

justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

Hello,

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

Friday 17 Dec 2021

BIG STORIES FIRST

- Violence has escalated dramatically in Darfur, with many hundreds killed or injured and more than [83,000 people](#) displaced in Central, North, and West Darfur since October 2021 (in addition to thousands displaced in South Kordofan); displacement levels are [eight times higher](#) than in 2020, according to UNITAMS head Volker Perthes. Human rights monitoring organisations have [highlighted](#) reports of sexual violence and the [destruction](#) of villages, and at least [138 people](#) were killed in West Darfur alone (as of 10 December). Communities in West Darfur signed a [non-aggression pact](#) on 15 December; it remains to be seen whether the agreement will hold. An estimated 6.2 million people are [projected](#) to require humanitarian assistance in Sudan in 2022.
- Large-scale protests were held on 6 December (the 7th nationwide demonstration since 25 October) and 13 December, with another demonstration planned for Sunday 19 December. Some [reports](#) on 6 December indicated that knife-wielding gangs were seen threatening protestors. Security forces continued their heavy use of [teargas](#) and [arrests](#) of protestors; on 13 December alone, at least [62 people](#) were injured, largely by teargas canisters shot at close range. The government has closed key [bridges](#) in Khartoum in advance of Sunday's demonstrations, presumably to limit protestors' ability to converge en masse in Khartoum's centre. Separately, following a month-long stay in the hospital, an 18 year-old [died](#) on 14 December after being shot in the neck during a protest, bringing the total number of individuals killed following the coup to 45. Other protestors have been sent to [Egypt](#) for additional medical treatment.

GOVERNMENT EASTERN TRACK, RESISTANCE COMMITTEES, FUNDING

Eastern track of Juba Peace Agreement is suspended

Hemedti [announced](#) a two-week [suspension](#) of the Eastern Track of the Juba Peace Agreement until a new "accord" is reached with eastern Sudanese stakeholders. A mediation team from

South Sudan is expected to return to Sudan to support this effort. The High Council of Beja Nazirs had threatened to once again shut down Sudan's main port on the Red Sea, as just before the coup, if the government refused to repeal the Eastern Track agreement [before 19 December](#). See here for a good analysis of the [political dynamics](#) surrounding the JPA. Not all parties to the Eastern Track deal agree that it should be suspended.

UNITAMS head briefs the UN Security Council

Beleaguered UNITAMS head Volker Perthes, who has been criticised by many within Sudan as being overly receptive to the 21 November political agreement, [briefed](#) the UN Security Council. Among other key points, he said that the restoration of [political space](#) can serve as the main indicator for a return to a democratic transition path, and that authorities must ensure a conducive atmosphere for credible elections.

Resistance committees announce intention to roll out political roadmap

Sudan's resistance committees plan to publish a [political roadmap](#) by the end of the year, independent of the FFC. The roadmap is expected to include discussion of economic issues, the transitional justice process, foreign policy, and security sector reform. See this [useful analysis](#) of the evolution of Sudan's "popular political forces," and here for a [profile](#) of local resistance and service committees. At around the same time, Hamdok said on [Twitter](#) that a new transitional government had not yet been formed because political actors must first engage in a serious dialogue to agree on a path forward based on the Juba Peace Agreement; he did, however, announce the [replacement](#) of 15 state governors, undoing steps taken by al-Burhan immediately following the coup.

ICRC criticised for signing MoU with RSF

In a widely panned announcement, the ICRC-Sudan said that it had signed an [MoU](#) with the RSF to provide trainings on international humanitarian law (also known as the laws of armed conflict). The EU and OHCHR have previously been criticised for reportedly attempting a similar [training](#) (the EU has since [clarified](#) that it does not provide any support to the RSF, and that all EU-funded activities are carried out by development agencies of member states, NGOs and other bodies.)

Sudan loses access to \$650 million in international funding

Finance minister Gibril Ibrahim said that Sudan was [unable to access](#) \$650 million in international funding in November when assistance was paused after the coup, including \$500 million from the World Bank and \$150 million in "special drawing rights" from the International Monetary Fund. Ibrahim told reporters that revenue from gold and other state companies "working in different fields" would allow Sudan to continue paying necessary bills and fund reforms; at the same time, Sudan has reportedly asked [allies](#) in the Gulf for financial support to cover looming shortfalls. Many protestors have urged foreign governments not to resume [development aid](#) to Sudan, and particularly the military.

Al-Burhan accuses foreign missions of "inciting" against army

In comments at a military graduation ceremony in the River Nile state, al-Burhan reportedly [said](#) that "some missions are inciting against the army. We will not leave them, we warn them and will take measures." He did not specify which missions. On the other hand, on

16 December, the US, Saudi Arabia, UAE and UK issued a [statement](#) saying that the 21 November political agreement is “encouraging,” and the “first step to resolving Sudan’s political challenges and returning the country to its transition to democracy based on the 2019 Constitutional Document.”

ACCOUNTABILITY SANCTIONS, INVESTIGATIONS, MISINFORMATION

Public Prosecution announces the creation of another specialised committee

The newly-appointed attorney general, Khalifa Ahmed, announced the formation of a committee to investigate any violations occurring since 25 October 2021. The Public Prosecution has reportedly received official [letters](#) from the RSF and SAF, stating that their members did not participate in the violent dispersal of protestors (claims which are easily disproven). As REDRESS and others have previously [highlighted](#), given the track record of the other committees created under the pre-coup transitional government in securing justice, including for the violations of 3 June 2019, little should be expected to emerge from this body. Separately, an ICC delegation traveled to Sudan this week; the new ICC Prosecutor said recently that situations referred to the Court by the UN Security Council, including Sudan, are [top priorities](#) for his office.

Sovereign Council files communications against AFP

Al-Burhan’s office announced on [Facebook](#) that it had filed a communication with the Information Crimes Prosecution and Press and Publications Prosecution against Mona Zaki, the director of AFP’s Khartoum office. The communication was filed under articles concerning “honesty and integrity in journalistic work” and “the dissemination of information related to national security and the movements of the armed forces.” More specifically, the communication relates to AFP reporting that al-Burhan had said planned elections would be open to all forces, including the military. The statement said that this case sets a “dangerous precedent that calls for accountability before the law.”

Sudan-related legislation moves through US Congress

Several pieces of Sudan-related legislation are under consideration in Congress: the [Sudan Democracy Act](#) (and a concurrent resolution condemning the coup) in the House of Representatives, and a related [bill](#) in the Senate. The legislation would mandate sanctions against any individuals responsible for undermining the democratic transition in Sudan (or those who have attempted to do so). No leaders of the coup, or perpetrators of any subsequent human rights violations, have been designated for sanctions to-date.

Defence in 1989 coup case argues constitutional document is no longer valid

Former president Omar al-Bashir’s defence lawyer reportedly submitted an appeal arguing that the Constitutional Chart 2019, which forms key government institutions, is no longer valid as a result of the 25 October coup (presumably also invalidating the ongoing proceedings).

weekend read

Artistic [freedom](#) in post-Bashir, post-coup Sudan; [US influence](#) in Sudan; a video [overview](#) of the coup and its aftermath; an interview with a protestor who [lost his leg](#) after being shot; watch award-winning short film "[Al-Sit](#)," now available to stream.

Thanks for reading.

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