

CJCPMUNC

2026



SOCHUM

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Aanya Patel

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Dear MUN Delegates,

Welcome to CJCP MUN 2026! My name is Aanya Patel, and I am a Senior at Central Jersey College Prep. I will be serving as your Chair for the SOCHUM Committee. We are so thrilled to have our third Model UN at CJCP, and I can't wait to meet you all!

I have been a part of Model UN when I was in 6th grade, and it has been such a great experience. As someone who had never had much public speaking and leadership experience, I was definitely in a new environment. When I went to my first conference for MUN, I was the most nervous person in the room. It took a lot of courage for me to go up and start speaking with others. But over time, I got better, and it became much easier. Model UN is by no means easy, and it will take effort, time, and patience, but as you continue your journey through Model UN, I can guarantee that you will learn lessons and skills that can transfer to your everyday life. One of the biggest lessons I learned when doing Model UN was that there is no easy solution to any problem. If there was, then the issue would have already been resolved.

Delegates must develop effective problem-solving skills and proper communication with other delegates to collaborate and find solutions that could be used to solve global problems. As you embark on your MUN journey with CJCP, remember that the whole purpose of this conference is to come together and take away new experiences and knowledge. We expect delegates to be open-minded and willing to learn and expand on their knowledge and skills.

Delegates, the biggest advice I have for you is to be prepared before the conference even starts. I know that it isn't easy, but I guarantee it will help you in the long run! I hope all of you learn something new from this conference. I can't wait to see you guys and the exciting ideas you will put on the table! If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out!

Sincerely,

Aanya Patel, SOCHUM Committee Chair

LETTER FROM THE VICE-CHAIR

Maryam Ndour

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Dear CJCP MUN Delegates

I hope you are excited for CJCP Model UN 2026! My name is Maryam, and I am a Senior at CJCP. I will be your Vice Chair for this year's SOCHUM Committee. I hope you guys are excited, and hopefully not so nervous, for this year's MUN. I can't wait to meet all of you talented delegates!

I started doing Model UN in my junior year, so just last year! This is quite late compared to my fellow dias members but I assure you that I have collected quite the experience in this one year period. I have gone from an entry level competition at Franklin high school, to competing at St.Peters University, to going to GCI, an international level competition. When I first competed I was definitely confused, but with the help of the dias and a friend of mine who was in the same committee, I pulled through and very quickly grasped the concept of Model UN. Throughout my journey, I grew to enjoy giving speeches, as it allowed me to voice my thoughts and share my ideas. I also learned to find a new friend, a new partner in every unfamiliar face. I learned to lead a group, and bring together different people who have different, brilliant ideas. I learned how to write up and organize ideas in new formats and how to answer questions on the spot and how to fully understand a plan that came about through the collaboration of great minds. Dear delegates, Model UN is a great opportunity for you to learn and refine all these skills and experiences, but it also allows you to have fun while doing so.

Delegates, my advice for you is to be prepared, whether it is writing out all your ideas, key points from the background guide, your NGO's, speeches, just try your best to be as prepared as possible. I also highly advise you to be respectful of other delegates' thoughts and ideas, and not just lead tyrannically, ignoring your fellow delegates' inputs and to give them credit for it. And most importantly, have fun!

I can't wait to see all of your amazing team work and problem solving, and hear all of your fantastic ideas and solutions! And don't be afraid to reach out to my email if you have any questions or need any help.

Sincerely,

Maryam Ndour, SOCHUM Committee Vice-Chair

NOTES OF PROCEDURE

Motions:

1. Motion to Set the Agenda: “Country _ motions to set the agenda on the topic of ____.”
This Motion Requires an Absolute Majority.

2. Motion to Set the Speakers List: “Country _ motions to set the Speakers List to _
seconds.” This Motion Requires an Absolute Majority.

3. Motion to Suspend the Debate:

a- Moderated Caucus: “Country _ motions to suspend the debate for a moderated caucus to
discuss ____ for a total time of _ minutes and speakers time _ seconds.” This Motion
Requires an Absolute Majority.

b- Unmoderated Caucus: “Country _ motions to suspend the debate for an unmoderated
caucus for the purpose of ____ for a total time of _ minutes”. This Motion Requires an
Absolute Majority.

4. Motion to Introduce Draft Resolutions: “Country _ motions to introduce Draft
Resolutions.” This Motion Requires an Absolute Majority.

5. Motion to Begin Debating on Amendments: “Country _ motions to begin debating on
amendments.” This Motion Requires an Absolute Majority.

6. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting: “Country _ motions to adjourn the meeting for the
purpose of lunch.”

7. Motion to Close the Debate: “Country _ motions to close the debate and move into
voting procedures.” This Motion Requires a Two-Thirds Majority.

NOTES OF PROCEDURE

Points:

1. Point of Order: This is used when a delegate feels that the chair or a fellow delegate has made an error.
2. Point of Parliamentary Procedure (Point of Inquiry): This is used when a delegate has a question regarding the rules of procedure or flow of debate.
3. Point of Personal Privilege: This is used when a delegate has a certain personal discomfort.
4. Point of Information: This is used when a delegate needs more clarification on a certain speech or notion that a delegate gave.

Yields:

Yields are only used when a delegate does not use their whole speaking time during the formal debate. They are of three types:

1. Yield to the Chair
2. Yield to Another Delegate
3. Yield to Questions

Amendments:

There are two types of amendments:

1. Friendly Amendments: A change to a draft resolution that all sponsors of the latter agree with.
2. Unfriendly Amendments: A change to a draft resolution that not all sponsors agree with. This Amendment requires an Absolute Majority vote to pass.

Resolutions:

1. If a draft resolution acquires an absolute majority, it passes and is adopted as the official resolution of the committee. In case no draft resolution achieves an absolute majority, the draft with a simple majority passes.

REVIEW OF COMMITTEE

Officially known as the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM), the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly is in charge of human rights, humanitarian problems as well as topics about displaced people and refugees. SOCHUM lacks the power to enact legally binding resolutions like the Security Council does, yet its activities have great political and moral weight. It sometimes establishes the groundwork for forthcoming Security Council discussions or motivates activities by regional groups and specialist agencies. SOCHUM works closely with the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and examines Human Rights Council, Special Political Committee reports, and a great number of UN special rapporteurs.

SOCHUM serves as a key forum for debate on humanitarian crises, especially when conflicts displace large civilian populations or generate systematic human rights violations. It reflects the broad diversity of UN membership, giving equal voice to countries from the Global North and South. As such, the committee often becomes a platform for competing narratives: Western states emphasizing accountability and human rights monitoring, African and Middle Eastern states stressing sovereignty and regional solutions, and non-aligned countries advocating for humanitarian aid without political interference.

On the Sudan crisis, SOCHUM plays an important role by convening member states to discuss the intersection of human rights and humanitarian aid. While it cannot directly mandate peacekeeping missions or sanctions, it can pass resolutions urging greater humanitarian access, recommending investigations into alleged war crimes, and mobilizing UN agencies to scale up assistance. It also provides an opportunity for Sudan's neighbors—who are hosting millions of refugees—to voice their concerns and request international burden-sharing. Ultimately, SOCHUM's role lies in shaping consensus, amplifying humanitarian needs, and keeping the crisis on the agenda of the broader international community.



Introduction to Committee Topic/Current Issue

With fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the For millions of people, paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) wreaking communities and driving them from their houses. Following Sudan's tenuous democratic transformation, months of political strife finally exploded into a countrywide conflict quickly. Battleground were major cities including Khartoum, Omdurman, and El Geneina, with innocent people caught in the crossfire. The civilian population has suffered most because there is no effective administration to manage aid efforts and ongoing conflict between the SAF and RSF.

The human price of the crisis is shocking. More than eight million people have been uprooted both within and across nations into Ethiopia, South Sudan, Chad, and Egypt. Women and children—who are particularly sensitive to sexual violence, hunger, and disease—make up many of these refugees. With the World Food Programme (WFP) claiming millions are already going through severe food insecurity, humanistic groups caution Sudan is headed for a famine of enormous scale. Uncertainty. Large sectors of the population lack access to medical treatment as hospitals and clinics have been robbed or damaged. Attacks on aid workers, communication blackouts, and bureaucratic hurdles have greatly restricted humanitarian organizations' capacity to provide life-saving assistance.

At the same moment, the crisis brings up pressing human rights issues. Reports of mass killings, targeted ethnic violence, sexual assault, and systematic attacks on civilians suggest widespread violations of international humanitarian law (IHL). In Darfur, observers warn of a possible campaign of ethnic cleansing, echoing atrocities from the early 2000s. Journalists, human rights defenders, and activists have been silenced through intimidation, detention, and violence, further isolating Sudanese civilians from the outside world.

The Sudan conflict is not just a regional crisis but a global concern. It threatens to destabilize an already fragile region, as neighboring countries struggle to host refugees despite facing their own political and economic challenges. The violence also risks creating a vacuum for extremist groups, arms trafficking, and foreign interference. The international community, particularly through the United Nations, has a responsibility to uphold human rights and ensure that humanitarian aid can reach those in need, even amid political complexities and competing international interests.

In SOCHUM, this subject draws attention to the point of convergence between human rights advocacy and humanitarian support. Discussions in SOCHUM stress the human side of war—protecting vulnerable people, upholding refugees' dignity—in contrast to solely political deliberations in the Security Council. and making sure violations of IHL are held accountable. The Sudan tragedy also highlights the need of worldwide cooperation because no one player can address the magnitude of the catastrophe by itself. Coordinated global action is necessary not only to alleviate immediate suffering but also to lay the foundation for peace, justice, and recovery. In this context, the question before SOCHUM is twofold: How can the international community guarantee that humanitarian assistance reaches civilians trapped by conflict, and how can it hold perpetrators accountable for violations of human rights? Answering these questions requires balancing principles of sovereignty, neutrality in humanitarian work, and the urgent moral imperative to act in the face of mass suffering.

History/ Background

Sudan has been marked by decades of violent conflict rooted in ethnic, political, and economic divisions. From 1955 to 1972, Sudan endured its First Civil War, a conflict largely driven by the marginalization of southern communities by Khartoum-based elites. A fragile peace collapsed in 1983 with the outbreak of the Second Civil War, which lasted until 2005 and became one of the longest and deadliest wars in Africa. This conflict killed an estimated 2 million people and displaced 4 million more. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed in 2005, ended hostilities and paved the way for South Sudan's independence in 2011. However, while the CPA resolved one dimension of Sudan's turmoil, it left unresolved political grievances in the north.

The secession of South Sudan represented both a triumph of self-determination and a major blow to Sudan's stability. Sudan lost about 75 percent of its oil revenues, worsening its already fragile economy. Ethnic tensions, authoritarian rule, and weak governance persisted, preventing the country from achieving a sustainable peace.

Darfur and Ethnic Violence:

In 2003, conflict erupted in Sudan's western region of Darfur, where non-Arab rebel groups accused the central government of neglect and discrimination. The government, under President Omar al-Bashir, responded with brutal counterinsurgency tactics, using militias known as the Janjaweed—later reorganized into the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The campaign involved mass killings, rape, and forced displacement, leading to the deaths of over 300,000 people and the displacement of millions.

The Darfur crisis drew international condemnation, with the International Criminal Court (ICC) indicting Bashir on charges of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Despite the presence of the joint African Union–United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), large-scale atrocities persisted, leaving deep scars on Sudanese society and setting the stage for future cycles of violence.

Transitional Expectations and Bashir's Fall:

Following months of large demonstrations fueled by economic suffering and demands for democracy, Omar al-Bashir was ousted in April 2019 after almost 30 years in power. Ruling initially, a Transitional Military Council (TMC) eventually decided to split authority with civilian officials in a delicate power-sharing agreement. The new administration sparked optimism about human rights safeguards, reform, and finally democratic elections.

Still, conflict between military and civilian leaders never totally vanished. General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan (head of the Sudanese Armed Forces, SAF) and Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, commonly known as Hemedti, leader of the RSF—dissolved the transitional government. This set the stage for open rivalry between the two generals.

History/ Background Cont.

The SAF vs RSF Power Struggle:

The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), Sudan's traditional army, historically wielded power through authoritarian rulers like Bashir. The RSF, by contrast, originated from the Janjaweed militias responsible for atrocities in Darfur. Under Hemedti's leadership, the RSF grew into a powerful paramilitary force with significant financial resources, partly due to its control of lucrative gold mines and backing from external actors such as the United Arab Emirates.

Although the SAF and RSF initially cooperated after the 2019 overthrow of Bashir, their alliance was always tenuous. By 2022, disputes over the integration of the RSF into the national army and control of Sudan's political future escalated into open hostilities. On April 15, 2023, fighting broke out in Khartoum and quickly spread across the country, plunging Sudan into its current crisis.

A Pattern of Human Rights Abuses:

Throughout these decades, Sudan has been consistently plagued by grave human rights violations. From Darfur to South Kordofan and Blue Nile, civilians have been targeted by government forces and militias through campaigns of ethnic cleansing, sexual violence, and forced displacement. Restrictions on press freedom, the imprisonment of activists, and systematic attacks on civil society have stifled dissent and weakened institutions that could have mediated peace. The pattern is clear: every chapter of Sudan's history has been defined not only by armed conflict but also by the suffering of ordinary people whose rights were consistently denied.

This legacy provides critical context for understanding the present conflict. The war between the SAF and RSF is not an isolated crisis but the continuation of decades of authoritarianism, militarization, and impunity.

For Sudanese civilians, it represents yet another chapter of displacement, loss, and resilience. For the international community, it underscores the urgent need to break this cycle through coordinated humanitarian aid, protection of human rights, and accountability for perpetrators of atrocities.



Present

Timeline of the Conflict Starting April 2023:

On April 15, 2023, violent clashes erupted between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), commanded by General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti). The immediate trigger was a dispute over the timeline for integrating the RSF into the national army, but the underlying cause was a struggle for political dominance after years of fragile transitional governance. Fighting began in Khartoum, Sudan's capital, and quickly spread to major cities such as Omdurman, Nyala, El Geneina, and Port Sudan.

By May 2023, the conflict had escalated into a nationwide war. Despite multiple ceasefire agreements brokered by the United States, Saudi Arabia, and other regional actors, truces consistently collapsed within days or hours. The RSF solidified its control over large parts of Khartoum and Darfur, while the SAF retained its hold on Port Sudan, North Sudan, and the air force. The stalemate has left much of the civilian population trapped in contested urban areas, facing bombardments, raids, and shortages of essential goods.

Throughout late 2023 and into 2024, the situation deteriorated further. In Darfur, ethnic violence reminiscent of the atrocities of the early 2000s re-emerged, with widespread reports of massacres targeting the Masalit and other non-Arab communities. In Khartoum, residential neighborhoods became frontlines, with civilians facing artillery shelling, drone strikes, and door-to-door raids. The failure of international mediation efforts has allowed the conflict to persist well into 2025, with no political settlement in sight.

Humanitarian Consequences:

The war in Sudan has triggered one of the largest displacement crises in the world today. According to UN estimates, more than 8.5 million people have been forced to flee their homes since April 2023. About 6.5 million are internally displaced within Sudan, while over 2 million have crossed borders into neighboring countries, especially Chad, South Sudan, Egypt, and Ethiopia. Refugee camps in Chad and South Sudan are overwhelmed, lacking sufficient food, water, and medical supplies.

Food insecurity has reached catastrophic levels. The World Food Programme (WFP) warns that nearly 20 million Sudanese people face acute hunger, with 5 million at risk of famine. Agricultural production has collapsed due to the destruction of farmland, displacement of farmers, and disruption of trade routes. Malnutrition rates among children are rising sharply, especially in displacement camps where aid is inconsistent. The healthcare sector has been likewise struck severely. More than 70% of hospitals in conflict-affected regions are nonfunctional, either damaged, robbed, or without staff and supplies. Doctors Without Borders (MSF) and other groups battle to maintain the functioning of their clinics in the face of relentless attacks. Cholera, measles, and malaria outbreaks have made the humanitarian crisis even worse. Already weak before the war, maternal and child healthcare has become virtually unreachable.

Human rights violations are frequent. With hundreds of instances reported in Darfur and Khartoum, survivors and humanitarian organizations have noted sexual violence used as a war weapon. Civilians are routinely targeted for their ethnicity, suspected political affiliations, or simply for being in contested areas. Looting, forced recruitment of boys, and arbitrary detentions are common. Internet shutdowns and the destruction of communication infrastructure have left millions isolated from information and humanitarian assistance.

Present Cont.

Humanitarian access remains a central challenge. Both the SAF and RSF have obstructed aid delivery by blocking supply routes, confiscating aid shipments, and attacking aid convoys. The UN reports that more than 70 humanitarian convoys have been attacked or delayed since the start of the conflict. Bureaucratic restrictions imposed by authorities in Port Sudan further complicate the work of NGOs and UN agencies.

Key Parties Involved

Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF):

Led by General al-Burhan, the SAF controls much of northern and eastern Sudan, including Port Sudan, which now functions as the de facto administrative capital. It relies on air power and external support from Egypt and reportedly from other states seeking regional stability.

Rapid Support Forces (RSF): Commanded by Hemedti, the RSF controls large parts of Khartoum and Darfur. Known for its brutality, the RSF has financial backing through Sudan's gold trade and alleged external support from the United Arab Emirates. Its forces have been implicated in mass atrocities, particularly in Darfur.

Civilian Resistance Groups:

Despite the violence, grassroots resistance committees—originally organized during the 2019 protests against Bashir—remain active, documenting abuses, organizing local relief, and advocating for civilian rule. However, they lack the resources and international recognition of the armed groups.

Regional and International Actors: Mediation attempts have been led by Saudi Arabia, the United States, the African Union, and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). However, competing interests and lack of enforcement have limited their effectiveness. Neighboring countries (Chad and South Sudan), bear the brunt of the refugee crisis, while Gulf states and Russia are accused of fueling the conflict through economic and military ties.

Outlook

The battle in Sudan gives no indications of settlement as early as 2025. Peace negotiations have continually failed; humanitarian needs are rising; and people are still suffering relocation, violence, and starvation. The conflict's persistence underlines how crucial global collaboration is to defend human rights and provide life-saving help. Absent more decisive action, Sudan risks becoming a long-running humanitarian disaster with far-reaching effects for regional and worldwide security.

Human Rights Issues

The war in Sudan has produced a situation of systematic human rights abuses that requires immediate international attention. Multiple reports have blamed the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) for targeting civilians, restricting humanitarian access, and acts that may constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity as defined by international law. The scale and intensity of the abuses that have occurred so far highlight the devastating consequences of armed conflict on civilian populations and the moral and legal responsibilities of the international community.

Breaches of International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

IHL, especially the Geneva Conventions, requires warring parties to discriminate between combatants and civilians and protect non-combatants from direct attack. In Sudan, civilians are being attacked by airstrikes, the Rozanaya forces are attacking civilians with no warnings, and indiscriminate attacks on civilians are frequent. In Khartoum, artillery shells and airstrikes have been landed on densely populated residential neighborhoods, hospitals, and schools. The RSF is being accused of going door to door executing civilians, stealing property from civilians, and forcing civilians to be human shields, while SAF's air bombardment would flatten neighborhoods entirely.

The total destruction and occupation of healthcare facilities further violate the evidence of breaches of protections for medical personnel and infrastructure. The number of reports facilitated by SAF and RSF making operational bases within hospitals has created for millions there are no urgent options for medical support leading up to the humanitarian disaster.

Claims of Ethnic Cleansing in Darfur

One of the most dangerous human rights issues is the reoccurrence of ethnic violence in Darfur. Human rights organizations, and UN officials have already reported massacres of the Masalit, as well as other non-Arab ethnic groups, where survivors told stories of mass killings, pervasive sexual violence, and forced displacements carried out by RSF fighters and militias. These killings have many similarities to the early 2000s, when the Janjaweed militias - the forerunners of the RSF - were also committing alleged genocide.

These kinds of situations could indicate the prospect of ethnic cleansing or crimes against humanity, and whether that leads to eventual liability from international mechanisms, such as the International Criminal Court, has now risen significantly, and the potential for renewed violence in Darfur reiterates Sudan's cycle of impunity and the previous failed interventions to eliminate that impunity.



Human Rights Issues Cont.

Displacement and Refugee Rights

Displacement of more than 8.5 million leads to various human rights challenges. Displaced persons often do not have adequate shelter, food, and/or medical assistance. For refugee populations in Chad, South Sudan, and Egypt, they generally live in camps that are overcrowded, with poor sanitation, and lack of access to education or livelihood chances. Many groups are at risk of statelessness, and some are facing hostility from host community members who already struggle with economic hardship.

International law, such as the 1951 Refugee Convention and the Kampala Convention on refugees and displaced persons (African Union) provides protections of refugees and displaced persons through terms such as the right to protection, to non-refoulement, and to humanitarian assistance. However, these rights have usually not been implemented and abided by in practice. Refugees experience long delays in their asylum processing, inadequate opportunities for protection against exploitation, and inadequate access to humanitarian assistance due to insecurity conditions and blocked routes for humanitarian access.

Freedom of Press, Communication, and Expression

The Sudanese conflict has been characterized by extreme violations of freedom of expression. The work of documenting injustice has led to journalists and human rights defenders being arrested, harassed, or killed. Many independent media outlets have been closed, and internet blackouts initiated by the warring factions have prevented civilians from communicating or downloading necessary information.

These restrictions not only silence victims but also limit international watch and accountability. The SAF and RSF reduce the visible crisis abroad by blacking out communications. Without communications, the SAF and RSF create an information void that protects perpetrators from scrutiny regardless of accountability.

Targeting of Human Rights Defenders

Activists, lawyers, and members of grassroots resistance committees continue to lead the way in turning a spotlight on human rights abuses and organizing humanitarian relief, but the risk to their safety is extreme. Members of both the SAF and RSF have detained, torturing activists accused of opposing their rule. The crackdown on civil society undercuts any future chance of reconciliation and democratic rule as voices calling for human rights are silenced.

Humanitarian Assistance and Access

The humanitarian crisis in Sudan can be considered one of the worst in the world, with millions risking starvation, disease and violence. Since the escalation of full-scale conflict in April 2023, aid organizations have not been able to provide life saving assistance to millions of people due to insecurity, political interference and logistical challenges. Humanitarian aid is about more than just providing resources; humanitarian assistance is a serious human rights issue because the denial of assistance or interference with assistance may breach international law.

Role of UN Agencies

UN agencies have played a major role in the humanitarian response:

World Food Programme (WFP): WFP has tried to provide food to displaced populations within Sudan and those who have fled Sudan. However, warehouses have been looted, and convoys have been attacked, as millions live without sustained access to food.

World Health Organization (WHO): WHO indicates that the health system in Sudan has collapsed, with hospitals in conflict areas rendered non-functional, having more than 70% of the hospitals in conflict areas not operational. WHO supplies of vaccines and medicines are often either blocked at checkpoints or destroyed in the ongoing fighting.

UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency is providing support to the millions of people who fled Sudan to Chad, South Sudan, Egypt, and Ethiopia. Camps in eastern Chad are highly congested, with some camps hosting more than triple their capacity.

OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs): OCHA coordinates the international response, but has repeatedly warned there is a myriad of barriers to delivering humanitarian assistance in Sudan, including bureaucratic delays, insecurity, and blocked routes. OCHA stated that Sudan is "one of the hardest places in the world to deliver aid."

Aid Delivery Challenges

Humanitarian operations are impeded by severe challenges:

Blocked routes and checkpoints: Both the SAF and RSF forces have blocked supply routes, and rarely allow aid convoys to reach civilian populations. In some cases, aid has been commandeered to support fighters rather than providing assistance to civilians.

Looting and violence: Aid warehouses and trucks have been looted many times. Aid workers have experienced harassment, have been kidnapped, and in some cases, targeted for assassination. This makes Sudan one of the most dangerous contexts for humanitarian workers.

Bureaucratic and Permissions Problems: Authorities require permits, often delayed or denied for political reasons, for aid delivery, which slows down responses and provides little chance for timely assistance during emergencies.

Internet Shutdowns: The loss of communications has impeded coordination between humanitarian actors and slowed the provision of aid and left communities unable to ask for help.

Effects of Sanctions and International Restrictions

International sanctions against Sudan, which are intended to exert pressure against warring parties, also further complicated humanitarian delivery. Restrictions on banking limits financial transactions and says that humanitarian organizations cannot move funds or purchase supplies. There are humanitarian exemptions; however, the bureaucratic barriers slow the process. Sanctions may intend to target political elites, however sanctions may overlook humanitarian actors and make greater suffering for non-combatants.

Humanitarian Assistance and Access Cont.

Role of the NGOs

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have a critical role in filling gaps when it is not possible for UN agencies to operate:

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF): Provides emergency medical assistance to people in Darfur and in refugee camps located in Chad despite suffering forcible attacks on its facilities.

International Rescue Committee (IRC): Provides families and individuals displaced by conflict assistance with food, cash transfers, and mobile medical services, especially in border areas.

Local Sudanese NGOs and community volunteer organizations: Local Sudanese grassroots organizations have taken on incredible personal risk to deliver humanitarian aid to communities it's impossible for international actors to reach, despite their lack of funding, security, and other favorable protections local and foreign political actors have. Often due to their nature serving their local communities, they have are able to access the communities, but local groups struggle to fund their work or find security to be able to provide programming.

Whether to make cross-border forms of assistance (from neighbouring states, like Chad or South Sudan) - or cross-line forms of assistance (from one side of a frontline inside Sudan to another) is an important debate.

Aid that is cross-border can accomplish its task of bypassing political and bureaucratic challenges facing aid to any humanitarian crises inside Sudan, but, could be viewed as violating potential claims to Sudanese sovereignty.

Undertaking cross-line processes depends on actors like SAF and RSF empathy and respect for the agreements. However, these agreements between the parties are commonly tenuous and fraught with potential to be broken for reasons associated to diversion of aid.

We still have not come up with a framework the UN Security Council and other interlocutor(s) agree could provide humanitarian corridors and enabling safe access to the aid actors and people; until then millions and millions of people will not be able to access life-saving forms of humanitarian assistance.



Relevant International Frameworks & Past Action

The crisis in Sudan falls under multiple binding and non-binding international frameworks that shape state and organizational responses. The UN Charter (1945) obliges member states to maintain international peace and security and to uphold human rights. Likewise, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) establish the right to life, liberty, and protection from persecution—rights currently under threat in Sudan.

Additionally, the Geneva Conventions (1949) and their Additional Protocols prohibit targeting civilians, mandate protection for displaced populations, and safeguard access to humanitarian relief. Sudan is also party to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981), which obligates African Union (AU) members to prevent mass atrocities on the continent.

Past actions include the United Nations–African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), which operated from 2007 to 2020 to protect civilians and support peace processes. Furthermore, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine (2005), though contested, provides the framework for potential international intervention if crimes against humanity or ethnic cleansing are ongoing. Sanctions imposed by the UN, United States, and European Union also serve as precedent, though they have had mixed success in changing armed actors' behavior.

Major Stakeholders

- Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF): The official military, led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, seeks control over the state apparatus while presenting itself as the guardian of national sovereignty.
- Rapid Support Forces (RSF): A powerful paramilitary group under Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti), accused of orchestrating atrocities in Darfur and obstructing humanitarian aid.
- Former Civilian Leaders/Transitional Government Figures: Politicians and civil society leaders were sidelined after the 2021 coup, many of whom continue to push for democratic governance and protection of human rights.
- African Union (AU): Facilitates mediation through its Peace and Security Council, though its leverage is often limited by member states' competing interests.
- United Nations Agencies (WFP, UNHCR, WHO, OCHA): Provide critical aid but face blockages, security risks, and funding shortages.
- Neighboring States (Chad, Egypt, South Sudan, Ethiopia): Bear the burden of refugee inflows, while simultaneously navigating political and security concerns tied to the conflict.
- Gulf States and External Actors (UAE, Saudi Arabia, US, Russia): Their involvement—ranging from alleged arms supplies to diplomatic mediation—shapes the balance of power on the ground and at the international negotiating table.

Possible Solutions

- **Protection of Civilians:** Establish UN-monitored humanitarian corridors and safe zones, reinforced by ceasefire guarantees. Deploy regional peacekeeping support under AU-UN cooperation to prevent further targeting of civilians.
- **Facilitating Aid Delivery:** Authorize third-party logistics partners and use pre-agreed ceasefire windows for aid distribution. Expand cross-border operations from Chad and South Sudan, where cross-line access is blocked.
- **International Oversight:** Strengthen sanctions on those obstructing aid while safeguarding humanitarian exemptions. Explore International Criminal Court (ICC) referrals for alleged war crimes.
- **Regional Collaboration:** Empower the AU and IGAD to lead mediation, with international backing for inclusive political talks involving civilian actors.
- **Restoring Infrastructure:** Provide funding to reestablish hospitals, communications networks, and water systems, enabling more sustainable aid operations.
- **Empowering Local NGOs and Civil Society:** Increase direct support to grassroots Sudanese organizations, which often have greater access to vulnerable communities.

Block Positions

- **Western Bloc (US, EU):** Strongly support sanctions, accountability measures, and referral of war crimes to the ICC; prioritize civilian protection.
- **African Bloc:** Advocate regional solutions led by the AU and IGAD, emphasizing sovereignty and cautioning against unilateral foreign intervention.
- **Middle Eastern Bloc:** Divided interests—some states (e.g., UAE, Egypt) back rival factions. Others, like Saudi Arabia, push for mediation and regional stability.
- **Non-Aligned/Global South:** Stress respect for sovereignty, support humanitarian assistance without political preconditions, and push for solutions through multilateral consensus.

Conclusions

The crisis in Sudan is both a humanitarian catastrophe and a human rights emergency. Millions remain displaced, while access to aid is deliberately obstructed. Upholding international law and facilitating aid delivery require a balance between respecting Sudan's sovereignty and preventing atrocities. Coordinated action through the UN, AU, and regional partners, combined with strong humanitarian mechanisms, remains the most viable path to protecting vulnerable populations and restoring stability.

Questions to Consider

1. How can humanitarian corridors or cross-border aid mechanisms be protected from obstruction by armed actors?
2. To what extent should international actors apply sanctions or accountability frameworks without worsening humanitarian suffering?
3. What role should regional organizations like the AU and IGAD play compared to the UN Security Council?
4. How can civilian protection be ensured while respecting Sudan's sovereignty?
5. What mechanisms can ensure transparency in aid distribution and prevent diversion by armed groups?

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