

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 March 2022

BIG STORIES FIRST

- Joint forces continue to use excessive and lethal force against [protestors](#). During protests on 17 March alone (yesterday), at least [187 people](#) were injured, including 70 injured by live fire. [87 people](#) have been killed since the coup. As protests wound down on 14 March, at least [one woman](#) – a South Sudanese student forced off of public transportation, who was not a protestor – was reportedly gang raped by [security forces](#). The student told a [Sudanese paper](#) that men wearing Central Reserve Police uniforms grabbed her by force and dragged her under a bridge, where they assaulted her. Other sources reported that [two other women](#) were also raped on the same day but had declined to open criminal reports due to the nature of the events.
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ACCOUNTABILITY RAIDS, EMPOWERMENT REMOVAL, HUNGER STRIKE

Headquarters of the 3 June investigative committee raided by security forces

Nabil Adib, the head of the committee tasked with investigating the 3 June 2019 sit-in massacre, announced that the work of the committee has been [suspended](#) after security forces raided its headquarters and committee staff were [denied entry](#) to the premises. The long-embattled committee, which has yet to publicly report any outcomes of its investigation and faced a series of obstacles to its work even before the coup, is an object of particular attention for the coup authorities.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights updates Human Rights Council on situation in Sudan

In a 7 March [update](#) to the UN Human Rights Council, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet noted that more than 1000 people are thought to have been arrested between 25 October 2021 and 3 March 2022, including at least 144 women and 148 children, many of whom were subjected to ill-treatment at the time of arrest. Bachelet also highlighted the forced incursion of security forces into at least six hospitals, and expressed some skepticism (deservedly) about the “stated initiation of investigations into some allegations of human rights violations.”

Empowerment Removal Committee members face additional charges

Lawyers for the detained leaders of the former Empowerment Removal Committee reported that [additional charges](#) have been registered against them, related to “dealing in foreign currencies” and “illegally obtaining wealth.” A spokesperson said that the communications were reportedly opened by the Ministry of Finance, but that no further information could be obtained about the charges or evidence. The news comes as former Committee members released a statement [condemning](#) the work of the “review” committee established by a decree issued the day after the coup, and as [another member](#) of the Empowerment Removal Committee was arrested.

September 2021 coup case continues

Leaked (unconfirmed) reports from the case against the alleged leaders of a [coup attempt](#) in September 2021 suggest that then-director of Military Intelligence Yasir Mohamed Osman had personally informed the relevant officers of the armoured division that Hemedti planned to put al-Burhan under house arrest, and that the presence of RSF contingents in strategic locations around Khartoum was a “threat to security in the country and the SAF.”

Detainees accused of murdering police brigadier begin hunger strike

The defence team of 17-year-old Mohamed Adam (“Tupac”) and 18-year-old Mohamed El Fateh said that the two [began a hunger strike](#) on 15 March to protest their [continued detention](#), use of torture and ill-treatment, and failure of the Public Prosecution to investigate the charges against them.

NISS agent sentenced to death penalty for killing of protestor

A court in El Obeid (North Kordofan) [sentenced](#) a member of NISS (now known as GIS) to death by hanging for the killing of Ahmed Safiedin in April 2019. The intelligence officer was found guilty until Article 130 of the Criminal Code 1991 (premeditated murder). Similar proceedings in Atbara (River Nile State) have been suspended until April, reportedly due to ongoing protests.

GOVERNMENT ECONOMY, MEDIATION

A “Higher Committee for Economic Emergencies” is created

A newly-created Higher Committee for Economic Emergencies – headed by Hemedti – has taken a [number of decisions](#) “to address the economic challenges facing the country” and to “improve the citizens’ livelihood.” These include unifying the [exchange rate](#) of the Sudanese pound against the dollar and ensuring the flow of petroleum products to stabilise the electricity supply. These measures come as [teachers](#) and railway workers are on strike across Sudan in protest of unpaid salaries resulting from the growing economic crisis. The committee has also reportedly authorised the creation of a special court to “prosecute the saboteurs of the national economy,” including through tax evasion, dollar manipulation, and [gold smuggling](#). Relatedly, some unconfirmed reports suggest that Hemedti and his brothers have taken steps to [liquidate family-owned companies](#) commonly thought to be involved in gold smuggling and other illicit activities, including in connection with the Wagner Group, a Russian mercenary organization.

Rumours circulate about a UAE-led “mediation” initiative

As al-Burhan [traveled to the UAE](#) to meet with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed, and amid continued talk of a widening rift between al-Burhan and Hemedti, Sudanese social media users [circulated rumours](#) that Hamdok will return as prime minister as part of a UAE-brokered deal. A number of resistance committees issued a [statement in response](#), rejecting “any supranational, undemocratic, popular approach that appoints any prime minister, whether Abdullah Hamdok or others, in isolation from the authority and will of the people.” Hamdok has not spoken publicly about these rumours. Separately, the [AU and UNITAMS](#) have [reportedly agreed](#) to join efforts in [mediating an end](#) to the political stalemate in Sudan.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION DISPLACEMENT, HUNGER, ARMED CONFLICT

Security situation in Darfur continues to deteriorate

As the last two armed movements have officially [withdrawn](#) from El Fasher in North Darfur, in accordance with the Juba Peace Agreement, [armed attacks](#) against civilians continue across the region, particularly in West Darfur. UN OCHA reported that [renewed conflict](#) in the Jebel Moon locality in West Darfur has displaced at least 12,500 people following fighting between nomads and farmers, with at an estimated 17-25 people [killed](#) (including at least three [humanitarian aid](#) workers) and three villages completely burned to the ground. At the border between Sudan and South Sudan, violence has also re-erupted in the disputed [Abyei region](#), where several dozen people were killed and an estimated 50,000 people displaced as fighting intensified in early March.

War in Ukraine projected to increase food insecurity in Sudan

Almost half of Sudan’s population is [expected to face hunger](#) this year as the war in Ukraine and the coup increase global grain prices. 20 million people are likely to be classified as suffering from “emergency” or “crisis” levels of “acute food insecurity” in 2022, double the figure from 2021. Sudan depended on Russia and Ukraine for roughly 35% of its wheat imports in 2021. Deepening the potential crisis, based on available resources the UN World Food Programme reportedly hopes to reach 9.3 million people with food aid this year, slightly more than last year but only half of expected need. See also the International Crisis Group’s [briefing](#) on East Africa’s growing food crisis.

**weekend
read**

An [analysis](#) of the resistance committees’ political charter; Sudanese and Ukrainian [refugees](#) face different treatment in Poland; and on charting Sudan’s [future](#).

Thanks for reading, and see you in two weeks.

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