

justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

Hello,

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

Friday 18 Feb 2022

BIG STORIES FIRST

- Arrests [continue](#) across Sudan. In the past two weeks, BBC [journalists](#), activists, and several high-profile [civilian leaders](#) were arrested, including politicians Khalid Omer Yousif, Wagdi Saleh, and Mohamed al-Faki Suleiman, all of whom were previously arrested and now face charges of “criminal breach of trust” in relation to their work for the Empowerment Removal Committee. Following international [statements](#) condemning these latter arrests, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a [statement](#) saying that it “noted with astonishment tweets that lacked tact and diplomatic prudence issued by some ambassadors accredited to Sudan in connection with the arrest of two Sudanese citizens under the provisions of the applicable national laws.”
 - At least 100 detainees in Soba Prison have reportedly begun a [hunger strike](#), as activists have launched an #88Plus campaign on social media to draw attention to the issue of detentions. As the UN designated expert on the human rights situation in Sudan [noted](#), Sudan’s emergency law permits authorities to exercise special powers of arrest and detention, but only to the extent necessary to “pursue a legitimate aim in a context of a genuine emergency.” A lack of transparency concerning bylaws issued under Sudan’s emergency law makes it difficult to determine what – if any – official legal processes are being followed by Sudan’s military authorities and security forces. Hemedti [said](#) yesterday that all individuals arrested during protests have been released, and that human rights are one of the major concerns for the RSF.
 - At least two people were [killed during protests](#) this week (bringing the total number of deaths since the coup to 81) while many hundreds others were injured. During protests on 7 February, the Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors reported at least [193 injuries](#), while another [170 people](#) were injured during protests the following Monday.
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ACCOUNTABILITY TORTURE

Mother of detained minor describes custodial torture

The mother of Mohamed Adam, better known as “Tupac,” said in a statement that her son has been tortured while in detention, including by having nails driven into his feet and being suspended upside down while tied up. Tupac was arrested along with several others on 15 January and accused of the killing of a police brigadier general during protests. A legal representative [said](#) that Tupac was tortured into confessing to his involvement in the brigadier general’s death.

Al-Burhan dismisses threat of sanctions

In his first [televised interview](#) since the coup, al-Burhan said that “sanctions and the threat of them are not useful,” and that the US has received inaccurate information concerning the killing of protestors. In the same interview, he also acknowledged recent meetings between [Israeli](#) and Sudanese officials. An Egyptian delegation also reportedly traveled to Sudan in the past two weeks.

GOVERNMENT UPR, CONSULTATIONS, AU

UNITAMS concludes first round of consultations

UNITAMS [announced](#) that it had wrapped up the first stage of consultations for a political process in Sudan, and would be producing a summary document highlighting “major areas of consensus among various Sudanese stakeholders on contentious matters pertaining to the transition.” Sudanese media [reported](#) that military leaders told an IGAD mission that the military would withdraw under two conditions: “the initiation of a comprehensive national reconciliation and consensus-building process,” and “the holding of participatory and inclusive national elections based on the principle of proportional representation.” Al-Burhan reportedly said that banned political groups should be allowed to participate in elections, because the government “should not be formed by the current assemblage of formal political parties only.”

Sudan’s UPR held after multiple delays

After several false starts, Sudan’s Universal Periodic Review was [held on 9 February](#), with Howaida Ali, acting undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice, and Osman Abufatima Adam Mohammed, Sudan’s interim permanent representative in Geneva, intervening on behalf of Sudan (controversially). States recommended that Sudan ratify the Rome Statute, cooperate fully with human rights mechanisms, and implement the Juba Peace Agreement, among other items. Relatedly, Adama Dieng, the UN’s designated expert on Sudan, is now [scheduled](#) to travel to Sudan from February 20 – 24, after his first visit was cancelled at the request of the military.

EU-AU Summit held without Sudan

The EU and AU met yesterday, and again today, for a [sixth summit](#) to discuss issues of mutual concern, including migration. Sudan was not represented at the summit after having been suspended from the AU shortly after the coup. A high-level AU delegation recently traveled to Sudan to discuss Sudan’s return to constitutional order, as prominent Sudanese scholars and political figures wrote to Moussa Faki (chairman of the African Commission) to [request a course correction](#) in the AU’s approach towards Sudan. In particular, the letter highlighted the need

for AU support to the UNITAMS process, rather than “work on creating a parallel process that does not serve the interests and aspirations of the Sudanese people.”

SAF forces dismissed “to prevent coup”

Al-Burhan is understood to have dismissed hundreds of young SAF officers, apparently to remove those unhappy with the current state of events. Issam Karrar, the commander of the SAF Ground Forces, [said](#) that the “military command has purged political elements in [the] national army to prevent military coups.” Karrar also said that “there was a campaign by the political forces to tarnish the image of the Sudanese army and portray them as against democratic change in Sudan,” and noted that the coups of 1958, 1969, and 1989 were all “organised by political forces through their political cells in the army.” Some have pointed out that these dismissals are [likely to benefit](#) Hemedti and the RSF. The news comes as al-Burhan announced a decision [appointing](#) Lt. Gen. Yassin Ibrahim Yassin as Minister of Defense, though he has by all indications been serving in this role for the past few months.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION DARFUR, PANEL OF EXPERTS

El Fasher doctors on strike

The El Fasher specialised hospital for women and obstetrics is on total strike after security forces reportedly [assaulted](#) medical personnel. At around the same time, armed men in a Land Cruiser technical [attacked](#) a village in North Darfur, killing two people and seriously injuring several others, while an armed group in two combat vehicles [attempted to loot](#) a former UNAMID site in El Fasher, killing two members of the joint forces. In its January 2022 [humanitarian snapshot](#), UN OCHA reported a 38% increase in the number of armed attacks this year as compared to 2021.

Mandate for Panel of Experts on Sudan extended

The Security Council [extended](#) through 12 March 2023 the Panel of Experts related to the committee charged with overseeing sanctions against Sudan. The Security Council also considered the Panel’s final report for 2021. The [report](#), which is worth reading in its entirety, highlighted that the “uncontrolled return of the Darfurian fighters from Libya, with weapons and experience of lucrative fighting, constituted a potential serious threat to regional stability,” and that “the groups [including SLA/MM, GSLF, JEM and SLA/TC] kept most of their heavy weapons in Libya because they did not know yet if the Government of the Sudan could be trusted on peace implementation.” See also a Rift Valley Institute [briefing](#) on the evolving political and security dynamics in Darfur.

weekend read

An [interview](#) with the former ambassador to the US; a [podcast episode](#) with Volker Perthes; and former Minister of Justice Nasredeen Abdulbari's [assessment](#) of a "transitional period constitutional question."

Thanks for reading, and see you in two weeks.

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