

## HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – 54th SESSION

### Interactive Dialogue Interactive dialogue on the High Commissioner's oral update on the Human Rights situation in Sudan

12 September 2023

In his opening remarks, **Mr. Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**, highlighted that since the outbreak of the conflict, human rights violations have escalated drastically, generated by both parties to the conflict: the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Testimonies from refugees in Chad and Ethiopia highlight the conflict's severity, including arbitrary detentions, rape, and enforced disappearances of activists. The conflict has caused over 1,500 civilian deaths and displaced 5.1 million people. The conflict continues to paralyze the economy and affect public services, particularly affecting children and women. The High Commissioner deplored indiscriminate attacks on civilians, the occupation of hospitals by the RSF, and ethnic attacks on non-Arab communities like the Masalit. Concerns also exist about social mobilizations prompted by the SAF, rising anti-migrant sentiments of Sudanese refugees in Tunisia and Libya, and increased sexual violence, mainly against women and children by the RSF. The HC called for a ceasefire and accountability for violations to end impunity.

**Mr. Radhouane Nouice, designated Expert on human rights in the Sudan**, expressed deep concern over ongoing strikes and shelling targeting civilians. He noted the devastating impact on the healthcare sector and the alarming increase in sexual violence, torture, and the killing of human rights defenders, lawyers, and activists. Mr. Nouice deplored ethnically motivated violence and the potential for further conflict resulting from SAF-led social mobilizations. Based on verified information, he confirmed serious violations by both the Sudanese army and, to a greater extent, the RSF. These violations encompass attacks on civilian infrastructure, deliberate killings of civilians, shortages of essential supplies, denial of proper burials, and the destruction of entire neighborhoods, among other offenses. Mr. Nouice emphasized the urgent need for a unified international effort to end the conflict as well as ending the prevailing sense of impunity in Sudan. He called upon Sudan's prosecutor general to address the issue of impunity and commended the United States for imposing sanctions on two RSF leaders. Furthermore, he urged for a permanent ceasefire and unrestricted humanitarian aid access to help those affected by the conflict.

**Sudan (Country concerned):** The Attorney General first referred to the creation of the National Committee to Investigate violations by the RSF in Sudan since April 15, 2023. This militia's severe human rights violations, including war crimes and crimes against humanity, led to the national army's intervention. The committee gathered evidence and conducted investigations. The Attorney General thanked countries like the United States for taking action against the militia and recognized international human rights organizations' condemnation. He urged classifying the militia as a terrorist group and prosecuting its leaders. He expressed Sudan's priority is ending the rebellion, delivering humanitarian aid, and addressing the displacement of millions. He commended international efforts, like the Jeddah talks and neighboring countries' involvement aiming to achieve these goals. Finally, he mentioned that Sudan will continue cooperating with human rights mechanisms and seek support from the HRC to investigate and address the militia's crimes and violations.

### Interactive dialogue

Most states and state organizations first offered their condolences to Libya for the recent floods and to Morocco for the earthquake devastation. Most states and state organizations that took the floor expressed their concern over the grave human rights situation in Sudan and called for a ceasefire that ensures a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Most countries also called for ending impunity, guaranteeing accountability, and ensuring unrestricted access to humanitarian aid and humanitarian

workers. They also called upon the international community to increase humanitarian assistance for the country. Most countries also welcomed the regional and international negotiation efforts put in motion to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. Several countries called upon the OHCHR to continue providing technical assistance to Sudan while committing to guarantee its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Some states and states' organizations such as the **EU, Luxembourg, Costa Rica, Canada, Ireland, Netherlands, the UK, France, Ukraine, and Germany** are deeply concerned by the large-scale attacks on civilians based on ethnicity and the rise of sexual violence, particularly in Darfur. They are alarmed by the famine conditions faced by children, attacks against women, and the displaced. They are also concerned by the destruction of vital infrastructure including hospitals and schools. The **United States of America** urged for a civilian-led transition that led to a democracy in Sudan. **Iceland** expressed concern over the recruitment of children in the conflict. **Côte d'Ivoire** stressed the importance of African solutions to African problems and welcomed the efforts of international actors to support a peaceful resolution to the conflict. **Pakistan** urged the international community to enhance its support and assistance program to Sudan. **China, Belarus, Iran, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Russian Federation, Libya, and Oman** emphasized the importance of ensuring Sudanese ownership of the political process and preserving Sudan's state institutions and sovereignty. They stressed the need to obtain the state's consent when expanding the HRC mechanisms. **Oman** commended the diplomatic efforts by the USA and Saudi Arabia to foster peaceful negotiations. **Venezuela and the DPRK** expressed they do not support the mandate as it is the result of politicization. **South Sudan** expressed its support for all mediation efforts leading to a peaceful resolution of the conflict and commended Sudan's cooperation with the OHCHR.

**All NGOs** expressed concern over the dire human rights situation in Sudan. Some NGOs condemned the attacks against civilians by the SAF and the RSF, as well as their allied militias. Other NGOs urged accountability for these violations, including the collection and preservation of evidence, with a particular focus on addressing sexual and gender-based violence. Other NGOs condemned atrocities related to ethnic cleansing in West Darfur, including summary executions, attacks on civilian infrastructure, and the burning of villages. Another NGO expressed its concern for the restoration of an Islamist government in Sudan. Other NGOs are alarmed about the attacks against human rights defenders, women, and children. One NGO expressed its concern for the systematic attacks on non-Arab communities such as the Masalit in West Darfur by the RSF. One NGO called upon the HRC to establish an International Commission of Inquiry to investigate the ongoing human rights violations.

Delegations that took the floor during the Interactive dialogue (56 country delegations):

*Côte d'Ivoire (on behalf of a group of the African Group), European Union, Pakistan (on behalf of the OIC), Libya (on behalf of the Arab Group), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (on behalf of the Sudan Core Group), Iceland (on behalf of the Nordic Baltic countries), Oman (on behalf of the GCC), Egypt, Qatar, Luxembourg, United Arab Emirates, Germany, Bahrain, Italy, Costa Rica, Libya, France, Ukraine, United States of America, Japan, Jordan, Iraq, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Switzerland, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, Ireland, New Zealand, China, Canada, Rumania, Russian Federation, Australia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Morocco, Yemen, Algeria, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Ethiopia, Senegal, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Belgium, Uganda, Zambia, Montenegro, Burundi, Niger, Belarus, Togo, Eritrea, South Sudan, Chad, Tunisia, Iran.*

NHRIs and NGOs that took the floor during the Interactive dialogue (12):

UN Women, UNICEF, East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, International Service for Human Rights, International Federation for Human Rights Leagues, International Bar Association, Human

Rights Information and Training Center, Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience.

To watch the full meeting refer to [UN Web TV](#).