Please cite as: EUAA, '2.2.2. Conflict dynamics and tactics ' in *Sudan: Security Situation*, February 2025.

2.2.2. Conflict dynamics and tactics

In May 2024, the RSF supported by allied tribal militia started laying siege on El Fasher in North Darfur,[702] described as the 'last stronghold' of the SAF in Darfur.[703] The siege of the town and surrounding areas was still in place as of October 2024, with over 900 000 people trapped in the city under dire conditions.[704] As of November 2024, the city remained under siege being subjected to daily artillery shelling targeting markets, the southern neighbourhoods, the military base and Abou Shouk IDP camp.[705]

As of June 2024, thousands of RSF fighters reportedly controlled the northern and eastern districts of the city while encircling the rest.[706] The October 2024 report by the UN Secretary-General noted a number of major assaults carried out by the RSF in the El Fasher area from August 2024,[707] with an intensification of fighting in September.[708] In October 2024, heavy fighting occurred in areas north of El Fasher, upon which military reinforcements were sent to the joint forces fighting the RSF in that area.[709] OHCHR based on its monitoring noted attacks by the RSF on the city from May to November 2024, employing heavy artillery shelling and suicide drones, while SAF forces countered the RSF advances with airstrikes and shelling leading to civilian casualties and destruction of civilian infrastructure.[710] It further documented 15 artillery attacks on Abou Shouk IDP camp, amounting to a direct attack on civilians, while Zamzam IDP camp south of El Fasher was hit by shelling at the beginning of December 2024.[711] Sources further reported that the RSF targeted healthcare infrastructure in El Fasher, shelling two hospitals on several occasions as well as a medical centre,[712] leading to the loss of civilian life and damage to health infrastructure.[713]

In July 2024, the JFASM managed to take control of the border area between Sudan, Libya and Chad, cutting off potential arms supply lines to the RSF from Libya.[714] At the beginning of October 2024, the JFASM reported to have seized a strategically important area from the RSF north of Kutum, among them an RSF base in Bir Mazza.[715] The SAF and allied militia that same month made gains in West Darfur on the border with Chad,[716] claiming to have retaken Kulbus and Jebel Awum from the RSF.[717]

The October 2024 report by the UN Secretary-General noted that in different parts of Darfur, especially West Darfur, violence including summary executions, sexual violence and forced displacement mainly carried out by the RSF and allied militia was characterised by ethnic motivations.[718] For example, arson attacks at the beginning of October 2024 affected fourteen villages predominantly inhabited by Zaghawa near Kutum, North Darfur.[719] In April 2024, during the RSF military campaign to seize Mellit, a town 60 km northeast of El Fasher, 20 attacks on civilians were recorded by ACLED. Reportedly these attacks disproportionally targeted

Zaghawa and included extrajudicial killings, torture, widespread property destruction, and looting.720 That same month, 15 villages west of El Fasher predominantly inhabited by Zaghawa were reportedly attacked by RSF troops that committed mass killings and enforced disappearances.721 For more information on ethnically motivated killings, see section of 2.4, notably 2.4.2 of the previous report (EUAA report Sudan - Country Focus, April 2024).

The SAF carried out indiscriminate airstrikes in Darfur, including in Nyala in South Darfur, El Geneina in West Darfur, and El Daein in East Darfur, resulting in civilian casualties and displacement.722 Throughout the reference period, media sources and rights groups reported SAF airstrikes, some of which hit civilian infrastructure or killed civilians.723 The RSF employed indiscriminate artillery shelling resulting in civilian deaths and significant damage in affected areas.724

- 702

  OHCHR, Sudan: Türk sounds alarm over hostilities in El Fasher, warns of serious human rights violations, 26 September 2024, url

- 703

  International Crisis Group, Halting the Catastrophic Battle for Sudan’s El Fasher, 24 June 2024, url, p. 1; BBC News, Sudan's El Fasher battle: Satellite images of Darfur show RSF destruction, 23 May 2024, url

- 704

  UNSG, Recommendations for the protection of civilians in the Sudan, S/2024/759, 21 October 2024, url, para. 9

- 705

  ACJPS, Sudan War Update: Security And Humanitarian Situation In North Darfur, 11 December 2024, url

- 706

  International Crisis Group, Halting the Catastrophic Battle for Sudan’s El Fasher, 24 June 2024, url, p. 1

- 707

  UNSG, Recommendations for the protection of civilians in the Sudan, S/2024/759, 21 October 2024, url, para. 9; International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch – Sudan: February 2024 – December 2024, n.d., url

- 708

  UNSG, Recommendations for the protection of civilians in the Sudan, S/2024/759, 21 October 2024, url, para. 9; MEE, Sudan: Fighting breaks out in el-Fasher following RSF

attack, 14 September 2024, url

- 709

  Sudan Tribune, El Fasher receives major reinforcements as fighting with RSF intensifies, 6 October 2024, url

- 710

  OHCHR, Under siege: the situation of human rights in El Fasher, North Darfur since May 2024, 20 December 2024, url, para. 3

- 711

  OHCHR, Under siege: the situation of human rights in El Fasher, North Darfur since May 2024, 20 December 2024, url, para. 27-28

- 712

  OHCHR, Under siege: the situation of human rights in El Fasher, North Darfur since May 2024, 20 December 2024, url, para. 23-25

- 713

  Al Jazeera, At least nine killed in drone attack on hospital in Sudan's Darfur, 14 December 2024; url; MSF, Last hospital in El Fasher risks closure during intensive bombardment on the city, 14 August 2024, url; BBC News, Last civilian hospital in besieged Sudan city closed, 10 June 2024, url

- 714

  ADF, Darfur's Joint Force Helps Sudan's Army Retake Key Areas, 22 October 2024, url

- 715

  Radio Dabanga, North Darfur: Joint Force seizes 'strategic areas', Zaghawa and Arab leaders sign accord, 3 October 2024, url

- 716

  Ayin Network, New Battlefronts in Darfur, recapture of Jebel Moya, 19 October 2024, url

- 717

  ADF, Darfur's Joint Force Helps Sudan's Army Retake Key Areas, 22 October 2024, url

- 718

  UNSG, Recommendations for the protection of civilians in the Sudan, S/2024/759, 21 October 2024, url, para. 10

- 719

Yale School of Public Health – Humanitarian Research Lab, Special Report: Fourteen Arson Attacks on Villages, North Darfur 2-12 October 2024, 16 October 2024, url, p. 3

- 720

  ACLED, Sudan: The RSF sets its eyes on North Darfur, 17 May 2024, url

- 721

  ACJPS, Ethnic Cleansing in the Volatile Darfur, 4 November 2024, url

- 722

  UNSG, Recommendations for the protection of civilians in the Sudan, S/2024/759, 21 October 2024, url, para. 9

- 723

  Amnesty International, Sudan: SAF airstrike on crowded market a flagrant war crime, 12 December 2024, url; Erem News, عشرات القتلى في غارات جوية للجيش السوداني على دارفور [Dozens killed in SAF air raids in Darfur], 21 November 2024, url; Sudan War Monitor, Wave of SAF airstrikes in North Darfur kills dozens of civilians, 6 October 2024, url; Radio Dabanga, Newborn among five killed in SAF airstrike in Central Darfur, 2 September 2024, url; Radio Dabanga, Battles continue in Sudan, air raids on East Darfur hospital kill four, 21 August 2024, url; DNHR, Update from Zamzam IDP Camp, El Fasher, North Darfur State, Sudan, 6 August 2024, url

- 724

  DNHR, Still, in Abu Shouk Camp, El Fasher lives with worries about the artillery she is shelling by RSF, 24 November 2024, url; DNHR, Continued Airstrikes and Bombings Devastate Darfur: Civilians Bear the Brunt, 27 August 2024, url

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu