

justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

Hello,

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

Friday 10 June 2022

BIG STORIES FIRST

- The AU-UNITAMS-IGAD “intra-Sudanese talks” have officially launched, albeit without the [participation](#) of key civilian groups, including the FFC (which had [rejected](#) meeting invitations, saying that a solution to the crisis cannot be found by “inundating the political process with parties representing the coup camp or linked to the former regime”). Up to this point, the “confidence-building” measures taken by the military have not inspired much confidence; see reporting on this point [here](#) (and the bullet below). In a public speech, al-Burhan [said](#) that the talks represented an “opportunity to complete the transitional period.” In a [research paper](#) published yesterday, REDRESS and the SOAS Centre for Human Rights Law disagree, arguing that the serious human rights violations which have occurred since the coup have disqualified the military from being viewed as equal partners in any future transitional period in Sudan, and that legitimacy cannot be re-conferred through a flawed mediation process.
 - Despite the [lifting](#) of the state of emergency on 29 May, serious human rights violations [continue](#) in Sudan. At least three people have been killed since 29 May, including a child who was run over by a CRP vehicle, bringing the total deaths since the coup to [101 people](#). Separately, an estimated 130 people remain in [detention](#), according to reports from the emergency lawyers, and others [continue](#) to be arrested on an ongoing basis. The state of emergency was reportedly lifted after a decision from the Security and Defence Council, and was meant to “facilitate dialogue” between the military and civilian groups.
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ACCOUNTABILITY GIS, TORTURE, UN

“Tupac” and other defendants stand trial in police killing case

The trial against 17-year-old [Mohamed Adam](#) (better known as “Tupac”) and 3 other defendants – Ahmed al-Fatih (“al-Nanna”), Mohamed al-Fatih, and Musaab al-Sherif – began on 29 May. All are accused of the killing of police brigadier general Ali Hamad. The trial

was [adjourned](#) until 12 June, after the judge – who has been described by lawyers as being reasonably impartial – granted the defence team’s request for a forensic medical examination of all defendants, who have reportedly been subjected to torture and other forms of ill-treatment while in detention. Another [trial](#) has also commenced, in relation to the killing of a SAF MI sergeant. The defendants in the case were also reportedly subjected to torture; in a [press conference](#), lawyers in the case said that they had filed at least 3 requests for medical treatment, all of which were denied. Separately, trial sessions against the 11 GIS agents [accused](#) of killing Mahjoub al-Taj Mahjoub (a medical student allegedly tortured before his death) continue.

UN independent expert travels again to Sudan

Adama Dieng, the UN independent expert on human rights in Sudan, traveled for a second time to Khartoum in the first week of June, just before publishing his [June report](#) to the UN HRC. Recounting his meetings with authorities, Dieng said in a [statement](#) that he “welcomed the lifting of the state of emergency . . . [but] stressed that more bold and concrete actions are needed to improve the human rights situation,” including that authorities needed “to provide clear and public confirmation that the [emergency decree](#) of 24 December . . . is no longer valid; to ensure a definitive end to the use of excessive force against protestors and arbitrary arrests and detention; and ensure that there is visible progress in ongoing investigations into human rights violations.” Dieng’s visit coincided with the third anniversary of the 3 June 2019 sit-in massacre. As REDRESS and Sudanese Archives noted in a [letter of allegation](#) to the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, no perpetrators have been held to account in relation to the events of 3 June.

UN Security Council renews UNITAMS mandate for another year

The UN Security Council has [renewed](#) the UNITAMS mandate for another year, until June 2023. See [here](#) for an overview of the debates leading up to the resolution’s adoption, which saw Sudan pushing back on efforts to adopt a substantive resolution that (in the UK’s words) “would have allowed for the updating of UNITAMS priorities to reflect Sudan’s own request for traditional support on issues such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; transitional justice, and civilian protection.” See also [here](#) for an interesting study on the effectiveness of the UNITAMS mandate, which notes that the “Mission must continue to be allowed the flexibility to adapt its focus to the fast-changing dynamics on the ground,” and that “the Mission should continue its work in support of its other objectives and priorities, including the protection of civilians, the implementation of the peace agreement, and advisory and capacity building, particularly related to the rule-of-law sector.”

GOVERNMENT BANKING, MILITARY FIRMS, UNITAMS

Sudanese central bank unfreezes additional bank accounts

The Central Bank ordered the [unfreezing](#) of several bank accounts, including the accounts of former police chief Mohamed Najib al-Tayeb and his wife, Hind Mustafa (a friend of al-Bashir’s second wife). Al-Tayeb was police chief under al-Bashir in the late 2000s. The Central Bank also ordered the unfreezing of Abdel Halim al-Mutafi’s accounts; al-Mutafi was a minister of agriculture under al-Bashir and remains charged with corruption crimes in the [ongoing](#) “Mashkour Sugar Company” case. Members of the Islamic Dawa Organisation [met](#)

for the first time since the [reversal](#) of an Empowerment Removal Committee decision concerning its dissolution, and after the group's assets were unfrozen.

Sudan says it will privatize military-owned firms

Sudan's finance minister, Gibril Ibrahim, has said that Sudan will move forward with plans to privatize companies owned by the military. Ibrahim said in an [interview](#) that the government is still on track to shut down many of the 650 state-owned companies and privatize others, saying that "[a]ll commercial companies will be put up for public subscription, except for companies that produce weapons, and that will be soon." Relatedly, the NYT published an in-depth [report](#) detailing the extensive operations of the Wagner Group, a network of Russian mercenaries. The report found that Wagner has obtained lucrative Sudanese gold mining concessions, and that Wagner has given direct military aid to Hemedti and the RSF.

Sudan ratifies charter of the Council of Arabic and African Coastal States

Sudan has [ratified](#) the charter establishing the Council of Arab and African States bordering the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, which was signed in Riyadh on 6 January 2022. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs [said](#) in a statement that "Sudan joined this Charter in recognition of the importance of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden to international navigation, and the impact on the stability and growth of the countries that ratify [it]." The other signatories are Saudi Arabia, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Jordan, Somalia, and Yemen. Also, a senior Saudi delegation reportedly [traveled](#) to Khartoum in early June to meet with al-Burhan.

Protestors call for dismissal of UNITAMS head

Protestors [gathered](#) outside of the UNITAMS headquarters calling for the dismissal of Volker Perthes, reportedly chanting slogans like "Volker, you German, the crisis will be solved by the Sudanese." Most of the [attendees](#) are understood to be [supporters](#) of various Islamist groups. Notably, the protest was carried out without any interference or response from the security forces.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION HUNGER, CONFLICT, ASSISTANCE

Ongoing conflict in Darfur and South Kordofan

Sporadic violence continues in Darfur and in [South Kordofan](#), with at least 27 people [killed](#) and dozens injured across both regions. Other clashes also broke out in [West Kordofan](#). In a recent [interview](#), the spokesperson for the General Coordination of IDPs and Refugees said that "there is no alternative to an "international force under [UN Charter] Chapter 7 to protect the citizens and displaced people in the Darfur region." He also said that the violence in recent months was "carried out in a very orderly and systematic manner, using weapons and vehicles from the state's warehouses . . . [t]his is not a tribal war. It is the state which kills, rapes and displaces its citizens and cloaks it as a tribal conflict." This week, some news circulated that the [son of Ali Kushayb](#) (currently on trial at the ICC) was killed by joint forces after attacking a group of people with a grenade.

UN announces large grant for Sudanese farmers

The UN Central Emergency Response Fund has [announced](#) a \$20 million grant for Sudan, to "allow the procurement and distribution of seeds, provide critical nutrition and WASH services

and support crop protection committees to farmers in Darfur.” The news comes as recent reporting highlights the impact of fuel price [increases](#) in Sudan, and the challenges faced by Sudanese farmers – see excellent reporting [here](#) and [here](#), including an interview with a farmer who said that “the summer season is threatened with collapse. Fifty percent, seventy percent of us might not plant. And that puts the food supply in question.”

US suspends assistance to Sudan

The US State Department said in a statement that the US has [suspended](#) foreign assistance to Sudan under the Abraham Accords as well as unrelated assistance, but that it will continue with “limited, new obligations of previously paused funds to promote democracy and human rights through civil society organizations, as well as for programs that support independent media, and the marginalized populations of Sudan.”

weekend read

[Sudan](#) or Chad?; an anti-coup [strategy](#) for the US; [understanding](#) the BNP Paribas case in the US; Sudanese [families](#) mourn CAR massacre victims; spotlighting Beja [musicians](#) the Martyrs of Khartoum [film](#); the activism of Sudanese [women](#); and attacks on [education](#) in Sudan.

Thanks for reading, and see you in two weeks.

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