

The UN Security Council

11 June 2019

RE: Appealing for Urgent Intervention to Prevent further Bloodshed in Sudan

The undersigned, 30 civil society organisations from around the world, are writing to you at a critical time, the fate of the Sudanese people hangs in the balance and bold leadership is needed to prevent further violence and support those seeking democratic change in Sudan.

The situation in Sudan is at a critical juncture. There is an immediate and urgent need for intervention to restore civilian rule in Sudan and to address the demands made by protesters since December 2018. The moment that held so much promise for the brave people of Sudan who exercised their democratic right to clamor for change through peaceful protest now seems to be turning to a more oppressive context.

Over the past week, the commitment made by the TMC to hand over power to a civilian-led transitional authority has crumbled.

The attack on peaceful democracy protesters in Khartoum that began with the violent breakup of the sit in has claimed more than 118 lives according to the Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors on 9 June 2019, and left hundred more injured. The Rapid Support Forces, riot police, and national security officials riding in armed vehicles reportedly attacked the protest site early in the morning, when most protesters were sleeping. They reportedly blocked the exit so that protesters could not easily leave and used live ammunition. In an apparent effort to conceal the extent of their crimes, attackers reportedly threw bodies into the Nile, weighing them down with bricks. According to the Central Committee of Doctors, more than 40 of these have now been recovered from the waters. At least three cases of rape were also reported in the attack. At least three hospitals were attacked, with reports of doctors assaulted. Since then, targeted harassment of medical personnel has led to the closing of eight hospitals, according to the Central Committee of Doctors.

The crackdown has continued beyond the sit in. Internet access has been disrupted and RSF militia continue to roam the streets. Hundreds have been arrested. Recently returned opposition leader Yassir Arman was arrested and held incommunicado for several days before being forcibly deported to Juba.

These horrific acts clearly demonstrate the TMC's lack of commitment to a peaceful transition to a civilian government and their determination to consolidate control by the harshest elements in the security services. It highlights the risk of further political polarization and of mass violent confrontation if urgent action is not taken in support of a peaceful transition to civilian rule.

We welcome the decision of the African Union's Peace and Security Council to suspend Sudan from the AU until power is handed over to a civilian authority and call on the UN Security Council to support the regional position by:

- Condemning the violence in Khartoum and elsewhere in the country as a threat to international peace and security, calling for an impartial investigation and for those most responsible for violence against civilians to be held accountable;
- Urgently supporting establishment of a mechanism to conduct an independent investigation into the attacks on protestors including cases of sexual and gender-based violence by armed groups including the Rapid Support Forces that have been reported following the latest attacks and demanding accountability for the perpetrators;
- Demanding a rapid transfer of power to civilian authorities and a transition period led by civilian authorities to undertake institutional, political, social and economic reforms to avoid the conditions that led to the protests and supporting the naming of a team of eminent persons to support this. Holding elections before these reforms take place will further divide the country and reduce prospects for true democracy;
- Freezing plans to draw down the forces of the joint United Nations-African Union Mission in Sudan in light of recent attacks on peaceful protesters not only in Khartoum but also in Darfur at least until a civilian authority is established;
- Demanding the demobilization of the Rapid Support Forces under the supervision of the international community;
- Expanding the imposition of targeted sanctions in Sudan, now only focused on Darfur, to individuals most responsible for violence against peaceful protesters and other peaceful opposition.

We urge the United Nations to support the African Union in their call for a Sudanese government that supports human rights, respects the rule of law and upholds the democratic freedoms for all Sudanese. If the international community does not speak with one voice now, it risks promoting a drastic deterioration of the situation on the ground with long term consequences for peace and security not only in Sudan, but also in the region.

Signed

Act for Sudan

African Federation Association AFA WFM UGANDA

African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS)

AlKhatim Adlan Centre for Enlightenment and Human Development (KACE)

Atrocities Watch Africa

Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)

CSW

Darfur Bar Association (DBA)

DefendDefenders (the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights

Defenders Project)

Euro-African Forum on Rights and Development (EAFRD)

Horn of Africa Civil Society Forum

Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Institute of South Africa (HURISA)

International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

International Refugee Rights Initiative

Investors Against Genocide

Justice Centre for Advocacy and Legal Consultations
Kamma Organization for Development Initiatives (KODI)
The MagkaSama Project
Massachusetts Coalition to Save Darfur
MENA Rights Group
Never Again Coalition
Nubsud Human Rights Monitors Organisation (NHRMO)
Skills for Nuba Mountains
STAND: The Student-Led Movement to End Mass Atrocities
Stop Genocide Now
Sudan Consortium
Sudan Unlimited
Sudanese Rights Group
World Peace Foundation