

# justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

Hello,

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

Friday 3 Feb 2023

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## BIG STORIES FIRST

- The second [workshop](#) on the “final issues” set out in the Framework Agreement [began](#) in Khartoum on 31 January. Before the workshop began, UNITAMS released a [statement](#) making clear that the “goal of the conference on the JPA . . . is to focus on the implementation of the agreement and the key obstacles to its implementation. Participants are exchanging views on how to better implement the agreement, not reopen it.” Nonetheless, some groups, like representatives from the Forces for Freedom and Change-Democratic Bloc, opted not to attend, [traveling](#) instead to Cairo for a parallel workshop hosted by Egyptian mediators. Another [meeting](#) is also slated for later in the month, to be held in Juba; leaders like Malik Agar and El-Hadi Idris have said publicly that the Juba effort will not be in contradiction with the ongoing workshop. Separately, FFC representatives have [announced](#) that two key workshops on transitional justice and security sector reform will be postponed until after a new civilian transitional government is put in place, with troubling implications for key [justice priorities](#).
  - In his [latest statement](#) to the UN Security Council, ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan rebuked the Sudanese authorities for their lack of cooperation with ongoing investigations in relation to the Darfur situation, and noted that “a true paradigm shift [towards accountability] can only be achieved through enhanced cooperation.” Among other issues, Sudanese authorities have denied much-needed visas to investigators and prevented access to critical public records. On the other hand, Khan also noted the “swift progress” in the ongoing Ali Kushayb trial, which opened last April. The Prosecution case is expected to close by the end of the month, making it the most efficient trial since the establishment of the ICC. 82 witnesses will have presented testimony either in writing or in-person at the close of the Prosecution case. Next up will be the presentation of victims’ views and concerns, slated for May 2023, with opening statements for the Defence scheduled for July 2023.
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## ACCOUNTABILITY TORTURE, UN EXPERT, MURDER

### Witness tortured, blackmailed in ongoing MI killing case

In a startling development during the ongoing proceedings against eight young men accused of killing a Military Intelligence officer, the seventh witness in the case [testified](#) in court that he “promised to testify” after being blackmailed while in detention. The witness also stated that he was arrested a week after the MI officer was killed and subjected to torture while held in detention for over a month, including by being beaten and having his cell flooded with water to prevent him from sleeping. The defence team in the case has asked the court to authorise criminal cases against the alleged perpetrators. 15 more witnesses (for a total of 29) are expected to testify for the prosecution in the coming weeks; the judge in the case has authorised extra court sessions to expedite the trial. The [trial](#) against Mohamed Adam (“Tupac”) and three other young men accused of killing a police brigadier general is also expected to resume on 12 February. The trial has been delayed by procedural issues regarding a case against the Kober Prison director accused of facilitating the torture of Tupac during his detention there.

### Trial sessions continue in 1989 coup case

Hearings continue in the case against al-Bashir and other defendants accused of masterminding and implementing the 1989 coup. In particular, former First Vice President Ali Osman Mohammed Taha [testified](#) that “he did not participate in the planning or implementation of the coup . . . but I did participate in the work.” Several other defendants, including Nafie Ali Nafih (former NISS director in the early 1990s), requested release on bail, which the new judge in the case quickly denied. As the trial continues, representatives from the Popular Congress Party told a Sudanese paper that the party has drafted a [proposal](#), to be presented as part of the transitional justice workshop, calling for the “issuance of a legislative amnesty that covers all those accused of political issues, especially the June 30, 1989 coup.” Several prominent PCP members, including Ali al-Haj and Ibrahim Mohamed al-Senussi, are both charged in connection with the coup and have recently appeared in court.

### Man convicted of killing USAID worker released

Sudan Supreme Court’s [ordered](#) the release of Abdel Raouf Abu Zaid Hamza, who was found guilty (along with others) of the killing of USAID worker John Granville and Abdel Rahman Abbas, a Sudanese colleague, in 2008. Sudanese media reported that Granville’s family had “agreed to forfeit the demand for the death penalty in response to mediation” led by a prominent religious leader. US officials [disputed these claims](#), with US ambassador to Sudan John Godfrey [stating](#) on Twitter that “[a]fter reading comments to the media by [Jane Granville](#), John Granville’s mother, I am even more deeply disturbed by reports that John Granville’s killer was released on the false claim that the family had extended forgiveness,” and clarifying that “[t]here was no understanding that the settlement of legal claims related to terrorist attacks implied forgiveness.” Abu Zaid remains a “Specially Designated Global Terrorist,” and the US continues to offer a reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to the arrest and/or conviction of two other men wanted in connection to the murders.

### New UN expert on human rights in Sudan makes first visit to Sudan

Radhouane Nouicer, the new UN designated expert on the human rights situation in Sudan, [arrived](#) in Khartoum on 28 January for his first official visit to the country after his

appointment in December. In a [statement](#) at the end of the visit, Nouicer noted that IDPs he met in El Geneina “still hold hope that they will one day be able to return safely to their homes and land,” but “need security and a political commitment to resolve the underlying causes of conflict.” Nouicer also urged authorities to “urgently address issues of accountability of security forces” and the need to restrict further use of emergency legislation, including at the regional level. Relatedly, the Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors reported today that a 20-year protestor died [today](#) after sustaining a gunshot wound to the head in November; he is the 123<sup>rd</sup> person killed since the October 2021 coup. The High Commissioner for Human Rights will give an oral update to the UN Human Rights Council on 3 March 2023.

#### **At least 64 detainees released from West Darfur prison**

After the months-long [arbitrary detention](#) of more than 100 individuals in West Darfur, some are finally being [released](#). 64 detainees were released from Erdamta prison on 26 January, while 95 more detainees from West Darfur are expected to be released soon from a prison in Port Sudan. Many of those detained in both locations were held without charge.

#### **Investigation launched into alleged torture in Kassala**

Prosecutors in Kassala have launched a preliminary [investigation](#) against officials allegedly responsible for the torture of a man to the point of [kidney failure](#). The victim was arrested last week and reportedly subjected to [torture](#) for at least four days by members of the Kassala Investigations Department. Sources said that the man was urinating blood and is now undergoing dialysis in Khartoum.

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### **GOVERNMENT ETHIOPIA, CHAD, WAGNER**

#### **Diplomatic overtures from neighbours continue in Sudan**

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia traveled to Khartoum to [discuss](#) bilateral relations between Sudan and Ethiopia on 26 January. After al-Burhan [greeted](#) Ahmed at the airport, Hemedti announced that they [met](#) to “discuss the close bilateral relations between Sudan and Ethiopia... in addition to the current political developments taking place in Sudan and in the region.” Israeli foreign minister Eli Cohen also [traveled](#) to Sudan this week to meet with al-Burhan, in the first visit by an Israeli official publicly acknowledged by Sudanese authorities. The Israeli foreign ministry said in a statement that “[d]uring the visit, which was made with the consent of the United States, the parties finalized the text of the agreement,” which is expected to be signed after a civilian transitional government is in place. Hemedti said he had [no knowledge](#) of the visit and did not meet the delegation, seemingly another sign of the rift between Hemedti and al-Burhan as both seek to build credibility in the broader regional and international diplomatic community.

#### **Al-Burhan and Hemedti visit Chad amidst worsening situation along the border**

Both [Hemedti](#) and [al-Burhan](#) recently visited Chad to discuss mutual issues concerning security and intelligence-sharing, as Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic have struck a deal to “help secure” a gold-rich region in the Central African Republic; responding to this news, an expert analysis at the International Crisis Group [predicted](#) that the “deal struck this month will destabilise the region even further.” Perhaps bearing this out, fighting between [Wagner](#) mercenaries and rebel forces has surged in recent weeks. Sudanese

forces [engaged](#) in some of these [skirmishes](#), killing somewhere between seven - 17 Wagner fighters over the last weekend of January. Coming at the same issue from a different angle, the US has also reportedly stepped up [efforts](#) to encourage Middle East allies (like Egypt and the UAE) to pressure Sudanese and Libyan authorities to cut ties with Wagner; the US has recently [sanctioned](#) the Wagner Group. See also this useful Twitter [thread](#) on Hemedti's relationship with the CAR government, an in-depth [analysis](#) of the "Wagner-RSF ties that block the path to democratisation" in Sudan, and a [story](#) about the next round of talks between Darfur fighters in Libya and the SAF (scheduled for early March in Doha).

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## HUMANITARIAN SITUATION CONFLICT, CURFEWS, AID WORKER

### Community leaders in North Darfur warn of 'imminent attacks'

A displaced community leader in Tawila camp warned that attacks were '[imminent](#)' after more than 1,000 gunmen on motorcycles gathered in Kabkabiya locality (reportedly on their way to Sortony, where there is a large IDP camp). Despite these warnings, no additional security forces have been deployed to address the growing threat. Elsewhere in the region, a woman was [gang-raped](#) by uniformed men while collecting firewood in Central Darfur, and [multiple instances](#) of armed robberies have been reported.

### Violence and curfews in South Kordofan

Kadugli, the capital of South Kordofan, was placed under an overnight [curfew](#) on 25 January after gunmen killed four people at a bus station on 23 January. The local government declared a [state of emergency](#), closing markets and suspending events for a month. The [movement](#) of humanitarian aid organisations to and from the state has now been suspended until further notice due to the increased security risks. Separately, recent [reporting](#) from the Red Sea state also highlighted the growing influence of Dirar Ahmed Dirar, who has "vowed to use weapons to liberate the Beja people." "Shaiba Dirar" and his men are known to openly carry weapons in Port Sudan without interference from Sudanese authorities, and Middle East Monitor reported that "inside the militia leader's office were dozens of pistols, guns and manuals for bombs . . . [and] teargas made by the Military Industry Corporation, Sudan's state-run defence corporation."

### Aid worker killed in Blue Nile state

Adam Tairab, a staff member of a local civil society organization, was shot and [killed](#) by unknown gunmen in Blue Nile state on 27 January. Volker [Perthes](#), head of UNITAMS, called Tairab "a peacebuilding advisor...deeply committed to building bridges between communities" and reiterated that "aid workers must be respected and protected." UNITAMS has called for an investigation into the killing, as the Blue Nile government [accused](#) SPLM-N forces of carrying out the murder. The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies, a human rights monitoring organisation, also [reported](#) that a human rights activist was arrested and detained under the ongoing state of emergency announced last fall by the Blue Nile state governor; Ali Mohamed Hajo, an activist and Ministry of Finance employee, was apparently arrested in relation to his Facebook post about an officer reportedly responsible for authorizing the torture of several students at a Military Intelligence facility. (These events are understood to have taken place several years ago, probably 2018.) A woman was also [arrested](#) by SAF forces after a soldier entered her house and demanded to have sex with her; though the woman's family restrained

the soldier after he persisted in his demands, the woman was arrested and now faces two months' imprisonment.

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## weekend read

Wagner Group activity in [African mines](#); [recommendations](#) from the International Crisis Group and [continued protests](#); [black markets](#) in Sudan and Sudanese [martial arts](#); and the latest Sudan Transparency and Policy [tracker](#).

*Thanks for reading and see you in two weeks.*

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