



Sudan - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Monday 22 July 2019

Information on the current human rights situation

In July 2019 *Reuters* states that:

“Sudan’s ruling military council and an alliance of protest and opposition groups have signed a political accord on a three-year transition towards elections...But progress toward a final deal has been slow and marred by violence, casting doubt on protesters’ hopes for civilian rule and democracy” (Reuters (18 July 2019) *What’s at stake in Sudan’s transition?*, p.1).

This document also points out that:

“In December, protests triggered by an economic crisis swept across Sudan, demanding an end to Omar al-Bashir’s 30-year rule. On April 11 the military toppled and arrested Bashir, announcing the formation of a transitional military council. But protests continued, demanding the transition be civilian-led. The military council and the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) alliance began talks, which soon stalled over the make-up of a sovereign council to steer the transition. At dawn on June 3, security forces - led according to witnesses by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) - moved to clear a sit-in outside the Defense Ministry in Khartoum. Doctors linked to the opposition said 128 people were killed in the raid and ensuing violence. The government has confirmed 61 deaths. Talks collapsed, resuming after several weeks under pressure from African-led mediators and after massive protests on June 30. Agreement on a power-sharing deal was announced on July 5” (ibid, p.1).

BBC News in July 2019 states that:

“Sudan has been in the midst of a political crisis since long-serving ruler Omar al-Bashir’s overthrow in April. The military and pro-democracy movement have been locked in a tussle for power that has led to mass protests and killings” (BBC News (17 July 2019) *Sudan crisis: What you need to know*, p.1).

In July 2019 the *Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect* points out that:

“Since mass demonstrations broke out in December more than 200 people have been killed and thousands arrested” (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (15 July 2019) *Responsibility to Protect (R2P) Monitor, July 2019, Issue 45 [Sudan excerpt]*, p.2).

Human Rights Watch in July 2019 notes that:

“Amid turbulent change in Sudan, the country’s human rights record remains dire. Since December 2018, government security forces have killed hundreds of protesters on the streets, attacked hospitals, arbitrarily arrested and detained, beaten and raped. The ouster of President Omar al-Bashir in April 2019 did not end the violence. The transitional military council, whose deputy commands the abusive Rapid Support Forces, continued to allow security forces to use excessive force against protesters,

killing well over 100 people and injuring hundreds more on June 3 alone. The military council is also blocking the internet, restricting reporting on incidents and coordination among aid agencies” (Human Rights Watch (9 July 2019) *UN Rights Council Shamefully Silent on Sudan: International Investigation Needed*).

A report issued in July 2019 by the *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights* notes that:

“...the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet on Wednesday called on the Sudanese authorities to lift restrictions on the internet and launch proper independent investigations into all acts of violence and allegations of excessive use of force, including attacks on hospitals” (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (3 July 2019) *Bachelet urges Sudan to restore freedoms, investigate violations and move swiftly to civilian rule*, p.1).

Amnesty International in June 2019 states that:

“Since the bloody crackdown earlier this month, there has been an alarming regression on human rights. This includes an ongoing internet shutdown, attacks on the media and the refusal to allow opposition groups to organize public forums, as well as the continued dispersal of peaceful protestors using unnecessary and excessive force. This clampdown clearly points to the return of the repressive days associated with al-Bashir” (Amnesty International (28 June 2019) *Sudan: Authorities must guarantee protestor safety*).

A publication issued in June 2019 by *Human Rights Watch* states that:

“Sudanese protesters were hopeful that the ouster of former president Omar al-Bashir would signal a break from 30 years of abuses. They spent over four months protesting in the streets despite violence by government forces that killed over 100 civilians and subjected many to unfair detentions and ill-treatment” (Human Rights Watch (26 June 2019) *In Sudan, Repression of Protests by Another Name*).

Human Rights Watch in June 2019 states:

“Security officials have also beaten, arbitrarily detained, and deported opposition figures, and national security officials detained activists and journalists and prevented groups from holding events in recent days. The whereabouts of many civilians who are believed to have been detained is still unknown and authorities have shut down the internet, making reporting and information sharing extremely difficult. The June 3 attack followed months of violence against peaceful democracy protests across Sudan. Since anti-government protests started in December 2018, government security forces beat and opened fire on protesters and bystanders and attacked doctors and hospitals, already killing over 100 people by the time al-Bashir stepped down on April 11. Government forces have also attacked protesters elsewhere in the country, including Darfur where the Rapid Support Forces continue to attack civilians, especially in the Jebel Mara area” (Human Rights Watch (24 June 2019) *UN Human Rights Council Should Create Fact-Finding Group for Sudan*).

A publication issued in June 2019 the *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights* states that:

“UN experts said today they were seriously concerned that Sudan was sliding into a “human rights abyss”, urging the Human Rights Council to establish an independent

investigation into violations against peaceful protesters since the start of the year. "Given the scale and seriousness of the reported human rights violations and the need to act quickly to prevent further escalation, we call on the Human Rights Council to establish an independent investigation into the human rights violations in Sudan and to actively monitor developments on the ground," said the experts appointed by the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The UN experts expressed alarm at reports of numerous deaths and injuries since 3 June 2019 as a result of the use of excessive force and violence by State Security Forces, and in particular the Rapid Support Forces, against peaceful demonstrators" (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (12 June 2019) *Sudan: UN human rights experts call for independent investigation into violations*).

In June 2019 *Amnesty International* states that:

"The Sudanese people have been protesting since December 2018 when they took to the streets to express their anger over rising costs of living and the decline of political freedom. Their pressure worked and on 11 April, Sudan's military overthrew the National Congress Party (NCP) government, arresting President Omar al-Bashir and other senior party leaders. But while al-Bashir's 30-year rule has come to an end, the human rights situation in Sudan, which has deteriorated dramatically since the beginning of the protests, continues to worsen. Many of the protesters calling for peace, justice, rule of law and economic reforms have paid the price of change with their lives and liberty. Since 13 May, there have been reports of the Sudanese security forces brutally suppressing the protests by unlawfully killing protesters, beating them in the streets, and unlawfully detaining and subjecting them to torture and other ill-treatment. Security forces have stormed hospitals firing live ammunition and tear gas at patients and medical staff attempting to arrest injured protesters, in an outrageous violation of international law" (Amnesty International (12 June 2019) *UN Human Rights Council Must Convene Special Session On Sudan*, p.1).

This document also states that:

"Since 3 June, the situation has further drastically deteriorated, with media outlets widely reporting attacks on protesters with live ammunition, teargas, whips and sticks by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary officers across Sudan. According to the Central Committee of Medical Doctors, more than 100 people have been killed. The World Health Organization (WHO) Sudan reported that over 700 people were injured. The security forces tried to conceal their acts by dumping dead bodies weighted with bricks in the River Nile, 40 of which are reported to have floated back to the surface, according to the doctors' committee. At the same time, access to the internet has been blocked across Sudan since 3 June. Hundreds of people have been arrested and detained since 3 June.." (ibid, p.1).

In June 2019 the *International Crisis Group* states in a report that:

"On 3 June, Sudan's security forces launched a bloody crackdown on unarmed protesters in Khartoum, clearing a sit-in outside the country's military headquarters and bringing its political transition to a screeching halt. The horrific rampage left dozens dead and many more injured. State-affiliated militias now roam the streets of the capital and other major cities, with residents sheltering at home" (International Crisis Group (7 June 2019) *Sudan: Stopping a Spiral into Civil War*, p.1).

A report published in May 2019 by *Amnesty International* states that:

“But while al-Bashir’s 30-year rule has come to an end, the human rights situation in Sudan, which has deteriorated dramatically since the beginning of the protests, continues to worsen. Many of the protestors calling for peace, justice, rule of law and economic reforms have paid the price of change with their lives and liberty” (Amnesty International (10 May 2019) *Sudan: 10 human rights priorities for the transition*, p.1).

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre 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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