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#StandWithSudan

## Sudan Media Forum Weekly Briefing

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

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Hello ,

Welcome to your weekly briefing. This week fighting has sharply escalated in Sudan's Blue Nile state, with RSF-allied forces seizing Kurmuk, triggering mass displacement and worsening humanitarian conditions. At the same time, drone strikes are intensifying, killing hundreds of civilians, as UN warnings raise concerns over potential war crimes. Humanitarian conditions continue to deteriorate, with tens of thousands displaced, a collapsing healthcare system, and refugee children increasingly out of school. Economically, fuel shortages and rising prices loom, while local initiatives like Emergency Response Rooms emerge as a rare source of resilience and international recognition.

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### Top Story of the Week

## Blue Nile Front Erupts as RSF-SPLM Alliance Seizes Strategic Kurmuk, Mass Displacement Escalates



Fierce fighting has erupted across Sudan's Blue Nile state in the southeast, as intense clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), backed by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement–North (SPLM-N), have triggered a large-scale wave of civilian displacement.

On Tuesday, the RSF–SPLM alliance, led by [Abdelaziz al-Hilu](#), [announced](#) it had taken control of the strategic town of Kurmuk, located in the far southeast of Blue Nile state near the Ethiopian border. In an audio recording, Brigadier General Mohamed Mansour, commander of the SAF's 16th Infantry Brigade in Kurmuk, confirmed that his forces had withdrawn from the town.

RSF and SPLM-N forces have since mobilized around the town of Qaisan, approximately 100 kilometers from Kurmuk, in preparation for a potential assault. Meanwhile, the Sudanese army has reinforced its positions south of Damazin, the state capital.

Seif al-Nasr Mahmoud, spokesperson for the [Blue Nile regional government](#), said the forces that attacked Kurmuk received logistical support from outside Sudan. He added that the drones used in the assault were launched from that country—an apparent reference to Ethiopia. The Sudanese government had, a day before the town's falls, accused Addis Ababa of facilitating cross-border attacks through its territory in support of the RSF–SPLM-N alliance, with the aim of capturing Kurmuk.

In South Kordofan, fresh clashes have also erupted in [the city of Dilling](#) following a renewed multi-directional offensive by RSF and allied SPLM-N forces. The assault comes despite the army having recently broken the siege on the city. On Saturday, the RSF–SPLM alliance [launched intensified](#) attacks using drones and heavy artillery, targeting civilian infrastructure including health centers, schools, and crowded markets, killing dozens. The escalation has raised fears of a renewed siege on Dilling, where a partial blockade is already in place.

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## Political & Security Update

### SPLM-N, RSF Accuse Army of Killing Dozens in Kordofan and Darfur



The Sudan People's Liberation Movement–North (SPLM-N) said on Friday that a Sudanese army airstrike on the town of Al-Sunut in South Kordofan killed and injured 46 civilians. According to [a statement by the movement](#), the strike targeted a group for mourning ceremony in the Kasha payam of Al-Sunut locality, leaving seven people dead and 39 others wounded. The statement added that Al-Sunut has been hit by three repeated airstrikes over the past week, resulting in the deaths of more than 60 civilians and injuring over 100 others, including children and the elderly.

Meanwhile, [the civil administration](#) affiliated with the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Central Darfur accused the Sudanese army of targeting multiple locations in the city of Zalingei with a drone, causing significant damage to residential areas.

In a statement, the administration said the bombardment struck civilians' homes in the eastern neighborhood and parts of the "Five Minutes" displacement camp, leading to extensive material losses. It called on international organizations to hold the Sudanese army accountable and to impose a no-fly zone over areas under RSF control in the Darfur region.

In recent months, the Sudanese army has expanded the scope of its aerial campaign in Darfur, with airstrikes killing large numbers of civilians and destroying homes and essential service facilities.

### **UN Rights Office Reports Over 500 Civilian Deaths from Drone Strikes in Sudan, Warns of Potential War Crimes**

Marta Hurtado, spokesperson for the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)), has revealed that more than 500 civilians were killed in drone strikes in Sudan between January 1 and March 15, with the vast majority of deaths occurring in three states within the Kordofan region. She noted that the sharp increase in the use of drones for airstrikes in Sudan this year highlights the devastating impact of high-tech, relatively low-cost weapons when deployed in populated areas.

Hurtado explained that the expanding scope of drone attacks is beginning to extend beyond Sudan's borders, posing serious risks of further escalation and potential regional consequences. She added, "The continued pattern of these attacks, which hit civilians and destroy civilian infrastructure, raises serious concerns regarding compliance with the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law—distinction, proportionality, and precautions—and may constitute war crimes."

The OHCHR continues to document attacks on markets, energy and water infrastructure, and healthcare facilities, emphasizing that medical facilities and healthcare workers receive special protection from attacks. She urged all countries to "do everything in their power to stop arms transfers that fuel the conflict and are being used in flagrant disregard of the duty to protect civilians in armed conflicts," and reminded parties to the conflict of their binding obligations to safeguard civilians.

### **Over 73,000 Displaced in Blue Nile as Aid Shortages Deepen Humanitarian Crisis**



The [Blue Nile Emergency Room](#) said in a statement that, according to circulating humanitarian estimates based on United Nations data, the number of displaced people who have arrived in the city of Damazin and surrounding areas has reached approximately 73,406, the majority of them women and children.

Meanwhile, the [Qaisan Emergency Room](#) in Blue Nile state reported that 425 families have fled from the town of Qaisan to various locations across the region as of Sunday, warning that displaced families continue to suffer under dire humanitarian conditions.

The Blue Nile Emergency Room stated that displaced population are facing acute shortages of food and safe drinking water, severe overcrowding in shelters, and a lack of adequate housing. This is compounded by deteriorating health services and rising risks of disease, alongside increasing protection needs. It added that the current situation has exceeded local response capacity and now requires urgent, coordinated intervention from all humanitarian partners. The Emergency Room called on national and international organizations, as well as UN agencies, to respond immediately.

The group warned that failure to act swiftly risks escalating into a full-scale humanitarian catastrophe, particularly as mounting pressure continues to strain Damazin as a primary hub for displaced civilians.

### UN Warns of Rising Civilian Risks in Sudan as Border Clashes Disrupt Aid, Hunger Threat Deepens



The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)) [has warned](#) that escalating tensions along Sudan's borders with neighboring countries are increasing risks to civilian safety. Reports indicate civilian casualties in several recent incidents along the Sudan–Chad border. OCHA also noted that near the Sudan–Ethiopia border, ongoing clashes are threatening humanitarian access to the towns of Kurmuk, Sali, and Dindraw, south of Damazin, the capital of Blue Nile state. The violence has triggered civilian displacement, with residents fleeing toward Damazin and across the border into Ethiopia.

In the Kordofan region, reports indicate that drone airstrikes have caused civilian casualties in the town of Lagawa in West Kordofan and in Dilling in South Kordofan. OCHA renewed its call on all parties to de-escalate, protect civilians, and ensure rapid, safe, unimpeded, and sustained humanitarian access to all those in need.

Meanwhile, the United Nations World Food Programme ([WFP](#)) [warned](#) that an additional 45 million people could face hunger if escalation continues in the Middle East and disruptions to supply chains and markets persist.

In a statement on Thursday, the agency said import-dependent countries would be the first to be affected. Sudan, which imports 80% of its wheat, is particularly vulnerable, and rising prices of this staple food could push more families into hunger.

### 76% of Sudanese Refugee Children in Chad Drop Out of School Amid Worsening Crisis



The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)) [in Chad](#) has revealed that 76% of Sudanese refugee households have taken their children out of school due to the ongoing crisis, noting that 41% of these

families have children of school age. The agency conducted a survey during March, covering 294 households comprising 748 individuals.

The organization indicated that none of the respondents possess birth certificates, while 87% of households lack identity documents, either because they were lost or confiscated during their flight from Sudan.

According to the findings, 67% of the surveyed families said they fled Sudan due to insecurity, while 84% reported experiencing human rights violations during their journey to Chad, including 32% who were subjected to physical assaults.

Regarding access to basic services, 44% of households reported having access to water, while 56% said they could access health and nutrition services. Additionally, 20% of families stated that some of their relatives remain in Sudan, primarily due to lack of transportation (84%) or fear of arbitrary arrest (7%). The survey further found that 48% of households have access to medical services, while only 10% reported access to sanitation, water, and hygiene (WASH) services.

### **[Sudanese Doctors Network Reports Mass Killings in El Fasher and Deadly Airstrikes on Dilling](#)**

The [Sudanese Doctors Network](#) has reported that a Rapid Support Forces (RSF) unit carried out the execution of 16 unarmed civilians in El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, citing ethnic motives. The victims included three women, and the force reportedly buried them in three mass graves on the outskirts of the city.

In a statement on Wednesday, the network strongly condemned the atrocity, describing it as a blatant violation of human values and international law, reflecting the ongoing targeting of civilians based on identity and the escalating pattern of systematic violence against civilians in the region.

In [a separate statement on Sunday](#), the network announced that 14 people, including five children and two women, were killed and 23 others, including seven children, were injured following an airstrike carried out by RSF and its ally, the SPLM-N, on the city of Dilling in South Kordofan on Saturday evening. The network noted that the strikes targeted residential areas, resulting in a high number of casualties amid extremely challenging humanitarian and healthcare conditions, including shortages of medical personnel. The statement added that Dilling continues to endure heavy shelling for the second consecutive day.

### **[Sudanese Lawyers' Front Condemns Death of Sudanese Citizen in Egypt, Cites Torture in Custody](#)**



The [Sudanese Democratic Lawyers' Front](#) has condemned what it described as the assassination of Sudanese citizen Rashid Mohamed Abbas, stating that he died following torture while in the custody of Egyptian authorities.

In a statement, the Front said that Abbas was arrested in early March and taken to an undisclosed location, where he endured continuous torture and was denied access to his family, before his relatives were later informed that he had

been transferred to a hospital in critical condition, where he ultimately passed away. The statement added that the authorities prevented the family from accompanying him to the hospital, calling it a “blatant violation of human rights,” and noted that his death resulted from the torture he suffered. The Front criticized what it described as a “weak statement” issued by the Sudanese authorities’ Voluntary Return Committee, which contained “misleading” information about Abbas’s death, claiming it occurred at the airport—a version rejected by the family, who refused to receive the body pending a medical report clarifying the true cause of death.

The so-called Voluntary Return Hope Committee had announced the death of a Sudanese citizen at Cairo Airport last Monday morning while preparing to depart for Port Sudan as part of a mass repatriation flight.

The Lawyers’ Front expressed outrage over the detention of dozens of Sudanese nationals in Egyptian prisons without legal justification and being denied family visits, accusing the Sudanese embassy of failing to protect its citizens. The Front emphasized that the treatment of Sudanese nationals in Egypt constitutes a violation of international conventions.

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## ♥ Humanitarian Focus

### 600 Medical Workers Killed or Injured in Sudan War as Health System Nears Collapse



The preparatory committee of the [Sudanese Doctors’ Union](#) has revealed that 600 medical personnel have been killed or injured since the outbreak of the war in April 2023.

The World Health Organization (WHO) said it has documented, over nearly three years of conflict, the deaths of 2,036 people in 213 attacks on healthcare facilities, in addition to more than 720 injured, including medical staff.

Adiba Ibrahim, a member of the preparatory committee, stated that the committee has tracked casualties among medical personnel while performing their duties, with 222 killed and 378 injured between April 15, 2023, and March of this year. She confirmed that more than 2,000 hospitals and health centers have been destroyed during the war, leading to a severe collapse of the healthcare system and a humanitarian catastrophe for civilians due to the lack of adequate medical care.

The health system continues to face major challenges, as ongoing conflict and road closures in several states have disrupted the delivery of medicines and medical supplies, while preventive and public health monitoring programs have significantly declined.

### UNHCR Reports 42,000 Unaccompanied Sudanese Children Displaced by War



The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)) has reported that 42,000 unaccompanied children have been registered in Sudan and neighboring countries as a result of the ongoing conflict.

Children caught in the conflict, which is approaching its third year, have been subjected to numerous violations, including killing, maiming, and sexual assault, in addition to being deprived of education and medical care.

In a brief report on child protection, UNHCR stated that “42,000 children have been separated from their families, including 5,000 within Sudan, with the remainder among Sudanese refugee populations in neighboring countries.”

The report detailed the regional distribution of these children: Chad is hosting around 24,000, followed by Ethiopia with 7,000, and Egypt and South Sudan with approximately 6,000 each. Uganda has registered 398 children, Libya 132, and the Central African Republic 129.

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## Economic Snapshot

### Fuel Shortages and Price Hikes Grip Sudan Amid Regional Tensions Despite Official Assurances



Sudanese government officials have offered conflicting statements regarding fuel supplies and the impact of the U.S.–Israeli war on Iran. While the Ministry of Energy assured the public that fuel supplies remain stable, long queues at gas stations and rising prices contradict these claims. Early signs of shortages are appearing in several states, with fuel prices increasing and vehicles lining up at stations, while cooking gas cylinders have vanished from stores.

[Petroleum product prices](#) have surged notably across the country. In Shendi, northern Sudan, initial signs of a fuel crisis emerged, prompting the state’s Public Transport and Petroleum Administration to set a new price for gasoline, raising the gallon to 21,500 Sudanese pounds from 17,000 in previous days.

Drivers of public and private vehicles complained about the rising fuel costs and shortages at many stations, with black market activity supplying fuel at double the official price. Vehicle operators expect transportation fares to increase accordingly.

Finance Minister Jibril Ibrahim warned that the country could face petroleum shortages if military escalation in the region continues, particularly if shipping through the Strait of Hormuz is disrupted. He noted that Sudan might

experience supply chain disruptions if oil tankers slow or halt in the Strait of Hormuz, with similar risks extending to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait in the Red Sea, potentially affecting oil shipments to the country. The minister added that the government may be forced to purchase fuel from the spot market in the Red Sea at higher costs, describing the outlook as “bleak and grim,” and called for the establishment of an emergency room to manage the crisis.

Meanwhile, Energy and Oil Minister Moatasim Ibrahim affirmed that petroleum supplies remain stable, with sufficient reserves to meet domestic consumption for several weeks. He noted the arrival of new tankers carrying shipments in waiting areas, including four gasoline tankers totaling 155,000 tons and two “gas oil” tankers, reinforcing supply security for the coming period.

The minister emphasized that Sudan’s oil imports are not heavily dependent on the Gulf region, as shipments arrive via multiple maritime routes including the Red Sea, Mediterranean, and Black Sea. He explained that current regional conflicts mainly affect Sudan through rising global fuel prices, rather than disruptions to supply or delivery to Sudanese ports.

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## Culture & In-Depth

### Sudan’s Emergency Response Rooms Win 2025 Chatham House Award for Pioneering Local Humanitarian Efforts



In a notable recognition of the evolving role of local actors in crisis response, Sudan’s [“Emergency Response Rooms”](#) have been awarded the 2025 Chatham House International Prize for their vital role in one of the most complex contemporary humanitarian crises.

Chatham House, one of the world’s leading think tanks, announced that its annual award would go to these civil networks, acknowledging their efforts in providing aid during Sudan’s ongoing conflict—an unprecedented honor for local volunteer initiatives.

The selection of Sudan’s emergency rooms reflects the pivotal role they have played since the outbreak of war in April 2023, which triggered a widespread humanitarian crisis. Amid the collapse of state institutions and limited access for international organizations to many areas, these networks have filled critical gaps by organizing local relief efforts. Their work has included distributing food, water, and medical supplies, operating communal kitchens within neighborhoods, repairing essential services such as electricity and water, and providing healthcare and educational support under extremely challenging conditions.

These emergency rooms originated as a grassroots volunteer movement, relying on local community networks and resistance committees, with thousands of volunteers operating in a decentralized manner across neighborhoods. As

the conflict expanded and displaced populations reached millions, these initiatives became a backbone of Sudan's humanitarian response, particularly in areas outside the reach of official services.

The efforts have received wide international acclaim, being recognized as a unique model of community-based, neutral humanitarian action. These networks have ensured assistance to all affected individuals without discrimination. International observers have highlighted the emergency rooms as an example of local communities' capacity to organize and respond effectively in the absence of formal structures, elevating their global profile.

Founded in 1920 in London, Chatham House is one of the oldest research institutions specializing in international affairs and global relations. It emerged after World War I with the mission of enhancing understanding of the causes of international conflicts and preventing their recurrence. Since 2005, the Chatham House Prize has been awarded annually to individuals or entities that make significant contributions to improving international relations. Winners are selected through a vote by institute members following nominations from experts and internal staff, giving the award a high level of credibility in political and academic circles.

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### Further Reading

#### Sudan: Over 700 Kidney Failure Patients Without Dialysis in White Nile State



A report shed light on the dire conditions facing kidney patients and dialysis centers in the peripheral White Nile State. Current estimates indicate that 749 kidney failure patients in Kosti alone are unable to access regular dialysis sessions and remain on waiting lists based on medical priority, as the Abbas Ibrahim Center struggles to overcome severe shortages and operational challenges. [Read the full story](#)

#### Sudan at the Heart of an Economic Storm: Sharp Contraction and an Uncertain Future



Since the outbreak of war in April 2023, Sudan's economy has entered a critical phase marked by widespread contraction and a downturn across most sectors, amid a complex interplay of internal and external factors. More than 80% of the industrial and manufacturing sector has come to a complete halt, alongside the suspension of agricultural

projects and state institutions. As the conflict drags on, pressing questions arise about the future of Sudan's economy: Can the country recover, and what might reconstruction look like once the war ends? [Read the full story](#)

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