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## 1.4. Human rights

The 2019 Constitutional declaration stipulated that all rights and freedoms contained in international human rights agreements, pacts, and charters ratified by the Republic of Sudan were an integral part of the new constitution (Article 41(2)).<sup>132</sup> Sudan is a party to seven of the nine core international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).<sup>133</sup> At the regional level, it is a party to, among others, the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC).<sup>134</sup> Sudan has not ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discriminations against women (CEDAW) and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

The UN and HRW have documented evidence of human rights abuses, including torture and sexual violence, allegedly committed by both the SAF and the RSF.<sup>135</sup>

Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) remained especially vulnerable to sexual and labour exploitation, including by criminal networks engaged in human trafficking.<sup>136</sup>

### (a) Extrajudicial killings

According to the UN, international human rights organisations and media, the SAF, the RSF and affiliated armed militias were responsible for widespread extrajudicial killings of civilians, including children and women.<sup>137</sup> Both parties have engaged in extrajudicial killings and executions of SAF and RSF prisoners of war from opposing forces.<sup>138</sup> In October 2024, mass killings of civilians attributed to the RSF were

reported in Al Jazeera,[139](#) where eastern villages witnessed a surge of sexual violence and extrajudicial killings.[140](#) Similar incidents were observed by residents of Khartoum.[141](#) The Emergency Lawyers Group identified cases of arbitrary detentions and extrajudicial killings in the same area and in Port Sudan.[142](#) Visual evidence obtained and verified by international outlets confirmed the involvement of RSF forces in the extrajudicial killings of unarmed civilians in North Darfur in June 2023.[143](#) For additional information see [EUAA Sudan report - Country Focus \(April 2024\)](#).

## □ **(b) Arbitrary arrests and detention**

Sudan ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforcement Disappearance (CED) in 2021 as well as the Convention against Torture (UNCAT).[144](#)

According to Freedom House, although the interim constitution enshrined the right to due process, security forces have continued to engage in arrests and detentions[145](#) without provision of any warrant, legal documentation or justification for the arrest. Documented arrests and detentions of civilians on suspicion of supporting the other party in the conflict took place in various locations of Khartoum, West and Central Darfur as well as River Nile state since the beginning of the conflict.[146](#) Both the RSF and the SAF have engaged in detaining individuals based on perceived affiliations, political opinions, or ethnic origins.[147](#) The SAF has reinforced repression through the “Law on Unfamiliar Faces,” a harsh policy that arbitrarily targets individuals based on perceived social affiliations, labeling them as RSF sympathizers without evidence.[148](#)

In May and June 2024, multiple media outlets highlighted arrests and detentions without judicial orders targeting civilians and political activists across Nile River state, Northern State, North Kordofan, Sennar, White Nile, West Kordofan, Kassala and Gedaref.[149](#) These detentions targeted activists and volunteers who stayed in their homes during the RSF's occupation.[150](#) In October 2024, as reported by the human rights organisation Justice for Africa, Nuba members of the Sudan Christian Church in Shendi, River Nile state, were arrested and subjected to mistreatment by SAF on suspicion of collaborating with the RSF.[151](#) For additional information see section [2. Treatment of selected profiles and groups of the population](#). Arbitrary arrests and detention by both parties frequently involved individuals on their way to the border. Arrests were conducted at different locations often involving the use of physical violence.[152](#)

### □ **(c) Enforced disappearances**

For additional information about enforced disappearances, see section 2.5.3 of the [EUAA Sudan report – Country Focus \(April 2024\)](#).

In February 2024, the Sudanese Group of Victims of Enforced Disappearance (SGVED) confirmed the disappearances of 993 persons (897 men and 96 women) in various cities including Wad Madani, Al-Hasaheisa and in the states of Al Jazirah, North Kordofan and Khartoum.<sup>153</sup> A report by the African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) released in April 2024 indicated that in the first year of war 1 140 individuals were victims of enforced disappearance.<sup>154</sup> The 2024 report by the UN Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances noted 177 outstanding cases for Sudan.<sup>155</sup>

In an article by Radio Tamazuj, a member of the Sudanese civil society organisation Missing People Initiative (Mafgoud) noted that enforced disappearances have increased since the beginning of the conflict.<sup>156</sup> In RSF-controlled areas people have been forced into disappearance, with their families coerced into paying ransoms for their release.<sup>157</sup> In March 2024, the RSF arrested activists running soup kitchens in Khartoum while they were distributing food to civilians.<sup>158</sup>

In another report, SGVED highlighted a reduction in the monitoring, documentation and reporting of enforced disappearances due to the worsening of the conflict. On some occasions reporting was limited by families' concerns about safety and potential reprisals. In cases where women were involved, cultural and societal pressures prevented the reporting.<sup>159</sup>

As of mid-October 2024, the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa reported that 165 women and girls were missing. Additionally, the SGVED also reported a total of 149 missing women and girls.<sup>160</sup>

### □ **(d) Treatment in detention and prison conditions**

For more information about detention conditions, see section 2.3.1. of the [EUAA Sudan report – Country Focus \(April 2024\)](#).

According to the 2023 US country report on human rights practices, since April 2023, the RSF had reportedly established 44 centres for holding kidnapped persons in Khartoum and surrounding areas, while the SAF continued to operate eight detention centres. Prisoners were living in severe conditions due to overcrowding, food shortages, inadequate health care, heating, ventilation, lighting and physical abuse. Persons in these centres were reportedly subjected to starvation, sexual assault, beatings, and cruel treatment, with credible reports of deaths in custody.[161](#) No access to detention facilities was allowed to international monitors since the beginning of the conflict in April 2023.[162](#)

By June 2024, governors of River Nile and Gedaref states endorsed policies of 'regional profiling,' resulting in the detention and mistreatment of individuals from western Sudanese states.[163](#) In July 2024, the Sudanese Human Rights Initiative (SHRI) indicated Kober prison as one of the largest in Sudan and Al-Hadi as a newly established hosting a significant number of death row inmates. Additionally, it was indicated that a relevant number of death row inmates were hosted in another large prison in Port Sudan.[164](#)

According to the UN FFM for the Sudan, RSF intelligence officers were present in RSF detention and interrogation centres. These were established in various locations, including police stations and prisons in RSF-captured areas, former SAF installations and re-purposed civilian buildings.[165](#) Unofficial locations and informal detention centres were used by both parties, mostly university, such as the University of Africa in Khartoum, schools, private premises, gas stations, police stations and areas or buildings close to checkpoints.[166](#) Individuals, including children, were detained in inhuman conditions and denied access to legal assistance or judicial oversight. In some instances, these conditions led to deaths.[167](#)

Additionally, the RSF attacked national and state prisons across multiple states, seizing and looting prison property.[168](#) These attacks led to the release of numerous prisoners, some of whom joined military operations, while others engaged in criminal activities.[169](#) As of September 2024, 19 481 inmates have escaped from Sudanese prisons.[170](#)

Since the outbreak of hostilities, hundreds of fighters have been captured by the two parties, and most remain unaccounted for.[171](#)

## (e) Torture and physical abuse

Evidence of torture and ill-treatment of civilians by both parties<sup>172</sup> included the use of both physical and psychological violence. Torture was often used to extract information and intimidate individuals.<sup>173</sup> As indicated by Ayin network, multiple video sources reported instances of humiliating and degrading behaviours.<sup>174</sup> Whipping, beating and forcing detainees to walk on their knees on gravel roads were documented by videos uploaded on social media platforms.<sup>175</sup> Analysis by HRW suggested that these incidents occurred in Khartoum, Al Jazirah and North and West Kordofan.<sup>176</sup> Abuses included electric shocks and burns.<sup>177</sup> Testimonies collected by the UN FFM for the Sudan informed about sexual violence, including forced nudity, beatings on genitals and rape threats, against men and boys in detention, during or prior to their interrogation.<sup>178</sup> For more information see section [2. Treatment of selected profiles and groups of the population](#).

Sudan's Constitutional Charter for the 2019 Transitional Period prohibited torture and ill treatments with Article 50 stating that 'No one may be subjected to torture or harsh, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment, or debasement of human dignity.'<sup>179</sup> Despite this, the Charter retained laws from the 2005 Transitional Constitution such as the 2010 National Security Act (NSA) and 1994 Evidence Act, which exposed detainees to torture and ill-treatments. Additionally, the 2007 Armed Forces Act, 2008 Police Act, and 2010 National Security Act granted immunities to state actors, limiting accountability for such practices.<sup>180</sup> Legal barriers such as official immunities, statutes of limitation, and inadequate victim protection further obstructed accountability for torture.<sup>181</sup>

#### (f) **Death penalty**

Sudan retains the death penalty for ordinary crimes.<sup>182</sup> Capital punishment in the country is legal under Article 27 of the Sudanese Criminal Act 1991<sup>183</sup> and includes offences against the state and international crimes.<sup>184</sup> In 2020, amendments to the Criminal Law repealed the death penalty for apostasy, previously punished by stoning to death.<sup>185</sup> According to the 2022 Working Group report on Universal Periodic Review on Sudan, the country abolished the use of death penalties for discretionary (ta'zir<sup>186</sup>) offences and retained it for extremely serious offences only (hudud<sup>187</sup> and qisa<sup>188</sup>) under Article 53. The death penalty cannot be imposed for offences committed by persons under the age of 18 years or persons aged 70 or above, except in the case of hudud and retribution (qisas).<sup>189</sup> The 2024 UN FFM for the Sudan emphasised that the death penalty may apply for crimes committed by children under the command of the armed forces and/or groups.<sup>190</sup>

Since the beginning of the conflict, people rejecting the war and refusing to side with the army, faced charges of spying for the RSF or being 'sleeper cells'. As explained by Radio Dabanga, these charges are punishable by death.<sup>191</sup> In Khartoum 'the execution of so-called death sentences (by field trials) continued and has brought civilians and the military together and is greatly supported by calls for incitement despite the catastrophic circumstances the city is witnessing.'<sup>192</sup>

While courts in Sudan were not known to have sentenced people to death in 2023,<sup>193</sup> between May and July 2024 six sentences were issued by courts in SAF-controlled areas,<sup>194</sup> followed by hundreds in December 2024 in various locations under army's control. These sentences were issued under article 50 and 51 of the Criminal Law ('undermining the constitutional system' and 'waging war against the state') against civilians accused of supporting the RSF militia or opposing the war.<sup>195</sup> According to the UN FFM report, as of October 2024 ten RSF members had been sentenced to death by hanging.<sup>196</sup> Additionally, another source reported that 17 RSF fighters were sentenced to death in September.<sup>197</sup>

In RSF-controlled areas, houses holding execution rooms were found in Khartoum.<sup>198</sup> For additional information on extrajudicial killings see [1.4.\(a\) Extrajudicial killings](#).

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