

# justice + conflict

UPDATES FROM SUDAN

REDRESS

Hello,

Welcome to this fortnightly roundup of news on justice and conflict in Sudan (delayed due to public holidays in the UK). Hyperlinks are underlined.

Tuesday 2 Apr 2024

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## BIG STORIES FIRST

- Minni Minnawi [announced](#) that the SLM-MM will fight against the RSF in [Khartoum and Gezira States](#), joining [JEM-Ibrahim](#) alongside the SAF. Minnawi's announcement came just days after the RSF [objected](#) to aid transportation routes into Darfur [agreed by Minnawi, the UN, and other humanitarian agencies](#). The SAF has continued to make [steady gains](#) in Omdurman and is reportedly building up a "[massive force](#)" to attack RSF positions in Gezira State. Coinciding with the recent momentum shift in the armed conflict, two senior SAF officials – [Yasir al-Atta](#) and [Ibrahim Jaber](#) (both also Sovereign Council members) – have publicly rejected the prospect of future power-sharing arrangements with civilian political groups. Speaking at the Wadi Seidna military base to members of [Malik Agar's](#) new [National Forces Coordination](#), al-Atta [claimed](#) that the Commander of the SAF ([currently al-Burhan](#)) would serve as Head of State during any transitional period and the SAF would not hand over power to civilian political forces prior to elections. Al-Atta [separately suggested](#) that the pro-SAF Popular Resistance Committees establish parliaments and appoint a Prime Minister/state *walis*. Shortly after, Jaber claimed a "[non-political transitional period](#)" would commence with a government of (presumably SAF-aligned) technocrats in anticipation of elections. A SAF sub-committee has [reportedly submitted](#) a list of proposed ministers to al-Burhan – apparently a blend of SAF officials and civilian technocrats though exact details are currently unclear.
- The US and other actors are pushing for the resumption of the Jeddah ceasefire talks – possibly by [18 April](#). The new [US Envoy for Sudan](#) expressed his "cautious optimism" about the negotiations (which were [indefinitely suspended](#) in early December 2023), though meaningful progress remains unlikely as things stand, particularly as the [SAF looks to capitalise on its recent momentum in Khartoum/Gezira](#) and it is expected that the RSF may soon launch another attack in Al-Fashir, North Darfur (see below in Humanitarian Situation). Both sides have repeatedly employed stalling tactics (e.g., forum-shopping) – delaying genuine engagement with mediators until

they consider that they have the upper hand in the armed conflict. Since both sides are using the same strategy, this has resulted in a deadlock – entrenching their respective positions and curtailing any momentum towards a ceasefire. Should the Jeddah talks resume, it is expected that they may now include the [UAE and Egypt](#), as well as the [AU](#) and a [continued role](#) for IGAD. However, the lead mediators – the US and Saudi Arabia – are [reportedly yet to agree](#) precisely how this expanded platform would function.

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## ACCOUNTABILITY GEZIRA, KORDOFAN, CRSV

### RSF atrocities mount in Gezira

The RSF has [formed a de facto native administration](#) in Gezira State and launched further targeted attacks against local civilians. [Emergency Lawyers report](#) that the RSF has killed at least 248 civilians and injured at least 347 people in Gezira since the armed conflict began. During the first five days of Ramadan alone, the [RSF launched attacks on 28 villages in Gezira](#), killing at least 43 people, including twelve people in [Um Jereis](#) and [El Halila](#) villages. While the SAF is soon expected to launch an attack on the RSF in Gezira (alongside the SPLM-MM, JEM-Ibrahim, and [Central Reserve Police](#)), the RSF may be planning to expand its control having recently [attacked Al-Giteina village in White Nile State](#), killing six people.

### Armed clashes in Kordofan States

Armed clashes have continued across the three Kordofan States. In South Kordofan, the SAF launched [airstrikes](#) killing at least 14 people – most of whom were students in El Hadra. It is not clear whether the attacks targeted RSF positions or the SPLM-N al-Hilu. In West Kordofan, [clashes are ongoing between the SAF and RSF](#). In North Kordofan, [SAF warplanes attacked an RSF supply convoy](#) near Hamrat al-Sheikh.

### CRSV reports continue to emerge

CSOs continue to report acts of sexual and gender-based violence perpetrated by the RSF. Amongst others, the [African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies](#) documented that the RSF committed acts of sexual violence against at least 33 internally displaced people in Kalma camp, South Darfur; and [SIHA Network](#) described “continuous and systematic acts of sexual violence” perpetrated as “primary tactics” by the RSF against civilians in South Kordofan. Relatedly, in a meeting with the Sudanese Together Against Rape and Sexual Violence campaign, a [representative of the Attorney-General claimed](#) that new directives were issued to prosecutors on rape and sexual violence cases following the start of the armed conflict, including removing the territorial jurisdiction requirement for prosecutions. Finally, a coalition of 68 women’s groups [submitted a memorandum](#) calling on the UN Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan to accelerate its investigation into sexual violence cases.

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## GOVERNMENT UNSC, TAQADDUM, CRUDE OIL

### UN Security Council urged to act as food insecurity worsens

The UN Security Council held a [briefing on food insecurity in Sudan](#) following OCHA’s submission of a [White Note](#). The White Note explains that nearly 18 million people across Sudan are currently facing acute food insecurity, five million of whom are currently experiencing emergency levels of food insecurity ([IPC Phase 4](#)) and some of

whom may face catastrophic conditions (IPC Phase 5) over the coming months, particularly in West and Central Darfur. In its [remarks](#), the US: (i) emphasised that external parties providing material support to the warring parties in violations of the [arms embargo](#) are complicit in the loss of lives (they did not name the UAE, though [Sudan's representative did](#)); and (ii) called on the Security Council to apply targeted sanctions to help address the violence and signal to perpetrators that perpetrators will be held accountable.

### **Taqaddum crisis of legitimacy**

Taqaddum faces a crisis of legitimacy following a series of high-profile incidents. First, a [leaked document](#) purportedly authored by Taqaddum-leader Abdalla Hamdok [proposed](#): (i) a 60-day ceasefire to be extended by mutual consent of the warring parties; (ii) a political dialogue involving all parties except the NCP; (iii) a five-year transition period followed by elections; and (iv) a ten-year process to form a unified army; and (v) immunity from prosecution for leaders of the SAF and RSF. The document is [reportedly similar](#) to the [Declaration of Principles](#) agreed by Shamseddin al-Kabbashi and Abdelrahim Dagalo in Manama. Taqaddum has [denied any association](#) with the document (which has been widely criticised). The origins of the document are unclear. Meanwhile, Taqaddum issued a [statement condemning sexual violence](#) and distancing the group from [comments made by its spokesman](#), Alaaeldin Nogod, dismissing and downplaying reports of rape and sexual violence committed since the armed conflict began. Taqaddum is [holding a leadership meeting](#) this week. Finally, Taqaddum issued a rare statement [expressly condemning violence by the RSF in Jezira](#) – a development that has been welcomed though: (i) some view the statement as a way of hedging Taqaddum's political opportunities; and (ii) the timing leaves much to be desired (the RSF has already been targeting civilians in Jezira for over three months and longer elsewhere, particularly in Darfur, Khartoum, the Kordofan States).

### **Ruptured oil pipeline in White Nile**

Sudan's Ministry of Energy and Petroleum [declared a force majeure event](#) in respect of oil exports following a "major rupture" in the main pipeline that carries crude oil from South Sudan through Sudanese territory to Port Sudan for export. Due to military operations in territory controlled by the RSF in northern White Nile State, certain pump stations ran out of diesel – causing a clog. While the clog issue was initially resolved, a rupture later occurred at [another point in the pipeline](#). A team of experts has been unable to fix the pipeline due to access and telecommunications issues caused by the ongoing armed conflict. Effectively, the declaration – provided it was made validly – relieves Sudan of its contractual obligations to deliver crude oil to its production partners in China and Malaysia for the duration of the incident. More than [90%](#) of South Sudan's State revenue depends on oil and its ability to sell oil has already been under pressure from heightened insecurity on the Red Sea. According to [sources in South Sudan](#), Salva Kiir has sought assistance from the UAE to secure RSF protection of oil installations and access for repairs/maintenance.

### **Authorities approve Iran ambassador**

The Sudanese de facto authorities have [officially approved Abdulaziz Hassan Salah](#) as Sudan's new ambassador to Iran – the latest step in the normalisation of diplomatic relations between Sudan and Iran. Meanwhile, Iranian Mohajer-6 drones reportedly were a ["decisive factor"](#) in the SAF's battle to recapture the Radio and Television

Corporation HQ from the Rapid Support Forces (though the de facto authorities [continue to deny](#) that Iran has provided any military support to the SAF).

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#### HUMANITARIAN SITUATION SAF AIRSTRIKES, AID BLOCKED

##### Fears grow of imminent RSF attack in North Darfur

Clashes between the SAF and the RSF have [intensified](#) in [North Darfur](#) – adding to fears that the RSF may soon launch a full-scale attack to capture Al-Fashir; a battle that would further exacerbate the profound humanitarian crisis in the region. The SAF has launched various airstrikes targeting RSF positions in [Al-Fashir](#), [Kabkabiya](#), [Kutum](#), and [Badia al-Zarq](#). In one incident, at least [nine civilians were killed and 14 injured](#). The RSF has mainly targeted key supply routes near Mellit in North Darfur – [blocking UNICEF trucks loaded with food supplies](#) and attacking a [SLM-AW supply convoy](#). The RSF has [deployed heavily armed fighters](#) near Mellit – increasing the likelihood of clashes with [members of the Joint Force still deployed in the area](#).

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## weekend read

“[Enlist or die](#)”; the [unseen resilience](#) of mutual aid; Sudan [weeks from catastrophic hunger crisis](#) (and [famine looms](#)); [AU role](#) on Sudan; [both sides profiting](#) from goods smuggling; [online briefing](#) (and [interview](#)) with new US Sudan Envoy; Libya to [investigate](#) oil smuggling claims; testimonies [here](#) and [here](#) on Darfur atrocities; SPLM-N mobilisation in [South Kordofan](#); [targeting of activists](#); [treatment of Sudanese refugees](#) in Egypt; and the [first English issue of Atar Magazine](#).

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

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