

justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

Hello,

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

Friday 11 Nov 2022

BIG STORIES FIRST

- REDRESS, the Missing Initiative, and the Sudanese Defenders Centre for Legal Aid have filed an [urgent appeal](#) today with the UN Special Rapporteur on torture and Working Group on arbitrary detention on behalf of eight detainees charged with the killing of a Military Intelligence sergeant. As the submission highlights, the eight young men were arrested at different times between March and August 2022, denied access to legal counsel, and subjected to torture on multiple occasions—including being threatened with rape, beaten and burned with cigarette lighters, and stripped naked. The submission also highlights serious fair trial violations, including the fact that lawyers for the eight detainees did not receive access to any evidence prior to the beginning of the trial, and the failure to conduct medical examinations regarding the detainees' allegations of torture. Khartoum resistance committees have [publicised](#) the submission in a coordinated social media [campaign](#), as the next hearing in the case is scheduled for this Monday.
 - A man was [killed](#) under “suspicious” circumstances in the Military Intelligence headquarters in Gedarif (eastern Sudan). Family members said they had sought to accompany him to the MI office, but that they had been told it was “routine procedure and did not require their presence.” Later that evening, family members were informed by a MI officer of his death.
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ACCOUNTABILITY BASHIR, SUDANESE BAR ASSOCIATION

Al-Bashir and companions back in Kober Prison

Amidst growing speculation that al-Burhan is attempting to [distance himself](#) (at least publicly) from the Islamists, al-Bashir, Bakri Hassan Salih (former vice president), Ali al-Haj (NCP Secretary-General) and Ibrahim Al-Sanosi (head of the NCP's Shura Council) were transferred [back to Kober Prison](#) after spending many months in a private hospital. In a [speech](#) this week, al-Burhan warned Islamists and members of the dissolved National

Congress Party about “hiding behind the military establishment,” [saying](#) that the “army has no faction or party, and it will never defend a faction or party.” Former leaders of the NCP and other allies have in recent weeks launched several (small) [protests](#), including outside of the UNITAMS headquarters, ostensibly to show their opposition to “international interference.” In Meroe, supporters of Salah Gosh [organised a rally](#) as part of a campaign calling for his return. Sudan Tribune reported that “[Gosh’s] supporters launched a campaign calling for Gosh’s return in the city’s market, where they posted his picture with slogans glorifying him and expressing solidarity.” They then “moved into a large hall inside a branch of Omdurman Islamic University . . . chanting slogans linking political reforms to Gosh’s return.” Former NCP leaders denied their involvement.

Sudanese Bar Association headquarters targeted by security forces

Following the Supreme Court Appeals Committee’s decision to [reinstate the unions](#) dissolved by the Empowerment Removal Committee, including the Bashir-era Sudanese Bar Association, police [prevented lawyers](#) from entering the SBA headquarters—and stopped others from leaving, denying food and water to lawyers already inside the premises. The SBA released a statement saying that “Sudanese Lawyers House lawyers are being attacked with batons and tear gas, stones were thrown at the house, and shots were fired by members of the dissolved National Congress Party regime and armed groups wearing civilian clothes.” UNITAMS subsequently issued a [press statement](#) condemning the attacks, saying that “[t]he Steering Committee of the SBA, irrespective of its legal status, has played an important role in advocating for an inclusive discourse in the context of the current political process. The attack against the SBA is a clear signal sent against ongoing efforts to reach an acceptable consensus among political forces and the military towards a genuine democratic transition in Sudan.”

Darfur Bar Association says 350 Darfuris still detained illegally

The DBA has again [announced](#) that at least 350 Darfuris, including some minors and many IDPs, are detained in prisons across Sudan. According to the DBA, many of those detained are being held by the RSF and were arrested without warrant or cause. One [lawyer said](#) that the detainees are “like hostages . . . negotiating with mediators to pay ransom money for their legitimate right to freedom.”

Wajdi Salih faces new charges after complaint

Despite being told that he would be [released](#) according to the “normal guarantees,” Wajdi Salih (the former head of the Empowerment Removal Committee) was detained again the following day under another complaint filed by the Ministry of Finance. Separately, al-Burhan [dismissed](#) the [head](#) of the Appeals Committee formed to review decisions made by the Empowerment Removal Committee; it is not immediately clear why al-Burhan made this decision.

Swedish court indicts two oil executives from Lundin Energy

Two oil executives from the Swedish oil company Lundin Energy have been [indicted](#) for aiding and abetting war crimes in what is now South Sudan between 1999 and 2003. In November 2021, a Swedish prosecutor brought charges against the two executives, one of whom is a Swiss citizen residing in Switzerland, raising questions about whether Sweden has jurisdiction to hear the charges against him. Sweden’s Supreme Court answered this question in the

affirmative, finding that under the principle of [universal jurisdiction](#) the fact that the defendant was not in Sweden at the time of being charged with a crime was not an obstacle (because the company is Swedish).

GOVERNMENT AGREEMENTS, ARRESTS

Yet another new political coalition formed

The National Accord Forces, Democratic Unionist Party and the Sudanese Ba'ath Party as well as some smaller groups have [formed](#) another [new political alliance](#), the Forces for Freedom and Change-Democratic Block. The coalition announced that it supports the [continuation](#) of the Constitutional Document 2019 but proposes some amendments, including the creation of a Security and Defence Council headed by a civilian prime minister. This development comes as international media reported again that immunities would be extended to “top military officers” in a possible forthcoming deal (and as security forces [arrested](#) a number of youth activists and [drove](#) over another young man in a protest).

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION MINING, ARMED ATTACKS

Sit-in held in River Nile state to protest mining activities

Activists in the River Nile state have staged a [sit-in](#) calling for an end to all mining activities in the area, saying that companies are mining too close to local communities, with serious health implications for residents (including kidney failure, cancer, epilepsy, and miscarriages). See here for a [new investigation](#) into the Wagner Group's ties to gold mining in Sudan, and a [new report](#) on gold mining and mercury poisoning, noting that “[y]ears of indiscriminate use of dangerous chemicals such as mercury, cyanide, and thiourea without protective measures for miners or local populations has exposed millions of citizens across Sudan to lethal risks. Successive governments have failed to compel private companies importing these materials to comply with required industrial and professional safety precautions.” Elsewhere, in West Kordofan, a Sudan oil refinery facility was [closed](#) after “pipeline sabotage prompted fears of technical damage to the infrastructure and environmental risks.” Protests were also held around West Kordofan oil fields, halting production.

UN expert issues statement about resurgence of violence in the Blue Nile state

The UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide expressed “[grave concern](#)” about the situation in the [Blue Nile state](#), and called on those in positions of authority to “do their utmost” to institute conflict prevention mechanisms and bring the perpetrators of violations to account “no matter how high or influential.” The Special Adviser also called on Sudanese leaders and people to prioritise trust-building and urged tech and social media companies to utilize all available tools to “stop the spread of incitement and hatred” on their platforms. The governor of the Blue Nile state issued this week an [emergency order](#) authorising the “regular forces” to arrest people and conduct searches and seizures.

Sporadic violence continues throughout Darfur

Armed groups [killed](#) one farmer and attacked another two people who were rushed to a hospital for treatment in North Darfur state this past week, while in Central Darfur an IDP was

severely beaten by an unknown assailant. The Darfur Network for Monitoring and Documentation reported that the assailant “kept on screaming at me, if you want compensation we shall give you.” In South Darfur, a farmer and his wife were killed by a group of five armed men, apparently after the couple attempted to resist an attempt to steal their vehicle.

weekend read

Investigating the [death of migrants](#) on their way to Europe; white is the [color](#) of Sudan; a [year of repression](#) in Gedarif; a glimmer of [political hope?](#); and a lack of [accountability](#) for police forces.

Thanks for reading, and see you in two weeks.

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