhan was [sworn in](#) on Thursday evening. In a Facebook statement, the Ministry for Culture and Information said that the announcement was an “[extension](#)” of the coup.
- A judge issued a [second order](#) to telecoms firms Zain and MTN, and local providers Sudatel and Canar, to restore Internet [connections](#). The media advisor to al-Burhan claimed courts have no jurisdiction over the Internet because this falls under the remit of the National Defence Council, and the military [announced](#) via Sudan’s Telecommunications and Post Regulatory Authority that its order to stop Internet access “overrides any decisions from other parties.”
- Attacks on Darfuri villagers have increased since the 25 October coup; Radio Dabanga [reported](#) that more than 2,000 families have since fled to Zamzam IDP camp.
- The UN Security Council met for [closed consultations](#), at the request of the UK, Estonia, France, Ireland, Norway and the US. UNITAMS head Volker Perthes [briefed](#) the UNSC, highlighting his “concern that the unilateral appointment of a new Sovereign Council . . . makes it increasingly difficult to return to the constitutional order.”
- The CCSD announced the [arrest](#) of Dr. Mohamed Nagi al-Assam by Military Intelligence; [al-Assam](#) has been a vocal critic of the coup. He is being held in an unknown location.
- 11 of 31 government universities have [announced](#) the indefinite suspension of classes in protest of the coup.
- In Sweden, prosecutors brought [charges](#) against the chairman and former CEO of Lundin Energy for complicity in war crimes carried out by the Sudanese army and allied militias in southern Sudan from 1999 – 2003. Sweden began an investigation in 2010 following a [report](#) by Dutch NGO PAX. See [here](#) for a press release from the Swedish Prosecution Authority.

Friday (12 Nov)

- A Sudanese human rights lawyer, on behalf of a coalition of judicial workers, human rights activists, and civil society organisations, filed a criminal case under Articles 50 and 51 of the [Criminal Law Act 1991](#), and Articles 10 and 162 of the [Armed Forces Act 2007](#). The case was filed against the leaders of the coup, namely al-Burhan, Hemedti, Abdelrahim Hamdan Dagalo, Minni Minnawi, Gibril Ibrahim, Mubarak Ardol (head of the Sudanese Mineral Resources Company), and the signatories of the Central and North Paths of the JPA.
- Preparations continue for [mass protests](#) on Saturday 13 November. REDRESS has previously highlighted the [potential risks](#) to protestors; security forces must refrain from using excessive or lethal force against protestors.
- The Troika, the European Union, and Switzerland issued a [statement](#) expressing that they are “gravely concerned by the purported appointment of Sudan’s Sovereign Council in violation of the 2019 Constitutional Declaration.”
- In its first Facebook post since 24 October, the Sovereign Council [announced](#) that Hemedti had been sworn in as deputy chair (in front of al-Burhan and the apparent chief justice).

Thanks for reading.

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