

justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

Hello,

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

Friday 29 April 2022

BIG STORIES FIRST

- Conflict has [erupted](#) in West Darfur, with at least 177 people killed since last Friday ([according](#) to the Central Doctors Committee, which noted that the real death count is likely much higher; UN OCHA has [placed](#) the figure at between 150-213 people killed). The total number of people displaced from their homes is unknown. Fighting began after two Arab nomads were reportedly killed last Thursday near Kreinik, leaving Arab fighters to [retaliate](#) with heavy weaponry. Men in RSF uniforms have been [implicated](#) in attacks, accounts [echoed](#) by the governor of West Darfur. Other sources [said](#) that Sudan's army and police forces failed to stop the attacks, which [spread](#) to Geneina. Hospitals and medical staff were also [targeted](#), leading to the evacuation and closure of the Geneina hospital for the first time in its [history](#). The security situation [remains tense](#) and unpredictable, with reports from last night [indicating](#) that the RSF and SAF clashed in Geneina. See here for an new [analysis](#) of Darfur's role in Sudan's domestic politics since al-Bashir's ouster.
 - Nearly two weeks after al-Burhan [said](#) that all political detainees would be freed, 11 prominent members of the Empowerment Removal Committee were [released](#) on [bail](#) (after [78 days](#) of detention, as noted by Wagdi Salih) as well as former Cabinet Affairs minister Khalid Omar Youssif. Their release follows some minor legal drama; a Sudanese judge refused to authorise the renewed detention of Salih and others due to a lack of evidence, but authorities initially [refused](#) to release them, saying that there was a new lawsuit pending. Some reports [suggested](#) that Sovereign Council member Ibrahim Jaber intervened with the [Public Prosecution](#) to prevent the release of the detainees, but this news has not been corroborated. At least three other political leaders remain in detention. Other arrests continue, including of [journalists](#). See also Human Rights Watch's new [research](#) on the roles of the GIS and Criminal Investigative Directorate (a specialised police branch) in conducting arrests and detentions.
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ACCOUNTABILITY AUTOPSIES, TORTURE

Decision reportedly taken to bury bodies in morgues

A Sudanese paper [reported](#) that the government has authorised the creation of a committee tasked with overseeing the burial of all bodies “accumulated” in morgues and hospitals (an estimated 2,000). Among the members of the committee are the attorney general, officials from the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Justice, and forensics specialists. The committee is also reportedly tasked with conducting all necessary autopsies and documentation before burials. The failure to properly autopsy and identify bodies has been a recurrent point of [controversy](#) over the past three years.

Christian pastor convicted of “breach of public safety”

A Christian pastor was [convicted](#) of “breach of public safety” and sentenced to one month in prison after conducting prayers in a disputed church in [El Gezira state](#). On 10 April, a group of individuals reportedly attacked worshippers in the church, claiming that the building belongs to the “Committee for Change and Services.” Lawyers for the pastor said that the building belongs to the Catholic Church, and said that they intend to appeal the verdict.

Defence team says accused teenagers have been tortured

Lawyers for Mohamed Adam (“Tupac”) and Mohamed el-Fateh say that the two have again been subjected to [torture](#). Both have been detained since 15 January, when they were arrested for allegedly killing a police brigadier during protests. For example, in a statement, the defence team said that el-Fatah was repeatedly taken at night from Kober Prison to an unknown destination by individuals in civilian clothes, and returned later at night in “bad condition.” Relatedly, the Public Prosecution has [reportedly refused](#) to conduct interviews with CRP forces who appeared in video footage taken when the police brigadier was killed.

Complaint opened by former Radio and Television Corporation director

Luqman Ahmed has [opened](#) a complaint with the Information Crimes Prosecution against Mohammed Shawkat and Abu Bakr Abdelrazig. Ahmed is the former director of the Radio and Television Corporation, and the subject of racial slurs used by Shawkat and Abdelrazig during the ongoing proceedings against al-Bashir and others involved in the 1989 coup. NGOs and civil society groups released a [letter](#) condemning racism and hate speech in Sudan, noting that “hate speech and public calls for incitement to ethnic violence, particularly through Sudanese animated social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Clubhouse . . . are growing unabated in the silence of the Sudanese authorities.”

GOVERNMENT MEDIATION, ACCUSATIONS

International envoys meet in Khartoum

High-level diplomatic [envoys](#), including from the Troika countries, EU, Germany, UK, and France, gathered in Khartoum on Thursday (28 April) to express [support](#) for the joint UNITAMS/African Union/IGAD [mediation initiative](#). The meeting followed news that the Eritrean government had [presented](#) al-Burhan with an initiative to end the ongoing political (and human rights) crisis. Details on the Eritrean initiative are not available, although it is known that an Eritrean delegation met twice with al-Burhan in recent weeks.

Article in military newspaper accuses UNITAMS head of spreading terrorism

In an article published in El Jaish, the SAF newspaper, Col. Ibrahim el-Houri (the paper’s editor-

in-chief) [accused](#) UNITAMS head Volker Perthes of spreading terrorism, and Western governments of [targeting](#) the army. El-Houri is understood to be close to al-Burhan. In response, UNITAMS [tweeted](#) that “demonizing public or private figures, and inciting against them is a conduct of hate crimes that societies and authorities have interest in holding its perpetrators to account, without delay.” See also an [analysis](#) of how the military harnessed the African Union in the [UNITAMS](#) process to legitimise the coup.

“Broad Islamist Current” formally announced

In a public press conference, members of several Islamist factions, including the NCP, announced the [creation](#) of a “Broad Islamist Current,” apparently signaling their formal return to politics (though the NCP remains technically outlawed). A “senior official source” reportedly denied to Reuters that “there was any alliance with Islamists,” and that the military is seeking to achieve a “broad national consensus” excluding the NCP.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION CORRUPTION, HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

International NGOs facing “cash shakedown”

Recent reporting [suggests](#) that Sudanese officials have resorted to Bashir-era practices such as “piling on bureaucratic procedures to extract profit and attempting to interfere in INGO procurements.” The head of UN OCHA in Sudan said that aid agencies have been subjected to additional fees since the coup, including fees levied in particular by state-level authorities. Another INGO country director said that SAF MI officers are again stationed in the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) state offices. These challenges come as Sudan is experiencing its [highest humanitarian caseload](#) in a decade.

weekend read

The [future](#) of Sudan’s resistance committees; a [podcast](#) asking whether power really does flow from the barrel of a gun; a dispatch from Sudan’s [gold mines](#); and on [fixing](#) the US Special Envoy position; and the [silencing](#) of anti-coup voices, by the former minister of justice.

Thanks for reading, and see you in two weeks.

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