



United Nations International Children's
Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

ISSUE II: Addressing the Humanitarian Needs
of Children Amidst the Ongoing Conflict in
Sudan

Chair: Elijah Labay

Co-chair: Kim Kuster

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Definition of key terms	4
General Overview	5
Major parties involved	7
Timeline of key events	8
Previous attempts to solve the issue.....	9
Possible solutions	10
Appendices/Bibliography.....	11

Introduction

The situation in Sudan is one of the worst conflicts in the world right now, yet you might find yourself unaware on the specifics. This SGAMUN, UNICEF will try to spread more awareness, so in this research report you'll find the basic knowledge on the issue. We would like to advise you to do your own research as well, especially on your country profile and its stand on the situation.

This report contains a general overview, key terms, involved parties and past attempts to solve the issue. Lastly, if you have any trouble finding credible sources, check out the source list all the way at the end.

We hope this will help you prepare for the debates, and we look forward to seeing you at SGAMUN 2025.

Definition of key terms

If you ever find yourself not understanding a word don't hesitate to ask us, but we do advise you to look over this list so the debate will go as smoothly as possible.

Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) – Official and national army of Sudan

Rapid Support Forces (RSF) – Paramilitary group in Sudan

Paramilitary / militia – A group similar to an army, except not official and often illegal

Auxiliary (troops) – aiding or assisting (troops)

Darfur - Region in West Sudan

Janjaweed – Arabic militia located in Sudan

Displaced Persons – People who were forced to flee their homes because of danger of some sort

Internally Displaced Persons – People who were forced to flee their homes because of danger of some sort, whilst still habituating in their home country

Refugees – People who fled their country in fear of persecution and because of the fear are unwilling to return to the place of the country of their nationality

Child soldiers – People under the age of 18 who are forced to be soldiers

Famine – Situation in area in which at least 1 in 5 households deal with an extreme lack of food (starvation)

Lost Generation – Generation of youth growing up in harsh circumstances, often deprived of well-rounded education

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) – Violence disproportionately targeting or affecting females

Ceasefire – Temporary stoppage to a war

Sanctions – Action taken to make country obey an international law

Responsibility to Protect (R2P) – International law to halt mass atrocity crimes

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) – Also known as the law of war, containing a set of rules trying to limit the effects of armed conflicts for humanitarian reasons

Humanitarian Corridors – A zone which is temporarily demilitarized to let through humanitarian aid

Artillery – Big weapons used for discharging missiles over long distance, (this includes cannons, catapults etc.)

Mercenaries – Hired soldiers, often having no political interests in the conflict and solely focusing on personal profit

Autocratic – Being in absolute power

Coup (d'état) – Overthrowing the current leader(s)

Zakat – Wealthy people/businesses pay more taxes to support others

Condominium – Two or more countries practicing sovereignty

General Overview

Omar al-Bashir

Omar al-Bashir ruled Sudan from 1989 until 2019. He was a military officer who participated in a military coup in 1989, after which he seized power. He ruled a military government as an autocrat and crushed opposition. The first actions he took were also very impacting, like announcing a state of emergency, suspending the constitution, and getting rid of the parliament. The reactions of other nations were divided about these decisions, some took sanctions and others did not really care. Then he continued by censoring the media and replacing people in the government with his own supporters. Omar al-Bashir was able to accomplish this with the help of the National Islamic Front (NIF), which helped in the religious aspect of his regime. Their Islamic ideologies were the backbone of his policies. Omar started changing even more in the daily life in Sudan. Sharia deepened in the legal system, which are the Islamic ways of living and justice, and public punishments started to be common now. Furthermore, women got less rights, every school started teaching Islamic studies and banks were now tightly controlled by the state. Wealthy businesses and individuals now paid zakat. Omar al-Bashir is on the wanted list of the International Criminal Court for alleged crimes against humanity, genocide, and war crimes in Darfur.

Sudan's oil

In the late 1990's, during the civil war, Sudan discovered huge oil reserves in the south, and because Western firms (like the US) were blocked by sanctions, they started collaborating with Chinese, Malaysian and Indian firms. A major part of the Sudanese economy was in the 2000's the export from oil and made up about three-quarters of the government revenue. South Sudan gained its independence in 2011, an area which Sudan heavily depended on because of its oil. When South Sudan broke away, Sudan lost 75% of its oil production, which took a heavy toll. The Sudanese economy plummeted and the currency lost its value quickly. This also caused inflation, and this caused the spark for the protests against Omar al-Bashir.

The Rapid Support Forces

Rebels like the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) were convinced the Sudanese government was oppressing the non-Arab population and there to be big wealth inequality. They started rebelling in 2003 in Darfur. The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) was established by the government in 2013 to together with the national military (Sudanese Armed Forces) reduce the armed groups located in the Darfur region in Sudan. It grew out of Janjaweed militias from the conflict in Sudan. Janjaweed are nomadic militias with a reputation of raping, mass killings and burning villages. This caused the cooperation with them to be controversial since the beginning. However, together they have also participated in a coup, ousting Omar al-Bashir.

Transitional government

Because Sudan needed a temporary government of some sort, army generals stepped in to form the Transitional Military Council (TMC) of Sudan. The civilians, however, did not agree with this and wanted to be included in the transition. So, in 2019, the army, Rapid Support Forces and Forces for Freedom and Change (a group of civilians) came to an agreement together to call for an official transitional period and replace the TMC with the Sovereign Council after Omar al-Bashir was gone.

The president of this Sovereign Council is General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

The integration of paramilitary

When the transitional government was established, it was also necessary for the paramilitary to integrate into the national army. This was supposed to lead to more stability in Sudan, which it desperately needed. However, the generals of the national army and paramilitary (Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and General Mohamed Hamdan 'Hemedti' Dagalo respectively) disagree on how and when this happens. Both want to maintain their power, and are willing to fight for it, though the toll this takes on civilians and the country is huge. On the 15th of April 2023 they did start to fight each other, marking the beginning of the current civil war.

Present & future

Sudan has reached the world's highest number of internally displaced people (10,8 million last September). The United Nations has also declared it the world's worst hunger crisis. Over 15 million children are in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. More than 7 million have been displaced, often multiple times. The UN found 24 million Sudanese children to be at risk of being in a generational catastrophe. The lack of education will continue to weaken the country's economy and resilience, even after the conflict has ended. Yet most of the western mainstream news barely mentions anything about Sudan. Attempts have been made to bring humanitarian aid into the country, but it is simply too dangerous.

From the 19 million school-aged children in Sudan, 17 million are out of school. This sets Sudan back in its fight against poverty, wealth inequality and will continue to do so for a long time.

Major parties involved

Important parties to know:

- UNICEF (United Nations Children's fund) – providing all necessities for children.
- Rapid Support Forces (RSF) – fighting the official military of Sudan.
- Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) – Sudan's national military, fighting against RSF.
- Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) & Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) – Were first to rebel against the government of Sudan in 2003, the conflict causing hundreds of thousands to lose their lives.
- Janjaweed – Paramilitary ally of the SAF, and together they fight against the rebels. Accused of committing many war crimes.
- President Omar al-Bashir – Ousted president of Sudan, wanted by the International Criminal Court.
- Volker Perthes – UN representative in Sudan.
- Abdel Fattah al-Burhan – General of Sudan's national army
- Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo ("Hemedti") – General of the RSF
- Forces for Freedom and Change – A group of Sudanese civilians involved in the making of the new council in Sudan.
- National Islamic Front (NIF) – Islamic political organisation, partnered with Omar al-Bashir.

Timeline of key events

30 June 1989 — General Omar al-Bashir seizes power in a military coup, suspends the constitution, dissolves parliament, and imposes a state of emergency. His rule is combined with strong support from the National Islamic Front.

1991 — The government introduces the Criminal Act, embedding Islamic principles into Sudan's legal framework. Public order laws become more strictly enforced, reducing civil liberties, particularly for women.

1997 — The United States imposes comprehensive sanctions on Sudan, further isolating the regime and shaping its later turn toward Asian partners for investment.

1999 — Sudan begins exporting oil through a pipeline operated by Chinese, Malaysian, and Indian companies. Oil quickly becomes the backbone of the Sudanese economy.

2003 — Armed conflict erupts in Darfur. Rebel groups accuse the government of discrimination and marginalization. The government responds by mobilizing Janjaweed militias, whose attacks on civilians gain international condemnation.

4 March 2009 — The International Criminal Court issues its first arrest warrant for President al-Bashir on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur.

12 July 2010 — A second ICC warrant follows, this time including charges of genocide.

9 July 2011 — South Sudan becomes independent, taking with it around three-quarters of Sudan's oil production. Sudan's economy suffers from revenue loss, devaluation of its currency, and mounting inflation.

2013 — The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) are formally created, drawing largely from Janjaweed elements, and deployed in Darfur and other regions. Their methods remain controversial.

11 April 2019 — Following months of protests, the military removes Omar al-Bashir from power. A Transitional Military Council (TMC) assumes authority.

17 August 2019 — After negotiations with civilian groups, the Constitutional Declaration is signed.

21 August 2019 — The Sovereign Council of Sudan is established as a power-sharing body, with General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan as its chair and General Mohamed Hamdan "Hemedti" Dagalo as deputy.

25 October 2021 — General Burhan leads a coup, dissolving the civilian-military partnership. A new, military-led Sovereign Council is later formed.

5 December 2022 — A Framework Agreement is signed with civilian actors, but disagreements over the integration of the RSF into the Sudanese Armed Forces remain unresolved.

15 April 2023 — Clashes erupt between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the RSF, marking the beginning of the current conflict.

Previous attempts to solve the issue

There have been many attempts to solve the conflict in Sudan, but only few have succeeded. These are some of those attempts in short:

- **Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA 2005)** ended the second civil war between North and South, but did not address Darfur.

UN attempts:

- **United Nations Missions In Sudan (UNMIS 2005 – 2011)** helped organize the 2011 referendum and the peaceful independence of South Sudan, but its limited mandate meant it could not deal with the ongoing conflict in Darfur and other regions.
- **United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID 2007–2020)** aimed to protect civilians and facilitate humanitarian aid. (Worked well, but was still limited by governmental restrictions and underfunding)
- **United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS 2020-present)** tries negotiating ceasefires between the RSF and the SAF, but has not been sufficiently successful yet.
- The security Council has called for ceasefires (2023-2024) but they never held up for more than a few days

Furthermore, UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, and OCHA continue to deliver humanitarian aid, especially to children and displaced persons.

Possible solutions

- **Renewed peace talks** that involve all relevant parties, meaning the civilians as well.
- Supporting efforts to **establish reliable ceasefires** and monitoring mechanisms.
- **Expanding humanitarian access** to vulnerable populations, especially children.
- Considering **frameworks for disarmament and reintegration** of (child)soldiers.
- Accountability **measures for violations** of international law.
- **Strengthening cooperation** between the UN, the African Union, and regional actors.
- **Economic and developmental initiatives** that could reduce tensions.

Appendices/Bibliography

These are all the sources used for this research report, and can be very useful to help you deepen your understanding on the subject if you want to be extra prepared or just don't know where to begin.

References

Al Jazeera. (2023, May 31). *Fighting in Sudan: A timeline of key events*. Www.aljazeera.com.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/31/fighting-in-sudan-a-timeline-of-key-events>

Booty, N. (2021, October 25). Sudan war: A simple guide to what is happening. *BBC*.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cjel2nn22z9o>

Center for Preventive Action. (2025, April 15). *Civil War in Sudan*. Global Conflict Tracker; Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/power-struggle-sudan>

Malafronte, G. (2020, February 18). *News | The Political Studies Association (PSA)*. News | the Political Studies Association (PSA). <https://www.psa.ac.uk/psa/news/sudan-after-omar-al-bashir%E2%80%99s-overthrow>

Rise, H. (2024, December 2). *Omar Al-Bashir's Rule: Islamism, Oil, And International Isolation Explained*. History Rise. <https://historyrise.com/omar-al-bashirs-rule-islamism-oil-and-international-isolation/>

Staff, A. J. (2023, May 15). *Sudan fighting: One month on and no solution in sight*.

Www.aljazeera.com. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/15/sudan-fighting-one-month-on-and-no-solution-in-sight>

Sudan conflict: 24 million children exposed to a year of brutality and rights violations, UN committee says. (2024, March 18). OHCHR. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/03/sudan-conflict-24-million-children-exposed-year-brutality-and-rights>

United Nations. (2023, December 14). *Explainer: How Darfur became a “humanitarian calamity and catastrophic human rights crisis”* | UN News. News.un.org.

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/12/1144787>

United Nations. (2024, September 16). *The Sudan Conflict*. UN News.

<https://news.un.org/en/focus/sudan-conflict>

Volle, A. (2025, June 5). *Rapid Support Forces (RSF) | Leader, SAF, Sudan, & Support*. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Rapid-Support-Forces>