

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL - 48th SESSION

Enhanced interactive dialogue on the report of the High Commissioner on the situation of human rights in the Sudan

[Ms. Nada Al-Nashif - UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights:](#)

- *Report of the OHCHR on the situation of human rights in the Sudan:* [A/HRC/48/46](#)

The report covers the period of **October 2020 to 30 June 2021** and informs on the **progress made** and the **remaining challenges** in the field of human rights, including the work of **OHCHR's country office** in the Sudan and its field presences.

The OHCHR welcomes the **commitment of Sudan to put in place important economic reforms and strengthen social protections**, which could lead to **improvements in the lives of the Sudanese people** and their access to key **economic, social and cultural rights**. These reforms must be based on human rights principles so that they benefit all populations and leave no one behind. Sudan's recent **ratification of international convention** is welcomed (including CAT and CED). Sudan is encouraged to continue its efforts to ratify international conventions to which it is not yet a party, in particular **CEDAW** and the **Optional Protocol of ECOSOC**.

Darfur continues to experience **multifaceted human rights challenges** since the withdrawal of the Hybrid UN-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). These include **harassment, intimidation, extortion of civilians and sexual violence against women and girls** by armed groups, as well as **intercommunal violence**, resulting in **civilian casualties** and destruction of civilian objects.

OHCHR remains concerned by the **delays in delivering justice to the victims of the past crimes** committed in **Darfur** as well as for the victims of the **violent dispersal of protestors in Khartoum on 3 June 2019**. The OHCHR is encouraged by the enhanced engagement and the cooperation of the Government of the Sudan with the **International Criminal Court**.

Sudan's **transition continues to face serious challenges**, but progress made thus far must not be derailed. OHCHR will continue to **support the transitional authorities** and the aspirations of the Sudanese people for democracy, development, respect for human rights and the rule of law. An important step towards meeting the demands and aspirations of the people of the Sudan could be to **speed up the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement**, in particular the provisions on **accountability, transitional justice and durable peace solutions** for all Sudanese.

[Mr. Volker Perthes, Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Sudan:](#)

It has been one year since the **historic signing of the Juba Peace Agreement**, a significant achievement for peace, justice and stability in Sudan. Its **implementation remain paramount**, but challenges persist. The **attempted coup d'état of 21 September** was a stark reminder of these challenges.

The **strong cooperation between the Transitional Government of the Sudan and the UN** is encouraging. **Ratification of international conventions** must be accompanied **institutional reforms** as well as awareness-raising and capacity building to ensure **effective implementation**.

Sudan is encouraged to **accelerate the establishment of key independent commissions** envisaged in the Constitutional Document, including **commissions on transitional justice**, land, women and gender equality, anti-corruption, elections, civil service and constitution-making. The establishment of a new **NHRI** in line with international standards and norms also remains outstanding. The establishment of



the **Transitional Legislative Council** with at least **40% representation of women** as stipulated in the Constitutional Declaration and the Juba Peace Agreement, is also urgently required.

One of the most consistent demands heard during the last eight months in the Sudan has been the **call to end impunity and deliver justice for victims**. These calls range from the demand for **accountability for the grave human rights violations committed by the past regime** and others in **Darfur**, to **accountability for ongoing gender-based violence** and accountability for human rights violations committed against protestors - including those killed during **the 3 June 2019 protests**. While the reforms undertaken by Sudan are commendable, more progress is needed in delivering justice and **implementing the transitional justice mechanisms** foreseen in the Juba Peace Agreement.

The **recent resurgence of intercommunal violence** poses new threats to protection of civilians. Just in **Darfur**, **violence has claimed the lives of 500 civilians** and displaced more than **175,000** since the beginning of this year. Between January and August this year, about **418,000 people were newly displaced** as a result of conflicts and armed attacks, mainly in **Darfur**, parts of **Kordofan** and **Blue Nile**. The challenges faced by the transitional authorities during this next critical period require sustained and coordinated support of the international community, including in the area of human rights.

[H.E. Ms. I.I Mohamed Ahmed - Assistant Undersecretary of the Sudan Ministry of Foreign Affairs:](#)

Given the wide **human rights violations committed by the previous regime** and the calls from the Sudanese people to demand justice, the government understands why it was necessary to keep Sudan on the agenda of the Council for so long.

After carefully studying the OHCHR report, Sudan pointed out that was **not comprehensive enough in its analyses**. The following points should be integrated in the report:

- Preparation of the transition:

The transitional government 2 years after it was established, is determined to establish proper **transition and a sustainable peace agreement for everyone**. In October 2020 an agreement was signed to prepare the **holding of free and fair elections**.

- Implementation of legal reforms:

The transitional government is dedicated to **implement reforms by enacting laws harmonized with international conventions ratified**, including the most recent ones. Reforms on women and children's rights, freedom of religion, FGM and death penalty have been undertaken.

- Challenges in the implementation of the rule of law:

The transitional government faces **many challenges** but keep working on implementing rule of law in the country. The government works tirelessly to **end armed conflicts in the country**, especially in **Darfur**. The **previous regime** has much responsibility in these issues. A joint force has been deployed in Darfur to resolve the conflict, but needs support from the international community. In March the government adopted a **national plan to implement the UN Security Council resolution on Women, Peace and Security**, to combat **gender-based violence** and gender inequalities.

- Cooperation with the International Criminal Court (ICC):

The government created a transitional body to guarantee the **non-repetition of atrocities** committed in the past. Sudan engaged in **cooperation with the ICC**, in February 2021 and signed agreement with it. In August the prosecutor of the ICC was received in Sudan.

The transitional government of Sudan **requests ongoing support from the OHCHR** with its field office, in order to promote good governance, rule of law and human rights for its people.



Delegations that took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue (30 statements)

Norway on behalf of Nordic-Baltic States, Egypt on behalf of the Group of Arab States, European Union, Cameroon on behalf of the African Group, Qatar, Germany, Senegal, France, Egypt, Iraq, Republic of Korea, Netherlands, Venezuela, Russian Federation, United States, China, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Yemen, United Kingdom, Ireland, Spain, Botswana, Belgium, United Arab Emirates, South Sudan, Jordan, Sri Lanka, Chad, Tunisia.

Delegations taking the floor during the interactive dialogue **commended Sudan's impressive efforts** undertaken in the past months, particularly in the **strengthening of human rights, the implementation of the rule of law, the ratification of international conventions, and the transitional justice efforts**. States also commended Sudan for its **remarkable cooperation with the OHCHR** and the United Nations. It was however underlined by States that these **efforts should continue**, with **more ratification** of international convention, **stronger laws to protect human rights** and civilians and a continued commitment to **uphold transitional justice**.

States emphasized in particular the **signing of the Juba Peace Agreement in October 2020**, which is a **remarkable example of peaceful political transition**. States commended the content of the agreement but several States urged Sudan to **accelerate the implementation of the agreement**, particularly in the **establishment of transitional justice mechanisms**.

Several States were concerned over the **challenges remaining in Sudan**, particularly the ongoing **human rights violations against women (sexual and gender-based violence), harassment of human rights defenders and journalists** and limitations of **political participation and civic space** including **freedom of expression, assembly and opinion**. States deplored **the ongoing violence in the region of Darfur** where civilians were not sufficiently protected by the government.

9 NGOs took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue:

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project, World Evangelical Alliance, FIDH, RADDHO, Human Rights Watch, OIPMA, ISHR, Elizka Relief Foundation.

NGOs taking the floor widely deplored the fact that **this constituted the last Interactive Dialogue held on Sudan at the Council**. They feared that the **situation was not yet stabilized to remove Sudan** from the agenda and hoped that it would not appear again on the agenda in the next years.

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project deplored the significant challenges remaining for Sudan, the **violence in Darfur** and the **accountability** needed for acts of the previous regime.

FIDH urged the government to prioritize the **implementation of transitional justice mechanisms** and demanded investigations for the **crimes committed by the previous regime**.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide and the *World Evangelical Alliance* denounced **attacks against Christians** and places of worship. They urged Sudan to **protect freedom of religion**.

RADDHO condemned the attempted **September 2021 coup d'état** and demanded the Juba Peace Agreement to be **implemented more rapidly**.

Human Rights Watch denounced the **unlawful killings of protesters** and the violence in **Darfur**

OIPMA welcomed recent steps taken by Sudan in **implementing national plan to protect civilians**. *Elizka Relief Foundation* demanded that **attacks and violence in Darfur** should be investigated.

ISHR deplored the situation of **women's rights in Sudan** and in particular the challenges faced by **women human rights defenders**, including **marginalization, sexual violence and abuse**.

Watch the full Interactive Dialogue on Sudan on UN WebTV: [Part1](#) / [Part 2](#)