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2.1.2. Resistance committees

Throughout the conflict, pro-democracy activists were systematically targeted. Retaliatory attacks in areas retaken by the opposing warring party and directed against pro-democracy activities and groups were described as a recurring pattern. In particular, the RSF 'perceive[d] Resistance Committees (RC) and Emergency Resistance Rooms (ERRs) as posing a direct threat to their ability to govern areas under their control'. [255](#)

The Resistance Committees (RC), [256](#) originally formed in 2013 during a set of protests against the regime, [257](#) represented Sudan's pro-democracy grassroots movement. [258](#) Consisting mainly of younger people from a variety of social and economic backgrounds, [259](#) these RC played a key role in the 2019 revolution and later mobilised against the 2021 coup, becoming influential actors through their community-based activism. When the war erupted in 2023, RC shifted towards humanitarian efforts, creating ERRs. [260](#)

ERRs, whether newly established or reactivated in April 2023, volunteered to fill the gap left by a lack of state service provision and limited international presence following the evacuation of international staff from Khartoum. [261](#) These initiatives are rooted in the Sudanese *nafeer* tradition, [262](#) which calls for collective action to rescue the needy and rebuild in the face of crises. [263](#) While some ERRs openly associate with the RCs, others avoid it given the political nature of the RCs. ERRs deliver food, water, emergency medical care, evacuations for thousands of people, and educational activities for children, and are funded by Sudanese diaspora and local groups. [264](#) For additional information on the situation of aid workers see [section 2.4.2](#).

Emergency Resistance Rooms (ERRs)

In Khartoum, security forces detained several ERR volunteers for carrying out relief activities without official permission. [265](#) ACAPS noted in October 2025 that 'these groups detained volunteers' in parts of Khartoum, 'while in Um Durman, they infiltrated some of the ERRs' and distributed aid, 'wearing military uniforms and carrying arms, leading to polarisation among the volunteers.' [266](#) In 2025, targeting of ERRs and community kitchens volunteers has persisted, as the SAF view these local aid workers as political opponents and subject them to harassment and detention. [267](#) In SAF-regained areas, ERRs must navigate suspicion of being associated with RCs. The security arm of the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), known as 'security cells', investigate ERR members and their activities, threatening to suspend National/Local Non-Governmental Organisations (NNGOs) and International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) partnering with ERRs. [268](#) In August 2025, a volunteer in the Red Sea ERR was reportedly arrested in Port Sudan for providing humanitarian assistance to war-displaced communities. [269](#) In Khartoum, ERRs' volunteers reported 'harassment by SAF-aligned Islamist

militias' operating through civil support groups (known as *isnad madani*), 'through which fighters from the BBMB and other informal armed groups have taken on civilian roles in aid distribution and service provision in neighbourhoods and towns.' [270](#)In Khartoum, many ERR volunteers have fled due to reprisal attacks. In Southern Khartoum, as many as 80 % of the volunteers have fled the area. [271](#) For additional information on the situation of aid workers and healthcare personnel see section [2.4.2.](#) and [2.4.3.](#)

- [255](#)

TIMEP, Sudan's Counterrevolutionary War: The Systematic Targeting of Pro-Democracy Activists, 15 April 2025, [url](#)

- [256](#)

PeaceRep, Resistance Committees and Sudan's Political Future, May 2023, [url](#)

- [257](#)

IFPRI, Siddig, Khalid; Kirui, Oliver K.; and Dorosh, Paul. 2026. War and Resilience: The Multifaceted Impacts of Sudan's Conflict and Pathways to Recovery. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute, [url](#), pp. 40, 41

- [258](#)

TIMEP, Sudan's Counterrevolutionary War: The Systematic Targeting of Pro-Democracy Activists, 15 April 2025, [url](#)

- [259](#)

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- [260](#)

TIMEP, Sudan's Counterrevolutionary War: The Systematic Targeting of Pro-Democracy Activists, 15 April 2025, [url](#)

- [261](#)

Arab Center Washington DC, Sudan's War: The Failure of Mediation and the Struggle for Civilian Rule, 31 October 2025, [url](#)

- [262](#)

Nafeer (نَافِر, *naḥīr*), originally meaning "a call to mobilise", denotes community mobilisation, volunteering, and mutual aid. Shabaka, Diaspora Collaboration and Mutual Aid, November 2024, [url](#), p. 16

- [263](#)

ACAPS, Challenges and opportunities for Khartoum state emergency response rooms, 16 October 2025 [url](#), p. 1

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Arab Center Washington DC, Sudan's War: The Failure of Mediation and the Struggle for Civilian Rule, 31 October 2025, [url](#)

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ACAPS, Challenges and opportunities for Khartoum state emergency response rooms, 16 October 2025 [url](#), p. 3

- [266](#)

ACAPS, Challenges and opportunities for Khartoum state emergency response rooms, 16 October 2025 [url](#), p. 4

- [267](#)

Humanitarian Outcomes, AWSR, Aid Worker Security Report 2025, August 2025, [url](#), p. 6

- [268](#)

ACAPS, Challenges and opportunities for Khartoum state emergency response rooms, 16 October 2025 [url](#), p. 4

- [269](#)

Sudan Post, Resistance committees: SAF's de facto government arrested Red Sea aid worker, 25 August 2025, [url](#)

- [270](#)

ACAPS, Challenges and opportunities for Khartoum state emergency response rooms, 16 October 2025 [url](#), p. 4

- [271](#)

TIMEP, Sudan's Counterrevolutionary War: The Systematic Targeting of Pro-Democracy Activists, 15 April 2025, [url](#)