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**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.

[3 February 2024]

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



General Update on the Human Rights Situation in the Sudan

Introduction:

The military conflict in Khartoum remains deadlocked, with no clear victor or vanquished. Neither side appears willing to concede at the negotiating table, and significant progress on the battlefield has been elusive. This ten-month stalemate has tragically transformed Khartoum into a battleground between the Sudanese army and Rapid Support Forces, resulting in thousands of casualties and displacements. The security situation has deteriorated, particularly in Darfur, forcing millions from their homes. Despite strenuous efforts, the conflicting demands of both sides have rendered a resolution seemingly out of reach.

Against this backdrop, this report analyzes the current human rights landscape in the Sudan, with a specific focus on the violations of economic and social rights.

Violations of Economic and Social Rights in the Sudan:

Right to Life:

As the war in the Sudan enters its tenth month, having broken out in the form of a power struggle, in mid-April, between the commander of the Sudanese army, and the commander of RSF, the military options became closer, while the political solution scenarios is moving away, in light of many military and political fronts in which the options of the parties intersect towards a complete military resolution, with the slow death of diplomatic initiatives.

Calls to arm civilians in the Sudan are escalating, killing thousands of people. According to the UN on 19 January 2024, between 10,000 and 15,000 people were killed in one city in the Sudan's West Darfur region last year due to ethnic violence by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and allied Arab militia⁽¹⁾. An estimated 13,000 people have been killed and 32 679 injured since the fighting began. According to UNHCR teams in the Sudan's White Nile state, more than 1,200 refugee children under 5 have died in nine camps in the period between 15 May and 14 September, due to a deadly combination of a suspected measles outbreak and high malnutrition⁽²⁾. Statistics confirm that the actual number of civilian deaths in the Sudan is twice as many as announced.

Right to Food:

The situation in the Sudan has spiraled out of control following the outbreak of violence in April, which pushed four million children into crisis levels of hunger or worse in 2023, marking a staggering 74% increase from 2022⁽³⁾. Key drivers of food insecurity include intensified conflict and growing inter-communal violence, an economic crisis, soaring prices of food, fuel, and essential goods, and below-average agricultural production. Regions that were once the country's breadbasket are now brutal battlefields. Even as the harvest season approaches, most farmers across agricultural regions are tragically witnessing their crops and livelihoods wither away as they cannot reach their farms to harvest or markets to sell their produce. According to recent reports, the average wheat prices are nearly 65 percent higher than they were in December 2022.

As conflict and economic deterioration continue in the country, more than 25 million people — half the population — are estimated to need humanitarian assistance in the Sudan in the year ahead. Nearly 18 million people across the Sudan are already facing acute hunger.⁽⁴⁾ Over 75 percent of those in an emergency are in areas where access is extremely limited due to heavy fighting and restrictions without assistance⁽⁵⁾. World Food Program needs US\$210 million from January–June 2024, to ensure that families can continue to access life-saving food assistance.

Right to Health:

The health situation in the Sudan has reached a critical level, especially in light of the ongoing clashes between the Sudanese army and RSF. About 65 percent of the population lack access to healthcare and between 70 - 80 percent of hospitals in conflict-affected areas are no longer functional. The remaining hospitals and health facilities are under-resourced and overwhelmed with patients seeking care for gunshot wounds, infectious diseases, and pregnancy complications, and in dire need of lifesaving medicine to survive. Disease outbreaks are increasing due to disruptions of basic public health services. Over 11 million people need urgent health assistance(6). About 9,600 suspected cases of cholera, including 264 deaths, have been reported from nine states as of 13 January 2024, according to the Federal Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization. Other disease outbreaks are ongoing in several states, including measles, malaria, and dengue fever(7).

The skyrocketing humanitarian needs have been further complicated by a rapidly spreading cholera outbreak. Since the formal declaration of the outbreak in Gedaref on 26 September, seven states in the Sudan have reported suspected cases and more than 3 million people are estimated to be at risk(8). Since the outbreak of the war, about 20% of those suffering from kidney failure, estimated at more than 13,000, have died(9).

Right to Housing:

Since April 2023, many residents have been subjected to violations of their basic right to housing, with entire neighborhoods empty as residents fled and left their homes. More than 7.6 million people have fled their homes since fighting broke out between the Sudanese Armed Forces and RSF on 15 April 2023, making the Sudan the biggest displacement crisis globally. About 6.1 million people have been displaced within the Sudan. The 6.1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) are sheltering in 6,355 locations across all of the Sudan's 18 states(10). Air strikes and ground battles are still targeting the capital, Khartoum, and Omdurman, and the number is increasing daily as a result of the ongoing fighting between military factions. RSF is also still forcing people to leave their homes, to the point that the Sudanese voices have risen, using the hashtag #Rapid_Support_is_permissible_our_homes, as a means of conveying the extent of the social suffering they are suffering, in light of the renewed clashes from time to time in different regions of the Sudan(11).

Recommendations:

After monitoring and extrapolating the human rights situation in the Sudan, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association presents a set of recommendations that could put an end to violations of the basic rights of the Sudanese and a way to ensure a credible and reliable transitional justice process.

A. Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association condemns the violations committed in Darfur that specifically target people based on their ethnicity, as well as decisions to arm civilians and calls on the Sudanese government to put an end to human rights violations and possible war crimes and humanitarian crimes.

B. Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association calls on the parties to the conflict in the Sudan, especially the Sudanese army, to return to the negotiating table to end the conflict, ensure a comprehensive political process, and allow the civil transition to take place.

C. Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association calls on the expert on the Sudan/ Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan to develop an executive action plan that includes developing practical and implementable solutions, to stop the fighting and reach a comprehensive solution to the Sudanese crisis through direct communication with the various Sudanese parties in their integration with existing mechanisms, including IGAD and the African Union.

D. Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association urges international mechanisms, including the Security Council, to put pressure on the warring parties, including through the use of targeted sanctions to force the leaders of the warring parties to put an immediate end to the conflict.

- (2) UNHCR, WHO warn of deteriorating health conditions as 1,200 children die of suspected measles, malnutrition in Sudan, September 19, 2023. <https://bitly.ws/Vx5r>
- (3) 2023 In Review: Nearly 16,000 children a day plunged into hunger in top 10 worsening food crises, relief web, 21 Dec 2023. <https://bitly.ws/3anDQ>
- (4) From Breadbasket to Battlefield: Conflict Ravages Sudan, Spreads to Critical Food Producing Regions, relief web, January 20, 2024. <https://bitly.ws/3anvG>
- (5) Sudan emergency, WFP, January 2024, <https://bitly.ws/3anyh>
- (6) Joint News Alert: Conflict in Sudan Pushes Health System to its Breaking Point, relief web, 17 Jan 2024, <https://bitly.ws/3anR2>
- (7) Close to 9,600 suspected cholera cases, other disease outbreaks, OCHA, 16 Jan 2024, <https://bitly.ws/36DI6>
- (8) Regional Director statement on the health crisis in Sudan, relief web, November 2023, <https://bitly.ws/3aoQI>
- (10) Sudan, OCHA, 21 January 2024, <https://bitly.ws/36DI6>
- (11) Sudan clashes: Accusations of the Rapid Support Forces of raiding civilian homes in Sudan, June 2023. <https://bitly.ws/3apv5>