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Sudan Media Forum Weekly Briefing

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A curated weekly update on the most significant news from Sudan.

Hello ,

Welcome to your weekly briefing. This week, examines the escalating violence in Sudan, from drone attacks and military sieges to widespread violations against civilians. It highlights the suffering of Sudanese refugees, particularly forced deportations and the abuses they face in countries of asylum. The bulletin also tracks the deepening humanitarian crisis in conflict areas, alongside warnings from organizations of state collapse and the persistence of crimes against civilians. It further includes political and economic analyses, as well as human, cultural stories that reflect Sudanese resilience through life and art.

Top Story of the Week

Delanj Siege Lifted as RSF Steps Up Deadly Drone Attacks Across Kordofan, Displacing Thousands



The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) launched what were described as their most intense kamikaze drone attacks to date on Friday, targeting several vital sites in El-Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan State. At the same time, the city of Delanj, which had only recently seen its siege lifted, came under heavy RSF attacks, leaving dozens of civilians killed and wounded. According to eyewitnesses in El-Obeid who spoke to [Sudan Tribune](#), RSF drones targeted the city with around 20 drones early Friday, most of which were intercepted by the Sudanese army's air defenses.

Last Monday, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) announced they had ended the siege on Delanj, the second-largest city in South Kordofan, following fierce fighting against the RSF and its ally, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement–North (SPLM-N) led by Abdelaziz al-Hilu.

From early Monday morning, SAF and allied Joint Forces engaged in intense battles, achieving rapid advances on the South Kordofan front. The army was able to break the siege after reopening the eastern route linking Delanj to North Kordofan, following its capture of the strategic town of Habila. With the siege lifted, the army restored supply lines and reopened vital corridors connecting Delanj to North Kordofan, paving the way toward Kadugli, which remains under a tight siege.

However, following the lifting of the siege, Delanj was subjected to [heavy drone](#) shelling by the RSF, resulting in the killing and injury of dozens of civilians. The attacks targeted civilian gatherings and destroyed service facilities, in what appeared to be an attempt to reimpose the siege on the city.

On Friday, essential goods flowed into Delanj for the first time in more than two years, immediately leading to a sharp drop in prices in local markets.

Separately, the International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)) [reported](#) that 4,315 people were displaced on January 28 from villages in the Al-Qoz and Habila areas of South Kordofan, due to worsening insecurity and ongoing clashes between the army and the RSF.

□ Political & Security Update

Burhan Meets British Delegation as UK Pushes for Ceasefire and Civilian Protection in Sudan



Sudan’s Sovereign Council, chaired by its president Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, held talks with a British delegation led by Vice Admiral Edward Ahlgren, the UK Ministry of Defence’s Senior Military Adviser for the Middle East and North Africa. The delegation also included the UK Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Richard Crowder, and the British military attaché in Cairo. In a statement, the [Sovereign Council said](#) the meeting reviewed overall developments in Sudan, as well as ongoing efforts to achieve peace, security, and stability.

Richard Crowder said the British delegation held “important discussions” with the head of the Sovereign Council on the urgent need to reach a ceasefire, and on the responsibility of all parties to uphold their commitments to protect civilians, in line with the Jeddah Declaration on the Protection of Civilians, signed on 11 May 2023.

Crowder noted that the United Kingdom will assume the presidency of the UN Security Council next month, and that it will co-host a conference on Sudan with Germany in April, to be held in Berlin.

He stressed the need for coordinated international efforts, led by the United States and its partners, to end the conflict, deliver humanitarian assistance, and bring an end to the atrocities witnessed in El Fasher.

Crowder also underscored London's commitment to close coordination with partners in the United States, Norway, the United Nations, and the European and African Unions, to help secure lasting peace and stability in Sudan.

Egypt Steps Up Deportations of Sudanese Refugees as UN Warns of Widespread Abuse Along Routes to Europe



Egyptian authorities have intensified campaigns against what they describe as violations of residency and asylum laws, particularly in Cairo and major governorates, prompting sharp criticism from Sudanese professional and rights groups.

The [Sudanese Professionals](#) and Trade Unions Coordination condemned the escalation of forced deportations and the targeting of Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt, calling on the Egyptian government to honour its international obligations, respect UNHCR-issued cards, and halt all forms of pursuit and forced return. The group also urged the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to intervene urgently to ensure respect for its documentation, gain access to detainees, and assess their legal status.

In a press statement, the coordination body said the growing crackdown and forced deportations affecting Sudanese refugees in several countries reflect a blatant disregard for the reality of the ongoing war in Sudan. It added that it has documented, with deep concern, arrests and harassment of young people and children holding official UNHCR registration cards, warning that the failure of these documents to protect their holders, coupled with detainees' loss of contact with their families, represents a dangerous escalation that violates basic human rights standards and renders legal protection meaningless.

[Egyptian media and human rights sources](#) said the campaigns and raids were carried out following a request from Sudan's authorities, aimed at forcing refugees to return.

Separately, the International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)) [revealed](#) that most Sudanese migrants who reached Europe over the past year were subjected to serious abuses, including physical violence, forced labour, and detention during their journeys.

In a report, the IOM said 70% of Sudanese migrants who travelled along the Central Mediterranean route to Italy reported experiencing physical violence, while 41% of those who crossed the Eastern Mediterranean route toward Greece reported similar abuses. Migrants also reported other violations, including arbitrary detention, theft of documents, and denial of shelter. The IOM recorded that between January and November 2025, approximately 12,684 Sudanese migrants and refugees arrived in Europe by land and sea, with a further 3,340 arriving overland via routes crossing European Union borders.

The organization warned that the number of Sudanese refugees and migrants arriving in Europe tripled between January and November 2025, compared with the same period in 2024.

MSF Describes El Fasher as “Destroyed and Largely Abandoned” After Brief, Monitored Visit



Médecins Sans Frontières ([MSF](#)) [said](#) that a brief, closely monitored visit to El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur State, revealed a city that is devastated and largely devoid of its population. The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) took control of El Fasher on 26 October, following 18 months of fighting and siege.

In a statement, MSF said its team carried out a four-hour visit to the city on 15 January, under constant supervision by security officials, during which they observed widespread destruction and areas largely emptied of the residents who once lived there.

“Our concerns are now growing that the majority of civilians who were still alive at the time RSF forces took control of the city have either been killed or displaced,” the organization said.

MSF added that the visit was extremely limited, allowing only a brief snapshot of the city and the conditions on the ground, but nonetheless painted a grim picture of the sheer scale of destruction in El Fasher, where the population has effectively been wiped out. The organization said the scenes it witnessed correspond with accounts of mass killings, torture, abductions, and other forms of violence in El Fasher and along escape routes from the city, as reported by patients MSF has treated in Tawila over recent months

Sudan Warns Aid Groups Against Dealing with RSF-Linked “Humanitarian Agency” as Central Bank Flags Illegal Finance App

The Sudanese government has [warned foreign organizations](#) and agencies operating in the humanitarian sector against engaging with the “Sudanese Agency for Relief and Humanitarian Operations”, an entity affiliated with the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), describing any such dealings as a violation of Sudan’s sovereignty and an implicit recognition of parallel institutions outside the country’s legitimate authority.

The directive follows reports indicating that some foreign organizations registered with the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) have been involved in institutional dealings with the agency, which the government describes as the RSF’s humanitarian arm.

Separately, the [Central Bank of Sudan](#) issued a warning against the use of an unlicensed electronic financial application operating in RSF-controlled areas of South Darfur, saying it violates the Anti-Money Laundering Law.

The central bank said the application is not licensed to operate in Sudan, and that any transactions conducted through it constitute a breach of national laws, including the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Act of 2014.

The RSF has been seeking to establish a parallel banking system in areas under its control, but lacks the secure infrastructure required for such operations, prompting it to launch a closed financial transfer platform limited to transactions within the application itself.

Over 50 Regional and Sudanese NGOs Warn of State Collapse and Civilian Atrocities in Sudan



Local and regional organizations have warned that the ongoing war in Sudan is accelerating state collapse and escalating systematic crimes against civilians, citing failures of local leadership and weak international response, and describing the global community as incapable of preventing renewed mass atrocities.

The warning came in [a joint statement signed](#) by approximately 54 Sudanese, Arab, and African organizations on the occasion of over 1,000 days since the outbreak of the 15 April war. The statement called for an immediate halt to foreign arms flows and the start of a peace process that goes beyond negotiations between what the groups described as warlords, aiming instead for a comprehensive transition to civilian rule.

The organizations urged both parties to the conflict — the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) — to immediately cease attacks on residential areas and critical infrastructure and to grant unrestricted access to international investigators.

They also called for the release of all civilian detainees, an end to extrajudicial killings, and the accountability of perpetrators. The statement urged the UN Security Council to adopt a resolution protecting civilians and ensuring justice and accountability, while calling on the International Criminal Court (ICC) to accelerate its investigations, issue indictments, and support strict enforcement of existing arrest warrants.

[Sudanese Teacher Arrested in El-Obeid Over Calls to End War, Union Says](#)



A spokesperson for the Sudanese [Teachers' Committee](#) said on Saturday that military intelligence in the city of El-Obeid had arrested a teacher, Ali Hassan, over his calls to end the

war. Teachers have increasingly complained about the continued detention or summons of their colleagues by security agencies, linked to their trade union activities or views on the war and deteriorating living conditions.

Committee spokesperson Sami al-Baqir told Sudan Tribune that “military intelligence in El-Obeid arrested teacher Ali Hassan for posting messages on his Facebook account calling for an end to the war.” He said the authorities have yet to file any charges, and that neither Hassan’s family nor the teachers’ committee has been informed of his place of detention, raising serious concerns over his legal and humanitarian safety.

Sudan’s Only Environmental Laboratory Destroyed in RSF Attacks, \$500,000 Needed for Reconstruction



A government official reported that Sudan’s only [environmental laboratory](#) in Khartoum, responsible for soil and water testing and monitoring air pollution and radiation, has completely ceased operations after being targeted by Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The estimated cost to restore the laboratory is around \$500,000.

The Director of the Environmental Laboratory at the Higher Council for Environment and Promotion, Umm al-Khair Mukhtar Abdullah, said the Khartoum laboratory — the sole facility of its kind in Sudan — suffered extensive destruction, with losses of at least \$412,000. She explained that the building, equipment, furniture, and devices were entirely destroyed, burned, or stolen.

“We need at least \$500,000 to bring the laboratory back into service,” she said, stressing the laboratory’s critical technical and knowledge value, which contributes to overcoming many environmental challenges. Umm al-Khair revealed plans for a comprehensive project to rebuild the laboratory, calling on civil society organizations, local and international NGOs, and relevant authorities to assist in rehabilitating the facility.

☒ Humanitarian Focus

Sudan Doctors Network Warns of Dire Conditions Facing Displaced Families in Kadugli Camp



The Sudan Doctors Network has revealed dire humanitarian conditions facing 330 displaced families at the [External Stadium Camp](#) in Kadugli locality, South Kordofan State, south-west Sudan. The families include 243 children, 381 women, and 104 pregnant women.

The city of Kadugli has endured a prolonged siege imposed by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and their ally, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement–North (SPLM-N) led by Abdelaziz al-Hilu. Recent escalations in military operations have triggered the displacement of thousands of civilians.

In a statement, the Sudan Doctors Network said it is closely monitoring with deep concern the deteriorating humanitarian situation faced by displaced people from these areas. It warned that hundreds of families are suffering from acute shortages of food and basic health services, alongside scarcity of essential goods and soaring prices of what little is available.

According to field assessments by the network's team at the camp, women and children are the most affected, with an alarming rise in the number of pregnant women, significantly increasing health risks and heightening the need for urgent interventions in nutrition, healthcare, and water services.

The network added that the camp is facing severe shortages of food supplies, medical items, and basic infrastructure, noting that only four latrines are available for the entire camp population.

Study: Majority of Food-Insecure Displaced People in Sudan Receive No Food Aid



A joint study by the [World Bank and the United Nations](#) High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has revealed that 57% of internally displaced people (IDPs) suffering from food insecurity do not receive food assistance.

Sudan is currently home to more than 9.3 million internally displaced people, 61% of whom are living in the Darfur states. The study found that 51% of IDPs reside within host communities, either in rented accommodation or with relatives, while 25% live in informal gathering sites and 19% remain in displacement camps.

According to the findings, only 43% of food-insecure IDPs receive food assistance, while food rations for refugees have declined since the beginning of the previous year, covering just 65% of needs.

The study also noted that 62% of refugees and 61% of IDPs suffer from inadequate food consumption, compared with 45% among non-displaced populations.

Despite the ongoing conflict, Sudan — whose borders remain open to cross-border movement — hosts more than 850,000 refugees, mainly from South Sudan, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. Around 67% of refugees now live in camps, up from 30% before the outbreak of the war.

Economic Snapshot

African Development Bank and Saudi Arabia Pledge Over \$389 Million to Support Sudan's Water, Health, and Agriculture Sectors

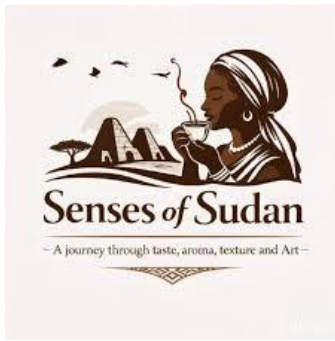


The Executive Director of the [African Development Bank's](#) Board, Sadiq Al-Obaid, pledged approximately \$379.6 million to fund projects aligned with the priorities of the Sudanese government in the water, health, and agriculture sectors, to be implemented over 2026–2028. The funding will come from the seventeenth replenishment of the African Development Fund and the residual balances from restructured projects. Al-Obaid also announced that the bank's president approved updating the reconstruction study in coordination with the World Bank, in line with Sudan's priorities.

Separately, Saudi Arabia announced a \$10 million grant to the United Nations to provide fresh and sustainable water to conflict-affected areas in Sudan and to rehabilitate water pipelines damaged by the war. The memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed last Tuesday in Geneva, Switzerland. According to the Saudi Press Agency, the MoU focuses on rehabilitating and expanding Sudan's main water networks, improving Nile water supplies in Khartoum, and enhancing solar energy operations. The initiative aims to increase access to safe drinking water, reduce risks of waterborne diseases and epidemics, and strengthen public health.

Culture & In-Depth

[Sudanese Women Use Art and Coffee Rituals to Heal from Displacement in Bristol Exhibition](#)



In one of the halls of "M Shed" Museum overlooking Bristol Harbour, a group of Sudanese women are using art as a means of coping with forced displacement, reclaiming what the war has stripped away — memory, belonging, and a sense of safety.

Coffee... More Than Just a Drink

Sudanese artist Israa Al-Haj says that coffee in Sudan is more than a beverage. At the exhibition "Sense of Sudan", which she curated in collaboration with six Sudanese artists based in Bristol, all members of the Bristol Refugee Arts Collective (BRAC), Al-Haj insists on serving coffee before discussing the artworks on display.

Small cups of coffee are poured. In Sudan, the traditional coffee ritual, known as "al-jabana," is a complete social ceremony: roasting coffee beans, hand-grinding spices, boiling water, and drinking three cups in sequence. Women are often at the heart of this ritual, gathering for hours to share worries and hopes.

"Even when life is harsh and fast-paced, coffee gives you a moment to pause, to talk, and to feel that what you are living through has meaning," Al-Haj says. Today, these rituals have moved from Sudanese neighbourhoods into the exhibition space in Bristol, becoming a bridge between the Sudanese diaspora and the British public.

Multi-themed exhibition, United by Memory

"Senses of Sudan" brings together a wide range of artistic works: large textile banners, embroidered fabrics, traditional wedding dresses, herbs and spices, rugs, paintings, and photographic works. Some of the participating artists have lived in Bristol for years, while others arrived more recently after the outbreak of the war.

Traditional fashion designer Sanaa Osman Al-Quraishi says: "It is extremely important to introduce people to our culture. Many know nothing about Sudan beyond the war." She is

exhibiting a handmade red wedding dress, symbolising “al-garteg,” one of Sudan’s most significant wedding rituals.

Art as a Space for Healing

For many of the participants, art is a psychological necessity. Shadia Idris Al-Banna, an accessories designer, says: “Because of the war, my family has been scattered. Art became my way of expressing this painful experience — motherhood and my identity.”

Al-Haj explains that the war pushed her to focus on painting faces, particularly women’s faces. “I paint people who look like me. It connects me to the place I lived in and to the people I knew.”

The Exhibition Is About Awareness

Artist Shereen Al-Sheikh says the exhibition centres on holding on to memories of a country being destroyed before our eyes. “Imagine all your memories being erased — yours, your parents’, everything they owned,” she says. Al-Sheikh lost several family members in the war, noting that personal loss makes the pain far more present than any passing news headline.

Further Reading

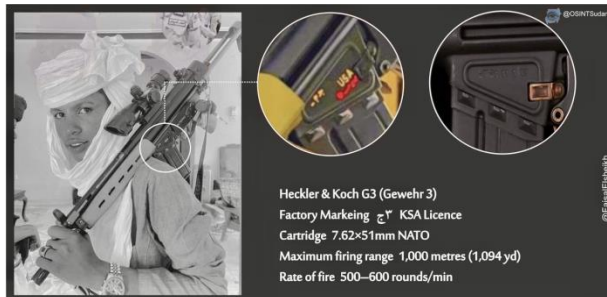
Sudan: How Communities in Al Jazira State Tackled Water Shortages Amid Power Cuts



Over recent months, community-led initiatives have enabled residents of villages in Al Jazira State in central Sudan to overcome chronic water shortages caused by unstable electricity

supplies, by turning to solar energy to power thousands of water sources across towns, villages, and remote rural areas. [Read the full story](#)

How Modified G3 Rifles Exposed Alleged Emirati Arms Smuggling to Sudan's RSF



The appearance of Heckler & Koch G3 rifles in the hands of Sudan's Rapid Support Forces is not a random battlefield occurrence, but rather the visible end point of a covert supply chain stretching across the Red Sea, linking Yemen to Sudan through smuggling routes shaped by war, political allegiances, and competing bids for regional influence.

[Read the full story](#)

Rights Groups: Sudanese Women Raped Every Hour in Parts of Darfur



Hala Al-Karib, Regional Director of the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA), which documents sexual violence, said that women are “literally being raped every hour in Darfur.” She added: “New patterns of sexual violence are unfolding before our eyes,” noting that victims span all age groups, including children and elderly women.

[Read the full story](#)

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