



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-third session

19 June–14 July 2023

Agenda item 2

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner  
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the  
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

### **Written statement\* submitted by Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association, a non- governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[29 May 2023]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **The Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan**

The Sudan witnessed grave human rights violations against peaceful demonstrators that rocked the Capital city in the wake of the Sudan's Prime Minister resignation of in November 2021. Thousands of demonstrators were seriously injured, and others died, and the Sudanese security forces carried out a campaign of repressive arrests. On the other side of West Darfur, the tribal conflicts continued killing hundreds and injuring others, and the situation continued so badly until bloody clashes erupted between the two armed factions in the Sudan on 15 April 2023, with the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and the Sudanese Armed Forces exchanged fire, exacerbating the crisis and killing hundreds of civilians and military personnel, in addition to injuring thousands, with nearly 200,000 people have fled the Sudan since the conflict erupted in mid-April, in addition to the displacement of hundreds of thousands within the country. All this comes in light of the deteriorating economic and social conditions in the Sudan, where it's now facing a major problem of food insecurity, in addition to preventing the arrival of humanitarian aid due to the closure of some airports. Before the conflict, a third of the population depended on humanitarian assistance, and this number is now swelling, with most major roads and the international airport have been closed due to fighting between the RSF and the Sudanese Army Armed Forces.

### **Violation of the Rights to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, Association, and Peaceful Assembly:**

The Sudan's Constitutional Declaration of 2019 provides for respect for civil liberties; including rights to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, but the Sudanese authorities did not respect these rights. According to reports, there were at least 52 violations against journalists and media institutions in the Sudan during the year 2022, as the security forces carried out reprisals against government critics on January 13, the Central Reserve Police raided al-Arabiya TV station in Khartoum, physically assaulted and arrested four staff members who were filming a demonstration from the roof and destroyed their cameras; and on the same day security forces attacked the Agence France Presse (AFP) and took two Photographers were covering the demonstrations, they were beaten and taken to a detention center in Khartoum(1).

On January 15, 2022, the Sudanese Ministry of Culture revoked Al Jazeera Mubasher's broadcast license, censorship and media content restrictions were practiced on a large scale in the country and the government restricted and disrupted access to the Internet, especially before the June 30 protests and 25 October 2022. The Sudanese authorities used threats and intimidation to force dissenting Internet users to delete the content they object to in Facebook groups(2).The government also sought to restrict academic freedoms, 30 vice-rectors were dismissed and the boards of trustees of public universities were dissolved, with regard to restricting freedom of peaceful assembly, peaceful protests throughout the year have been suppressed by the security forces; As it has killed about 116 people, and injured more than 7,000 people, including children, from October 25, 2021 to August 4, 2022(3).

### **Arbitrary Deprivation of Life, and Illegal Attacks on Civilians:**

Following peaceful demonstrations and protests in the Sudan from October 25 to August 2022, the security forces resorted to force to break up these demonstrations, which killed 116 people and injured more than 7,000 over than half of those who died were between the ages of 18 and 25, While 16% were under the age of 18, and only 10% of those who lost their lives were over the age of 36. In total, 1074 injuries were classified as severe, including 187 under 18 years old; of those, at least 78 cases were admitted to Intensive Care Units, 21 of them died; at least 46 of them had injuries to the head and neck; there are about 9 victims sustained varying degrees of permanent or long-lasting paralysis, there were 4 of them minors; there are 14 people who have undergone partial or complete limb amputations; 19 victims lost eyesight in at least one of the eyes, of which 12 had to undergo complete eye removals. Many other, sometimes fatal, injuries were reported to the lower limbs and pelvis, the upper limbs, the back, the face, and the abdomen(4).

In a related context, the security forces also failed to protect civilians in the West Darfur region. According to the UN, inter-communal clashes in the Blue Nile region that have flared up several times since July have caused at least 359 fatalities, injured 469 people<sup>(5)</sup>. In addition, on April 15, 2023, At least 676 people have been killed due to the clashes between the Sudanese Army and the Rapid Support Forces, and thousands trapped in residential areas where the clashes took place were subjected to air strikes, missile strikes, and the use of heavy weapons, which resulted in the killing of about 676 people, and the injury of 5,576 people, both civilians and military, have died since the outbreak of the conflict<sup>(6)</sup>. The conflict has also resulted in inter-tribal violence in El Geneina, West Darfur, with an estimated 96 people killed since 24 April<sup>(7)</sup>.

### **Arbitrary Detentions and Arrests:**

Following the protests in the Sudan in 2019, a pattern of mass arrest and short-term detention of demonstrators and bystanders was observed, and then their release without charge in violation of international human rights law. There is no legal basis for the arrests, and it should be noted that 1,293 people were arbitrarily arrested and detained, including 143 women, and 157 children, including two girls, from October 25, 2021 to April 10, 2022. According to reports, the children are being detained with adults and not in juvenile detention centers under the authority of a family and child judge, which is inconsistent with international covenants on the rights of the child, as well as inconsistent with the Sudanese national legislation (Child Act of 2010)<sup>(8)</sup>.

From October 25 to November 17, 2021, the Sudanese authorities arrested and detained 63 government officials and political figures, including one woman, Prime Minister, and six other ministers. They were taken from their homes in front of their families in a terrifying and humiliating manner, taken to blindfolded places of detention, and contact with them was denied<sup>(9)</sup>.

### **Recommendations:**

Maat for peace, Development and Human Rights Association calls the United Nations for intervention to end the ongoing conflict in the Sudan, and urges the Human Rights Council to take immediate measures to stop attacks against civilians in the Sudan. Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association also makes a set of recommendations to the Sudanese authorities, as follows:

- Respect citizens' civil and political rights; including the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly and association.
- Refrain from targeting the media, cutting off the Internet, restricting anti-public policies, and re-licensing Al Jazeera broadcasting in Khartoum.
- Opening an independent and impartial investigation into the excessive use of force by security forces during protests, holding those responsible accountable and compensating victims.
- Releasing the illegally detained, and dropping the charges against them.
- Opening the main roads and airports and ensuring that humanitarian assistance reaches citizens and refugees, without any obstacles.
- Engaging in peace negotiations with international and regional partners; to end the ongoing armed conflict, achieve peace, and promote democratic transition.

(1) Sudan 2022 Human Rights Report, U.S.Department of State, 20 Mar 2023. <https://cutt.us/J7ibc>

(2) Sudan, Freedom on the Net, Freedom House, Available at. <https://cutt.us/q5q78>

(3)Sudan report: over 7,000 protesters seriously injured since Oct 25 coup, Dabanga, Nov 2022. <https://cutt.us/Sn3E2>

(4) Ibid

(6)At least 676 people killed in Sudan clashes: UN, English.News.CN, 15 May 2023. <https://cutt.us/RQlXx>

(8) Situation of human rights in the Sudan – Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR, A/HRC/50/22, Available at. <https://cutt.us/FV62g>

(9) Ibid

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