

justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

Hello,

Welcome to this fortnightly roundup of news on justice and conflict in Sudan. Hyperlinks are underlined. (Today's newsletter sent on Thursday in advance of a Friday bank holiday.)

Thursday 14 April 2022

BIG STORIES FIRST

- The ICC's [first trial](#) on the situation in Darfur opened on 5 April 2022 against alleged Janjaweed leader Ali Kushayb, who has been charged with 31 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Kushayb spoke briefly on the second day of the trial, saying that he "came of my own free will to [the ICC]" and that he "came here to correct the misleading falsehoods attributed to me." Kushayb also named al-Burhan, Hemedti, Shams el-Din Kabbashi and General Atta, saying that they "ought to prioritise the Sudanese people and their security in the hope that the elections of 2023 be held properly." For more information on the case, see [here](#) for ICC court records and transcripts, this REDRESS [Q&A](#), or here for a [recap](#). The trial, which is expected to last for several years, will resume on 25 April with the testimony of the fourth prosecution witness.
- The Public Prosecution for Crimes against the State has [reportedly](#) opened a criminal complaint against Sulaima Ishaq Elkhalfifa, the head of Sudan's Combating Violence against Women Unit, in relation to her office's work on cases of rape during December 2021 protests. (See this [recent report](#) from the UN Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence for additional information.) Sulaima has said that the GIS has opened an arrest warrant for her on separate charges. Some have speculated that this development comes after UNITAMS head Volker Perthes' comments before the UN Security Council in which he referenced statistics from the CVAW Unit; [al-Burhan](#) has since [threatened](#) to expel Perthes from Sudan for overstepping his [mandate](#). (The UNITAMS mandate is up for renewal in June 2022.)
- Security forces continue to use excessive and [lethal](#) force against protestors, including during [protests](#) on 6 and 11 April. At least [94 protestors](#) have been killed since 25 October 2021, and the Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors reported on 13 April that at least 83 serious eye [injuries](#) have been recorded since the coup. Security forces have also once again stormed [hospitals](#) in Khartoum, launching tear gas at patients and intimidating medical staff.

ACCOUNTABILITY NATIONAL CONGRESS PARTY, DETENTIONS

Former NCP head found not guilty, released

As the [third anniversary](#) of al-Bashir's ouster from office has come and gone, several key allies have been [acquitted](#) of charges and released from prison, including NCP head Ibrahim Ghandour (who also served as foreign minister under al-Bashir). Ghandour was found not guilty on [charges](#) of undermining the constitution, financing terrorism, and plotting the assassination of former prime minister Abdalla Hamdok. 12 other NCP leaders, including Anas Omer (former governor of West Darfur) and Kamaleldin Ibrahim, were also acquitted; several days later, a second court ruling [acquitted](#) Omer and eight others of another set of charges and ordered their release. Ghandour subsequently expressed his [support](#) for the coup (calling it a "corrective" measure, like al-Burhan). Former NCP members have recently been appointed to other [prominent positions](#), including as the new [general manager](#) for the Sudan Currency Printing Press.

Emergency Lawyers warn of detainee transfers

The Emergency Lawyers Group said in a [statement](#) on 5 April that more than 100 detainees held in Soba Prison were transferred to Debek (north of Khartoum), Kosti (south of Khartoum), and Port Sudan. Noting the poor conditions in these prisons, the group said that it "condemns this behaviour, which is a crime of enforced exile and abuse of detainees and their families." Other arrests continue, including of [artists](#) and [resistance committee](#) members in Khartoum, some of whom were reportedly subjected to torture and ill-treatment by Military Intelligence and other forces. In a [statement](#), lawyers said that a 21-year-old muralist, known as Medo, had "accessories he was wearing [melted] into his skin using fire," while a 19-year-old photographer (Ezzo) was beaten over the head with a chair until he lost consciousness. Soba Prison administrators also reportedly [refused](#) to receive four individuals transferred from the Khartoum North police station, on the basis that they showed signs of torture. ICYMI, REDRESS, the Darfur Bar Association, PLACE and the Emergency Lawyers group released a [report](#) on arbitrary arrests and incommunicado detentions last month.

Controversy erupts during al-Bashir court proceedings

On Sunday, al-Burhan [fired](#) Luqman Ahmed, the director of the Radio and Television Corporation (appointing Ibrahim Mohamed Ibrahim al-Bazi in his stead), reportedly on the basis that Ahmed had [failed to properly cover news](#) from the Sovereign Council. Several days later, during the ongoing proceedings against al-Bashir and others involved in the 1989 coup, two defence lawyers were [caught](#) on a "hot mic" using [racial slurs](#) to describe Ahmed (incidentally, the same commonly used derogatory terms under discussion in the first days of the Kushayb trial at the ICC.)

GOVERNMENT DEALMAKING, RSF, EGYPT

Delegations meet with Egyptian intelligence services

Following al-Burhan's recent travel to Egypt, a delegation from the Democratic Unionist Party [reportedly](#) met with Egyptian intelligence service members in an effort to build support for al-Burhan, along with the Umma Party. Other sources [reported](#) that a Sudanese delegation,

including Military Intelligence director Mohamed Ahmed Saber and Mubarak Abdullah Babiker (reportedly al-Burhan's national security adviser), traveled to Israel. Separately, finance minister Gibril Ibrahim reportedly sought to arrange a \$1 billion [central bank deposit](#) to [support](#) Sudan's currency in a visit to Saudi Arabia.

Rumours of a draft deal to form new government circulate

Reuters [reported](#) that [factions](#) aligned with the military have drawn up a deal to form a transitional government with the military formally at its head, and creating a technocratic [cabinet](#) and legislative council which would govern until elections planned for 2023. Diplomats have reportedly [warned](#) that such a deal would not lead to the resumption of much-needed international aid. This reporting comes as the "National Accord Group" of the FFC announced a [new structure](#), with Mubarak Ardol at the helm. (Ardol is the head of the Sudanese Mineral Resources Company and a former SPLM-N leader.) The new FFC group [met](#) for the first time in early April.

RSF reportedly creates land commission

A [document](#) circulating on [social media](#) and apparently issued by Hemedti indicates that he has established a commission to specialise in land and real estate for the RSF, separate from the SAF's own land commission. [Sources](#) said that the decision to form the commission was "mainly due to the acquisition [by Hemedti] of real estate belonging to the Islamic Movement and the NCP," which he plans to register under the RSF. The resolution states that the commission will inventory and classify land and real estate belonging to the RSF, obtain new land approvals across Sudan, and complete the process of registering land and properties affiliated with the RSF.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION CONFLICT, PEACE ACCORDS, MIGRATION

Violence continues in Darfur

In a press conference held in Khartoum, Falata tribal group leaders from South Darfur [said](#) that recent attacks were part of a "big scheme to evict the area from its residents because of the area's [gold and other] resources," and that security forces failed to stop the attacks (which RSF members are accused of having participated in). At least five herders were [killed](#) and others seriously injured in an attack by armed gunmen in North Darfur, while militiamen [attacked](#) two [villages](#) in [West Darfur](#) this week. UNITAMS [announced](#) that it would open a sub-office in West Darfur state to implement its mandate, including JPA security arrangements. Elsewhere, in Eastern Sudan, tribal leaders have [signed](#) an agreement to end inter-tribal hostilities which have recently erupted, following efforts to demarcate tribal borders (led by Hemedti and the Committee to Address the Situation in Eastern Sudan).

Sudanese migrants drown in Mediterranean

At least 18 Sudanese migrants are believed to have [drowned](#) while attempting to cross the Mediterranean on 9 April, just after a first boat sank while on the same dangerous route from Libya (also understood to be carrying Sudanese passengers).

weekend read

An [analysis](#) of the political and security dynamics in the Two Areas; OCHA's key [humanitarian messages](#) for Sudan; elite [deals](#) in Sudan; [relations](#) between Sudan and Ethiopia; the US State Department [report](#) on human rights in Sudan; and Sudan's ties to the [Wagner Group](#).

Thanks for reading, and see you in two weeks.

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