



Security Council (SC)

Topic 3: The Humanitarian Crisis in Sudan

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Contents

1. Definition of key terms	1
2. Introduction	1
3. Timeline of events	2
4. Background information	3
5. Major countries involved	3
6. UN involvement	4
7. Official documents and treaties about the issue	4
8. Impact of the issue	5
9. Bibliography	5

1. Definition of key terms

Displacement: migration that occurs involuntarily, as individuals are forced to leave their homes due to adverse conditions such as conflicts, epidemics, or political instability.

Famine: the severe lack of food across entire geographical areas, often leading to widespread hunger and suffering.

Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF): the official military of the Sudanese government and are one of the two main factions involved in the ongoing civil war.

Rapid Support Forces (RSF): a paramilitary group that evolved from the Janjaweed militias and were previously aligned with Sudan's government during its period under Islamic control. They are now a central party in the current conflict.

Civil War: an armed conflict fought between factions or groups within the same country.

2. Introduction

The humanitarian crisis in Sudan is considered one of the most severe crises of our time, stemming from decades of oppressive regimes that have left the population in dire conditions, including famine, widespread epidemics, and poverty.

This ongoing crisis was exacerbated in 2023 when a conflict erupted between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), escalating into a full-scale civil war. Since then, famine, already widespread, has worsened dramatically. Internal and external displacement has

surged, while continuous terrorist attacks have made it nearly impossible for humanitarian aid to reach those in need.

3. Timeline of events

- **1955:** Sudan gained independence from Egypt and the United Kingdom, forming the Republic of Sudan.
- **1969:** A socialist coup d'état dissolved the Republic, replacing it with the Democratic Republic of Sudan. This period saw the First Sudanese Civil War (1955–1972), driven by conflicts between the southern minority and northern elite, as well as religious divisions among Arabs, Christians, and Black animists. The conflict ended with the Addis Ababa Agreement, granting cultural and religious autonomy to the South.
- **1976:** An unsuccessful coup briefly disrupted the relative stability achieved after the First Civil War.
- **1985:** The Second Sudanese Civil War erupted, fuelled by the imposition of Sharia law, the declaration of an Islamic state, unresolved tensions from the first war, and disputes over oil fields. This war resulted in over 2 million deaths, widespread famine in 1998, and severe human rights abuses, including mass killings and acts of slavery.
- **1989:** Colonel Omar al-Bashir seized power, establishing a dictatorship.
- **2003:** The Darfur conflict, also known as the Land Cruiser War, began. The Sudanese government, opposing the Sudan Liberation Movement and Justice and Equality Movement, engaged in ethnic cleansing, resulting in 300,000 deaths by 2020.
- **2005:** The Comprehensive Peace Agreement ended the Second Civil War, ushering in a period of relative calm despite periodic skirmishes and natural disasters, such as the devastating floods of 2007.
- **2011:** South Sudan gained independence following a referendum. However, unresolved issues in South Kordofan and Blue Nile led to ongoing conflict.
- **2013–2020:** The South Sudanese Civil War broke out, involving government forces and opposition groups. This war caused severe human rights violations, including ethnic massacres and the killing of journalists.
- **2017:** The United States imposed significant sanctions on Sudan's imports and exports, exacerbating inflation and currency shortages.
- **2018–2019:** Massive protests against President al-Bashir's regime culminated in his removal. A joint military-civilian government was formed in 2019.
- **2021–2022:** A military junta briefly deposed the civilian government, leading to deadly protests and the imprisonment of over 1,000 people.
- **2023:** A third civil war broke out due to a power struggle between Sudanese leader Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his deputy, Hemedti, who leads the RSF. The RSF has received support from the United Arab Emirates.

- **2024:** The United Nations reported that over 10.2 million people have been displaced, 25 million face severe food insecurity, and 150,000 have been killed. The Darfur region is at risk of another genocide, as RSF forces have increasingly targeted Black indigenous communities.

4. Background information

Millions of people have fled Sudan due to relentless attacks by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), who continue to invade cities, villages, and refugee camps. The RSF appear to be specifically targeting non-Arab ethnic groups, resulting in widespread ethnic cleansing.

In early June 2024, the last public hospital in the city of El-Fasher was forced to close after being attacked by the RSF. This incident is one of many in which hospitals and health facilities have been shut down due to escalating violence. The closure of these facilities has left the population in dire conditions, especially since humanitarian aid rarely reaches civilians.

On October 12, 2024, an airstrike on a market in Khartoum, Sudan's capital, resulted in 23 deaths and at least 40 injuries. Tragically, such attacks are common in Sudanese cities, and acts of terrorism, like this airstrike, are a harsh reality for many Sudanese civilians.

The Sudanese military-led government has rejected calls from the United Nations to protect civilians and keep them out of the conflict, further endangering the population. This stance reflects a troubling pattern of atrocities committed by the government against its own people, highlighting their disregard for the well-being of the nation.

On June 15, 2023, the governor of Sudan's West Darfur region was killed by the RSF after accusing them of causing the conflict and urging the international community to intervene.

5. Major countries involved

China:

China is Sudan's primary trading partner, importing oil from Sudan and supplying it with inexpensive goods and military equipment. The two nations maintain a strong and cooperative relationship characterized by close ties in diplomacy, economic exchange, and political collaboration.

Pakistan:

Pakistan and Sudan collaborate in various sectors, including agriculture, healthcare, and education. Pakistan supports Sudanese higher education and has historically provided Sudanese students with free medical training. During periods of drought and famine, Pakistan has sent aid to Sudan. Additionally, Pakistani UNMIS contingents frequently organize free medical camps in remote areas of Blue Nile State, which are often inaccessible by road.

Russian Federation:

Diplomatic relations between Sudan and Russia improved significantly in the late 1990s and early 2000s, coinciding with Vladimir Putin's leadership. Russia firmly supports Sudan's territorial sovereignty and opposes the establishment of an independent Darfurian state. Russia is also Sudan's leading investment partner and a key political ally in Europe, consistently recognizing Sudan as a vital strategic partner on the African continent.

Egypt:

Egypt has historically supported a unified Sudan and, as such, did not actively participate in the Sudan Peace Process that ultimately led to South Sudan's independence. Egypt has aligned itself with Sudan's military, providing soldiers and warplanes. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi has maintained a close relationship with Sudan's military leader, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

In early 2023, Egypt launched a political initiative in Cairo aimed at resolving disputes between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the RSF. However, the initiative was perceived as favouring the SAF. When hostilities broke out, General Hamdan's RSF forces captured 27 Egyptian military personnel, prompting Western officials to intervene in efforts to de-escalate the crisis and prevent further regional destabilization.

6. UN involvement

- **Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS):** A consortium of UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) established to provide humanitarian assistance to war-torn and drought-affected regions in southern Sudan. OLS operated from 1989 until the conclusion of the Second Sudanese Civil War in 2005.
- **United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS):** A UN peacekeeping mission in Sudan that operated from 2005 to 2011. Upon its conclusion, much of its equipment and personnel were transferred to UNISFA and UNMISS.
- **United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS):** A UN peacekeeping force established in 2011 to support South Sudan in maintaining peace and stability following its independence.
- **United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID):** A joint UN and African Union peacekeeping mission conducted between 2007 and 2020. Its objectives included stabilizing the Darfur region and ensuring the effective delivery of humanitarian aid.
- **United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA):** Established in 2011, this UN peacekeeping force monitors the contested Abyei border area between Sudan and South Sudan while facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

7. Official documents and treaties about the issue

- **UNHCR Global Appeal 2012–2013**
- **UNHCR External Update #92: Sudan Situation (8–14 December 2024)**
- **United Nations Security Council Resolution 1769**
- **United Nations Security Council Resolution 1996**

8. Impact of the issue

Before the outbreak of the conflict, Sudan was already grappling with a severe humanitarian crisis caused by extreme weather events, social and political unrest, and rising food prices. These challenges drove poverty, hunger, and displacement. However, the situation has worsened dramatically since the start of the civil war.

Humanitarian and Health Impacts:

The RSF's terrorist attacks have directly caused mass killings and widespread displacement, with numerous reports of ethnic cleansing. The conflict has severely hindered public infrastructure, rendering 70% of health facilities inoperable or closed. Humanitarian aid rarely reaches those in need due to the ongoing violence.

Displacement has placed immense pressure on already scarce healthcare resources, as well as water, sanitation, and hygiene services. A suspected cholera outbreak has infected approximately 11,000 people, resulting in at least 300 deaths.

Children are the most vulnerable group, suffering disproportionately from malnutrition and health complications.

Economic Impacts:

Sudan's economy has been devastated by the conflict. Even before the war, the country faced rampant inflation, which has worsened significantly, with the Sudanese pound losing 50% of its value. In addition to inflation, economic stability has been undermined by targeted attacks on banks and shops, further restricting civilians' access to basic resources.

Displacement:

Sudan has reached unprecedented levels of internal displacement, with over 10 million people displaced within the country. An additional 2 million people have fled to neighbouring countries, including Chad, Libya, and Uganda.

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