

FORUM:	Security Council
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Introduction

Since April 2023, Sudan has been embroiled in a brutal civil war between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), considered by the UN to be the worst humanitarian disaster in the world. Coming after years of instability and political violence, it began in April 2021, when the two most powerful generals such as SAF



Protestors in Sudan

and RSF – each with a claim to the presidency – turned against each other. It has since triggered the displacement of nearly thirteen million people and resulted in genocide in the western region of Darfur. In recent months, the Council has recognized the risk to regional stability posed by this conflict: If not brought under control, it threatens to spill over into the Red Sea and the Sahel, undermining the very authority of the Security Council, whose members are nonetheless directly involved in the crisis.

Background

The current war began in April 2023, when General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan of the SAF and General Mohamed Hamdan “Hemedti” Dagalo of the RSF – having overthrown the country’s precarious civilian-military transition – turned against each other. Their dispute was over the future of the RSF, a paramilitary organization largely composed of Janjaweed militia from the early 2000s Darfur conflict, which was to be integrated into the regular army. It ended in generalized fighting erupting in the capital, Khartoum, in mid-April, and later spread to almost all eighteen states of Sudan.



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The war has seen several phases. Khartoum and West Darfur were the main theaters of war in early 2023, when RSF-affiliated militias committed ethnically targeted atrocities against the Masalit people in El Geneina. In 2024, the front shifted to North Darfur, where the RSF laid siege to El Fasher, the region's sole army-controlled city. SAF, meanwhile, retook the capital in early 2025. In July 2025, RSF and allied militias announced the formation of an alternative government, with the Tasis, the Sudan Founding Alliance, as its ruling party. Hemedti, RSF's commander, presided over a fifteen-member presidential council in



RSF-affiliated militias

Nyala, which the Security Council condemned as illegitimate and contrary to Sudan's territorial integrity. El Fasher fell to the RSF in late October 2025 after a near 540-day siege, which the UN later determined to have involved genocide. The war now focuses on Kordofan and Blue Nile, with El Obeid, the capital of the former, under siege as of August 2026.

Problems Raised

Problem 1: Mass Displacement and the Collapse of Humanitarian Access

The conflict has generated the largest displacement crisis in the world. As of March 2026, according to the International Organization for Migration, about 8.9 million Sudanese were internally displaced, while approximately 4.5 million others had fled to neighboring countries, primarily Chad, Egypt, and South Sudan. Aid to internally displaced persons and refugees is limited by many factors, including the obstruction of humanitarian corridors by both warring factions, drone attacks on humanitarian workers and World Food Program facilities, and the inability to finance the UN Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan for Sudan, only 20 percent of which has been covered as of April 2026.

Problem 2: Famine and the Use of Starvation as a Weapon of War

According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, about 19.5 million Sudanese, or 41 percent of the population, were living in crisis or higher levels of acute food insecurity as of February-May 2026, including 135,000 people in Catastrophe, the highest category on the scale. El Fasher and Kadugli



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were formally declared famine-affected in 2025, while other cities, including El Obeid, were also at risk of following suit. Despite the Security Council’s repeated statements that starvation must not be used as a weapon of war, both warring factions have been accused of obstructing humanitarian aid to the other’s territorial jurisdiction.

Problem 3: Ethnically Targeted Violence and Findings of Genocide

The war has involved numerous acts of ethnically targeted violence against Sudan’s non-Arab populations. In particular, the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan concluded that the RSF’s attacks on El Fasher in October 2025 were a genocide against the Zaghawa, Fur, and other non-Arab ethnicities, following similar charges from the attacks in El Geneina in 2023 and Zamzam camp in 2025. The OHCHR recorded more than six thousand people killed in the RSF’s final offensive on the city in the first three days of fighting. The International Criminal Court, which the Security Council referred Darfur to in 2005, is investigating whether senior RSF officials have committed genocide.



Visualized map of violence in Sudan

International Actions

Action 1: Security Council Resolutions and Mechanisms

The Council has adopted several measures to address the crisis, although they have had little impact on the ground. In particular, Resolution 2736 (2024), adopted unanimously, with Russia abstaining, called on the RSF to lift the siege of El Fasher, which the RSF lifted only sixteen months later. Furthermore, the Council formally rejected the RSF’s declaration of the “Government of Peace and Unity” in 2025. In its response to the second anniversary of the war in February 2026, the Council condemned drone strikes on humanitarian workers and warned both warring factions not to use starvation as a weapon of war. The Council also imposed an arms embargo on Darfur, which has been in place since 2004 under Resolution 1556 (2004), although it has consistently refused to extend it to the entire country, a position the US



Congress has criticized. Moreover, the Council's referral of Darfur to the ICC in 2005 remains one of its most critical measures, allowing the Court to investigate the atrocities in the region.

Action 2: Regional and International Mediation

The diplomatic efforts to end the fighting have been intensive but have yielded few results. The Jeddah process, which brought together the Saudi kingdom, the US, and other foreign powers, resulted in the Declaration of Commitment to Protect Civilians in May 2023, but it failed after a few months. A Quad, consisting of the US, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the UAE, was formed in September 2025, with a roadmap from humanitarian truce to a full ceasefire and political transition. Notably, US diplomacy achieved significant progress, with a draft agreement on peace in Sudan reportedly accepted by both warring factions in February 2026. However, Egypt conducts its Sudanese policy through the Cairo Dialogue with Sudanese

civilian authorities and the African Union, while the UN Security Council Personal Envoy, Ramtane Lamamra, promotes a Sudanese-led approach. These diplomatic initiatives have had mixed results, with General al-Burhan rejecting some Quad proposals initially while Sudan suspected UAE interference in Sudanese affairs. Moreover, although there is now an agreement to declare a humanitarian



Picture of International Mediation in Sudan

pause, renewed hostilities around El Obeid in August 2026 suggest that the warring factions continue to fight.

Key Players

Sudan (Transitional Government / Sudanese Armed Forces)

Based in Port Sudan and led by General al-Burhan, the internationally recognized government views the RSF and Tasis as an illegitimate rebellion. It has resisted calls for a ceasefire, arguing that the RSF has

gained too much territory to be rewarded for its restraint. It has also accused the UAE of supporting RSF militias.

Rapid Support Forces / Sudan Founding Alliance (Tasis)

Led by General Hemedti, the RSF controls most of Darfur, as well as significant portions of Kordofan and Blue Nile. It administers the regions under a self-declared “Government of Peace and Unity,” which none of the international community recognizes, and is accused of committing genocide in El Fasher by the UN.



Possible Solutions

Solution 1: Strengthen and Universalize the Arms Embargo

The Security Council should consider adopting Resolution 2736 by extending the embargo to all of Sudan. It should also task the Panel of Experts with identifying and designating those responsible for facilitating arms trafficking, using a public list, and imposing sanctions, regardless of their status in Sudan or elsewhere.

Solution 2: Establish Monitored Humanitarian Corridors and Support Accountability

The Security Council should adopt a resolution establishing monitored humanitarian corridors, modeled on Resolution 2736, and requiring both warring factions to ensure the safety of humanitarian aid. In addition, it could impose penalties on those responsible for attacks on humanitarian workers, as Resolution 2286 calls for, and expand the mandate of the International Criminal Court to bring perpetrators to justice.

Solution 3: Anchor a Sudanese-Led Political Transition

The Council should encourage the Quad to endorse a unified statement and rally behind an Egyptian initiative for a Sudanese-led political transition, not only to isolate the RSF but also to prevent the UAE



from dominating Sudan's post-war reconstruction. The resolution could also require the transitional government to ensure that Sudan's civilian authorities play a leading role in the negotiations.

Glossary

Rapid Support Forces (RSF)

A paramilitary force descended from the Janjaweed militias of the early-2000s Darfur conflict, commanded by Mohamed Hamdan “Hemedti” Dagalo.

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)

A five-phase scale used by UN and partner agencies to measure the severity of food insecurity, ranging from Phase 1 (Minimal) to Phase 5 (Famine/Catastrophe).



Internally Displaced Person (IDP)

A person forced to flee their home who remains within their own country's borders, as distinct from a refugee, who has crossed an international border.

Tasis (Sudan Founding Alliance)

The RSF-led political and military coalition that declared a rival “Government of Peace and Unity” in July 2025.

Penholder

The Security Council member state responsible for drafting and steering negotiations on a given country situation; the United Kingdom has held this role for Sudan.



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