



Sudan – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 21 September 2015

Any incidents demonstrating the attitude of rebel groups eg Janjaweed (also now known as "Armed Militia of Darfur" or the "Rapid Support Forces") towards locals who work for UNAMID/ international NGOs.

An IRIN News report on the situation for humanitarian workers in Darfur states:

“Aid workers have raised serious concerns about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Sudan's troubled Darfur region where, they say, a prevailing climate of impunity has often resulted in humanitarians being killed, injured, abducted or car-jacked. ‘There have been very few successful investigations of criminality against aid agencies, and understandably this has only encouraged greater caution and aversion to risk in the conduct of humanitarian activities,’ Aly Verjee, senior researcher at Rift Valley Institute, told IRIN. As a result, humanitarian space has been affected as organizations do only what is most necessary, for fear that anything more will increase the danger to staff, risk damaging ongoing essential activities and signal to the authorities unwelcome ambitions to do more, Verjee added. The latest incident against aid workers was resolved on 13 April when the African Union-UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and camp leaders successfully mediated the release of 12 Sudanese aid workers who had been taken hostage by a youth group at Kalma camp for the internally displaced in South Darfur.” (IRIN News (18 April 2011) *Sudan: Lack of justice "entrenching impunity" in Darfur*)

The 2014 US Department of State country report for Sudan, in a section headed “Disappearance”, refers to the abduction of NGO workers as follows:

“Gunmen in Darfur abducted humanitarian workers and personnel of the African Union-UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). For example, in three separate incidents on June 18, gunmen abducted 21 NGO workers, one UN staff member, and one contractor in Darfur. All were released by August 1.” (US Department of State (25 June 2015) *2014 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Sudan*, p.3)

A UN News Service report states:

“After close to three months in captivity in Darfur, Sudan, a staff member of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has been released. A logistician based in Nyala, the capital of South Darfur state, Patrick Noonan was abducted by armed men on the morning of 6 March, along with a Sudanese driver who was released later on the same day. ‘All WFP staff are celebrating the release of Patrick, today,’ said WFP's Executive Director, Ertharin Cousin, in a news release. ‘He went to Darfur with the aim of helping vulnerable people and his kidnapping was a great strain on his family, friends

and colleagues. We are thankful for his safe release.' Mr. Noonan, a UK national, had been in Sudan for about two years at the time of his abduction 86 days ago. The situation in Sudan's Darfur region remains volatile and insecurity is an issue that has affected the work of the humanitarian community serving the region. Since 2009, 40 humanitarian workers have been abducted, including Mr. Noonan." (UN News Service (30 May 2012) *Abducted UN aid worker freed after almost three months in captivity in Darfur*)

A Namibia Press Agency report on the death of two aid workers in Darfur states:

"A Sudanese worker for aid group World Vision has died of injuries suffered in a suspected grenade blast during urban fighting in Darfur last week, humanitarian sources said today as fresh battles erupted. A second World Vision staff member was killed during the clashes in Nyala city on Thursday, which officials in South Darfur state blamed on 'differences' between members of the security forces. The fighting in Nyala was sparked by the killing of a notorious local bandit who was also an officer in the paramilitary Central Reserve Police, and the World Vision office was caught up in crossfire between the combatants." (Namibia Press Agency, (NAMPA) (7 July 2013) *A Sudanese worker for aid group World Vision has died of injuries suffered in a suspected grenade blast during urban fighting in Darfur last week*)

An Agence France Presse report on the release of abducted aid workers states:

"Three Sudanese employees of international aid agencies were released on Saturday in the troubled Darfur region after 32 days in captivity, peacekeepers said. 'They appear to be unharmed and in good condition,' the African Union-UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) said in a statement. Mustafa Abdalla Adarge, of the United Nations children's agency UNICEF, was freed along with two staff from the Irish aid group GOAL, Mohamed Abu Elgasseem and Ahmed Elsayed, in North Darfur state's Kutum district, UNAMID said. GOAL had confirmed on June 20 that two of its employees were 'abducted by an unknown group' while driving on a routine assignment near Kutum town." (Agence France Presse (19 July 2014) *Aid workers free after month's captivity in Darfur: UN*)

A UN News Service report states:

"United Nations humanitarian officials in Sudan have strongly condemned an attack carried out against health workers who were returning from a routine mission in West Darfur. On Tuesday, unidentified gunmen ambushed a vehicle about 40 kilometres from Geneina in Kreinik locality which was carrying two health ministry staff and a doctor from the World Health Organization (WHO). The three health workers were unharmed, but the driver and a security official were killed in the attack. The assailants then stole the vehicle and fled the scene. 'Insecurity continues to hamper the operations of courageous humanitarian workers in Darfur, as demonstrated by Tuesday's violent act,' said the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan, Marta Ruedas, as she condemned the attack.' (UN News Service (10 September 2015) *Darfur: UN humanitarian officials deplore fatal attack on health workers*)

While not specifically mentioning NGO workers, a Human Rights Watch report, in a section titled “Applicable Legal Standards”, refers to the activities of the Rapid Support Forces as follows:

“The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and other Sudanese government forces that participated in attacks in Darfur in 2014 and 2015 committed numerous serious abuses including indiscriminate aerial bombing, attacks on civilians, extrajudicial executions, rape and other sexual violence, torture, arbitrary detention and pillage.” (Human Rights Watch (9 September 2015) *“Men With No Mercy”*: *Rapid Support Forces Attacks against Civilians in Darfur, Sudan*, p.75)

This report also contains a letter from Human Rights Watch to the Sudanese authorities regarding Rapid Support Forces abuses in Darfur which states:

“We have documented numerous serious abuses against civilians by alleged members of the Rapid Support Forces during both these periods. The abuses include forced displacement of communities; destruction of the physical infrastructure necessary for the survival of the population, including wells, food stores, shelter, and farming implements; plunder of collective community wealth, mainly livestock; and serious abuses of civilians, including killings, mass rape, and torture.” (ibid, p.85)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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