

justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

Hello,

Welcome to this fortnightly roundup of news on justice and conflict in Sudan (and happy new year!). Hyperlinks are underlined.

Friday 6 Jan 2023

BIG STORIES FIRST

- In a surprising development, former president Omar al-Bashir said in [court](#) on 20 December that he “assume[s] all responsibility for what took place on June 30 [1989] . . . admission is the best evidence. I’ve been following the prosecution’s attempts to confirm this charge by presenting videos and witnesses, and I listen and enjoy it.” Though al-Bashir appears to be in good health in [video recordings](#) of his testimony, he is understood to be in the hospital now in stable condition but with high blood pressure.
 - Amidst [reports](#) that the “final phase” of Sudan’s ongoing political is slated to begin on or after 8 January, Egyptian authorities have [offered](#) to facilitate a “new platform for dialogue.” Reactions to this proposal have been [mixed](#). Notwithstanding any political developments, protestors continue to be met with excessive force; for example, on 19 December (the four-year anniversary of the protests which led to al-Bashir’s ouster), security forces [fired](#) tear gas, bullets and stun grenades, [injuring](#) at least 155 people. As Human Rights Watch noted in a short [briefing](#), accountability for these and other violations “is critical for the future and should not be swept under the rug” in the forthcoming negotiations. Next week, the FFC-Central Council is expected to hold a [workshop](#) to discuss the Empowerment Removal Committee and its future.
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ACCOUNTABILITY KOBER, ADULTERY, DETAINEES

Criminal complaint ordered against Kober prison director

During a trial session in mid-December, the presiding [judge](#) in the ongoing case against Mohamed Adam (“Tupac”) and three other young men [ordered](#) the transfer of Tupac out of Kober Prison, after Tupac was seen in a previous court session bearing visible injuries. Tupac has since been [transferred](#) to another prison in north Khartoum. The judge also ordered the filing of a criminal complaint against the Kober Prison director under article 90 of the Criminal

Law Act (“public servant misusing the power to commit persons for trial or to confinement”). Similarly, the trial concerning eight other protestors accused of killing a Military Intelligence sergeant continues.

Stoning sentence of woman charged with adultery overturned on retrial

Following a re-trial, the Kosti Criminal Court in White Nile State held that 24-year-old Maryam Tiyrab was guilty of “gross indecency” (rather than adultery, which carries the death sentence by stoning) and [sentenced](#) to six months’ imprisonment. The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies, which worked on Maryam’s case, [reported](#) that the “court’s decision to amend the offence from adultery under article 146 to gross indecency . . . came after Ms. Tiyrab retracted her confession which was the only evidence used against her by the prosecution.” SIHA, a women’s rights group, subsequently published a [briefing](#) calling for a “better legal framework, one that will protect [women’s] rights and not infringe them.”

Public Prosecution moving forward with burial plans

The Public Prosecution reportedly plans to [move forward](#) with the burial of dozens of unidentified bodies, despite protests from lawyers working within the Missing Persons Investigation Committee. The Public Prosecutor has apparently said that he will contact the Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs related to procedures needed to facilitate the visit of an Argentine [investigation team](#) (which had previously been denied access to Sudan after an initial mission in July 2021). Separately, families gathered outside of Sudan’s judiciary on 16 December to protest a rumoured [decision](#) to abolish the Martyrs’ Claims Prosecution Office, a special court intended to expedite cases related to those killed during protests since December 2018. So far, the court has reportedly handed the cases of six people.

New UN human rights expert appointed

On 16 December 2022 UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk [designated](#) Radhouane Nouicer as the new expert on the situation of human rights in Sudan, replacing Adama Dieng (who stepped down in October). According to the press statement announcing his appointment, Nouicer has served in various UN positions for over 30 years, including at UNHCR and OCHA, and as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for the Tunisian Transitional Government in 2011.

Many West Darfur detainees still held in prison despite hunger strike

On 12 December, more than 200 detainees from West Darfur held in [Port Sudan](#), Al-Huda Prison in Omdurman, and Ardamata Prison in El Geneina announced that they would continue a [hunger strike](#) until being brought before a court or released from detention. At least 15 of those on hunger strike were minors. On 20 December, 57 detainees were [released](#), but at least 150 [remain](#) in prison, many of whom are understood to be held by the RSF. The RSF does not have the legal authority to detain individuals. One recently released detainee interviewed by the Darfur Network for Monitoring and Documentation [said](#) that he was told to show up at the RSF building in El Geneina, where he was arrested and transferred to Omdurman. In prison, the detainee said he “suffered immensely [and] started to urinate blood. I went into a hunger strike upon which I was released [and] was made to sign a memorandum which shows that I will not pursue the matter of my arrest nor what happened to me during my arrest.” Recent Al

Jazeera [reporting](#) from Darfur indicates that many of those arrested may be detained for their perceived opposition to the Hemedti-brokered tribal reconciliation agreements.

Notorious human trafficker arrested in Sudan

Eritrean national Kidane Zekarias Habtemariam was arrested in Sudan on 1 January by Sudanese police in [coordination](#) with UAE authorities. The subject of two Interpol red notices, Habtemariam [escaped](#) from an Ethiopian court in February 2021 and has been on the run ever since. According to an Interpol [press release](#), Habtemariam was “wanted for heading a major criminal organization behind the kidnapping, extortion and murder of East African migrants” and is “known for his particularly cruel and violent treatment of migrants.”

Decision to disband the Sudanese Bar Association halted

Sudan’s Supreme Court ordered a [temporary halt](#) to the implementation of the decision to dissolve the Sudanese Bar Association’s Steering Committee, following an appeal lodged by the SBA. The Supreme Court said that its decision comes “within the framework of precautionary measures to implement the decision of the competent department of the Supreme Court.”

GOVERNMENT DARFUR, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, ERITREA

Darfur delegation visits Eritrea

A delegation from Darfur State headed by regional government Minni Minnawi [traveled](#) to Eritrea, meeting with Eritrean president Isaias Afwerki. Minnawi reportedly said that he conducted the visit to learn more about the Eritrean development model, which “does not need foreign aid” and “relies on the ideas and minds of the Eritrean people themselves.” Other [reporting](#) indicates that an RSF delegation, along with other Sudanese officials, may have traveled to Birao (Central African Republic) to discuss [border security](#), while an Egyptian [delegation](#) met al-Burhan and Ahmed Ibrahim Mufaddel (the head of the GIS) in Khartoum to discuss “bilateral relations” and other issues, as highlighted above.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION CONFLICT, DISPLACEMENT

UN and partners launch 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan

In mid-December 2022 the UN and its humanitarian partners formally [launched](#) the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan. The UN estimates that 15.8 million people will need humanitarian assistance this year – the highest figure in a decade. In 2022, humanitarian organisations reached 9.1 million with some form of assistance and will seek to provide support to at least 12.5 million of the “most vulnerable” people in Sudan this year. The full plan is available [here](#). At around the same time, UN OCHA released its November 2022 [humanitarian update](#), showing that about 32,800 people were displaced by conflict in West Kordofan and Central Darfur (for a total of almost 300,000 over the year across Sudan).

Conflict continues in parts of Darfur

At least seven villages in South Darfur were [burned](#) to the ground in late December, with government forces reportedly deployed and a state of emergency imposed in response. The South Darfur State Security Committee [said](#) that at least 11 people were [killed](#), including a

policeman and RSF member, and 18 others wounded. Hemedti traveled to [Nyala](#) at the end of the month, along with El Hadi Idriss and other officials. In North Darfur, armed herders reportedly [opened fire](#) on a North Darfur government delegation tasked with investigating reports that livestock had been released into farmland around El Fasher. Separately, an individual [affiliated](#) with the army (more details unknown) reportedly [set fire](#) to a Christian church in Gedaraf.

weekend read

Can peace be [achieved](#) with Sudan's new deal?; a [lack of trust](#) surrounding the deal and the [Sudanese street](#); young Sudanese [archeologists](#) and Nubian [pyramids](#); and an [analysis](#) of the Sudanese Professionals Association experience.

Thanks for reading and see you in two weeks.

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