

63rd Session of the Human Rights Council

SUDAN UNDER SCRUTINY, UNCOVERING THE HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS



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September 2026

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I. Executive Summary

On 7 September 2026, the Human Rights Council held an Interactive Dialogue with the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan (FFM Sudan) during its 63rd regular session, concerning the Mission's report entitled "Fuelling Sudan's conflict: weapons, fighters and external support networks" (A/HRC/63/23). The report examines the increasing use of advanced military technology, particularly long-range drones, and the external support sustaining the military capabilities of the parties to the conflict. It finds that these developments have expanded the reach and intensity of military operations, with serious consequences for civilians and civilian infrastructure. The Mission found reasonable grounds to believe that both the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) committed serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law during the course of drone operations, some of which may amount to war crimes. A central concern of the report is the role of external networks in supplying weapons, military technology, logistical assistance, training and foreign personnel. The Mission found reasonable grounds to believe that a transnational network facilitated military operations by the RSF, while its investigation into external support to the SAF remained at an initial stage. The report consequently emphasises the obligations of States and other actors involved in such support to prevent assistance from contributing to violations of international law.

The Interactive Dialogue reflected the broader international concern over the continuing conflict and its impact on civilians, while also highlighting differing perspectives regarding sovereignty, external involvement, accountability and the role of international mechanisms. The discussion further underscored the urgent need to protect civilians and address the factors sustaining the conflict. The Mission called for an end to the fighting, full compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law, stronger enforcement of the arms embargo, preservation of evidence, protection of victims and witnesses, and accountability extending beyond direct perpetrators to those who order, finance, supply or otherwise facilitate international crimes.

Geneva International Centre for Justice (GICJ) calls for an immediate ceasefire, the protection of civilians and unhindered humanitarian access. It further stresses the need to end external support that fuels violations and ensure accountability for all those responsible for international crimes.

II. Background

Sudan has been engulfed in a devastating armed conflict since 15 April 2023, when fighting broke out between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). More than three years later, the conflict continues to cause widespread civilian suffering, particularly in Darfur, Kordofan and Blue Nile. Both parties have been accused of serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, including unlawful killings, attacks against civilians and civilian objects, sexual violence, torture, arbitrary detention, forced displacement and the destruction of essential infrastructure. The scale of the crisis has made Sudan one of the world's most severe humanitarian emergencies.

Millions of Sudanese have been forced from their homes, making Sudan the conflict in Sudan the world's largest displacement crisis.

By mid-2026, approximately 15 million people had been displaced, including around 5 million children. Nearly 19.5 million people were facing acute food insecurity, while several areas remained at risk of famine. The health system has also been severely damaged: attacks on health facilities, shortages of medical supplies and the displacement of health workers have left millions without adequate healthcare. The WHO reported that 37 % of health facilities remained non-functional and had verified hundreds of attacks on healthcare since the beginning of the conflict.

The situation in Darfur has been particularly alarming. The fall of El Fasher to the RSF in October 2025 followed an extended siege and was accompanied by widespread killings, sexual violence, torture, forced displacement and other grave abuses.

A UN investigation documented more than 6,000 killings during the first three days of the final offensive, concluding that the violations included acts that may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

These developments have reinforced concerns over ethnically targeted violence and the risk of further atrocity crimes in Darfur.

The conflict has also had a devastating impact on women and children. Women and girls face heightened risks of rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence, while children have been exposed to killings, displacement, malnutrition, disease, interrupted education and other grave protection risks.

The international community has responded through several accountability mechanisms. The International Criminal Court, following the UN Security Council's 2005 referral of the Darfur situation, continues to investigate Rome Statute crimes in Darfur. Following the outbreak of the current war, the Human Rights Council established the Independent International Fact-Finding

Mission for Sudan in October 2023 to investigate violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law and to establish the facts and circumstances surrounding them.

The Mission's mandate has subsequently been renewed, reflecting the continuing gravity of the situation. The Security Council has also maintained the Darfur arms embargo and sanctions regime, while international and regional efforts have continued to seek a political resolution and greater protection for civilians.

Against this deteriorating situation, the 63rd session of the Human Rights Council provided an important opportunity to examine the continuing violations and the factors sustaining the conflict. The FFM's report, '*Fuelling Sudan's conflict: weapons, fighters and external support networks*' (A/HRC/63/23), places particular emphasis on the increasing use of long-range drones and the external supply of weapons, military equipment, logistical assistance, training and personnel. These developments have further intensified the risks faced by civilians and raise important questions concerning international humanitarian law, arms transfers, state responsibility, civilian protection and accountability.

III. Summary of Expert Report

Mr. Mohamed Chande Othman, speaking on behalf of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan, presented the Mission's report *Fuelling Sudan's Conflict: Weapons, Fighters and External Support Networks*. He highlighted two closely connected findings: the growing use of advanced weapons technology, particularly long-range drones, which has expanded the battlefield far beyond traditional front lines, and the role of external support in sustaining the military capabilities of both parties through weapons, technology, logistics, training and personnel. Othman stressed that the increasing use of drones by both the SAF and RSF had devastating consequences for civilians, with attacks reaching homes, schools, hospitals, markets, displacement sites and other places of refuge. He emphasised that the impact of these attacks extends beyond civilian casualties, as the destruction of essential infrastructure and services has severely disrupted daily life. He referred to several incidents, including attacks affecting electricity, fuel, water and healthcare infrastructure in and around El Obeid, successive drone strikes on a kindergarten and hospital in Kalogi, South Kordofan, which killed 114 people including 60 children, and an SAF strike on the Ad-Daein teaching Hospital, which killed at least 70 people and rendered the hospital non-functional. Additionally, he highlighted attacks on civilian infrastructure in Blue Nile State. The Mission further emphasised the disproportionate impact of the conflict on women and children, noting that attacks on healthcare facilities, schools and other civilian infrastructure deepen existing vulnerabilities and affect their long-term wellbeing. Based on its investigations, the Mission found reasonable grounds to believe that both the SAF and RSF had committed serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, some of which may amount to war crimes. Regarding external support, Othman stated that the Mission also determined that a transnational network involving individuals and entities in the United Arab Emirates, Chad, southeastern Libya and Puntland, Somalia, facilitated RSF military operations through weapons, drone-related equipment, logistics and personnel. He also referred to foreign fighters and former Colombian military personnel recruited and deployed in support of the RSF. The Mission's investigation into external support to the SAF remained at an initial stage and would be further developed. Othman stressed that States have a responsibility not only to refrain from contributing to violations but also to take reasonable measures where there is a clear and foreseeable risk that their support could facilitate violations. He also expressed concern over the increasingly difficult environment for documentation and accountability, particularly the intimidation and harassment faced by survivors, witnesses, journalists, lawyers and human rights defenders, including those cooperating with the Mission. When concluding his intervention, Othman called for an immediate end to the war, full compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law, measures to prevent military support from contributing to violations, enforcement and expansion of the arms embargo, preservation of evidence, protection and assistance for victims and

witnesses, and effective remedies and reparations. He emphasised that accountability should extend across the full chain of responsibility, including those who commit, order, finance, supply or otherwise facilitate international crimes.

IV. Exhaustive Summary of the Enhanced Interactive Dialogue

1. Statement on behalf of the Concerned Country, the Republic of the Sudan



The representative of the Republic of Sudan reaffirmed the Government's position regarding the establishment of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission and referred to the work of Sudan's National Commission of Inquiry on Violations of International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law. She stated that the Commission had issued its fifth report and was actively pursuing justice and accountability for victims of violations committed since the outbreak of the conflict. Sudan characterised the conflict as a proxy war, arguing that external support to the RSF, particularly from the United Arab Emirates, was a principal factor sustaining and expanding the conflict. The representative welcomed the identification of external sponsors in the Mission's findings and called for immediate measures to end such support, particularly the alleged supply of arms, which Sudan argued was contributing to continued violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. The representative also emphasised the importance of a Sudanese-led dialogue as the preferred path towards resolving the conflict. She

stated that Sudanese authorities, with support from the African Union and League of Arab States, were advocating for dialogue in a free and transparent environment and stressed the importance of maintaining the necessary conditions for such a process.

Regarding accountability, Sudan highlighted the activities of its National Commission, stating that it had received and investigated numerous complaints concerning serious violations, including rape, enforced disappearance, assassination, murder, mutilation and injury. The representative stressed that members of the Sudanese Armed Forces were not immune from investigation and that cases involving alleged violations by the armed forces were being followed up. She also referred to a recent court ruling concerning the killing of the Governor of West Darfur as an example of national judicial proceedings.

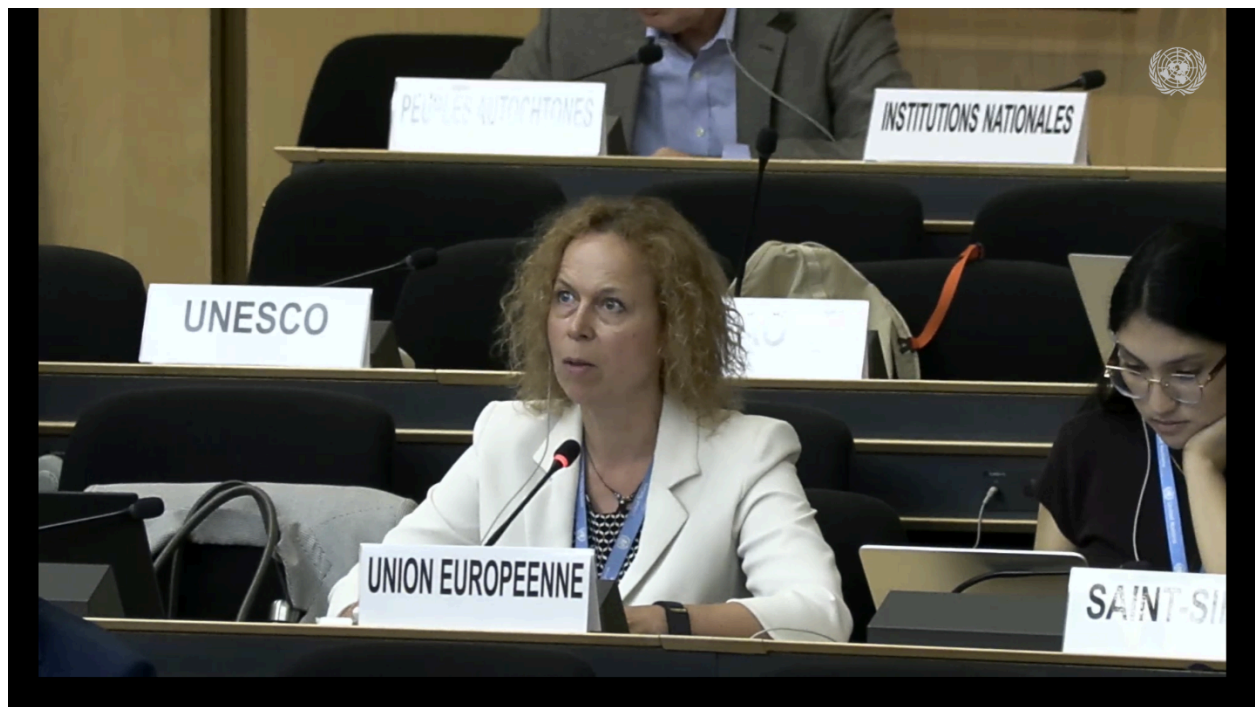
The representative concluded by emphasising Sudan's ongoing efforts to collect evidence, protect victims and witnesses, and pursue accountability through national institutions. Sudan called on the Human Rights Council and relevant UN mechanisms to adopt a complementary approach that supports rather than replaces Sudan's national judicial processes.

2. The Kingdom of Sweden, on behalf of the Nordic and Baltic countries



The Kingdom of Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic and Baltic countries, welcomed the FFM's report and emphasised the importance of renewing its mandate and ensuring its access to Sudan. It expressed grave concern over attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, markets and displacement sites, as well as reports of arbitrary detention, torture, starvation and widespread sexual and gender-based violence. The group called for an immediate end to external financing and military support sustaining the conflict, a sustained ceasefire, protection of civilians and humanitarian workers, and safe and unhindered humanitarian access. It also stressed that sustainable peace requires accountability and asked the Mission what measures could be taken to end sexual and gender-based violence as a method of warfare and ensure accountability.

3. The European Union



The European Union (EU) welcomed the FFM's findings concerning serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law by both the SAF and RSF, with particular concern over conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence. It condemned attacks against civilians, humanitarian personnel and critical infrastructure, including the increasing use of deadly drones. The EU called for unhindered humanitarian access, an end to external support fuelling the conflict, and meaningful engagement in efforts towards a peaceful resolution. It reiterated its support for extending the arms embargo to the whole of Sudan, expanding the ICC's mandate, and renewing the FFM's mandate to strengthen accountability and combat impunity.

4. The United Kingdom, on behalf of the Coalition for Atrocity Prevention and Justice for Sudan



The United Kingdom, speaking on behalf of the Coalition for Atrocity Prevention and Justice for Sudan, welcomed the FFM’s findings and its documentation of atrocities, conflict-related sexual violence and other serious violations. It expressed particular alarm over the escalating use of drones against civilians and infrastructure essential to civilian survival. The Coalition called on all parties to comply with international law, protect civilians and humanitarian personnel, facilitate humanitarian access, and allow the safe and voluntary movement of civilians. It further called for an end to illegal weapons flows and external support to the warring parties, respect for sanctions obligations and stronger accountability, while reaffirming its support for the Mission’s continued work.

5. The Arab Republic of Egypt



The Arab Republic of Egypt expressed concern over the deterioration of the human rights situation and the violations suffered by civilians, particularly those attributed to the RSF. It stressed that the Sudanese State and its national institutions should not be placed on an equal footing with an insurgent militia. Egypt emphasised the importance of preserving Sudan's unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity and State institutions, while condemning foreign intervention. It called for intensified regional and international efforts to end the conflict, ensure sustainable humanitarian access and protect civilians, and achieve a comprehensive political settlement.

6. The Republic of Ireland



The Republic of Ireland aligned itself with the statements of the European Union and the Coalition for Atrocity Prevention and Justice for Sudan and expressed alarm at the continuing violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. It condemned the escalating use of drone strikes against civilians, humanitarian personnel and critical infrastructure and called on all parties to comply with their international obligations. Ireland expressed particular concern over widespread and systematic conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls and called for an end to impunity. Ireland also urged States and external actors to cease arming, financing and enabling the conflict and supported the renewal of the FFM's mandate. Ireland asked what immediate and concrete measures could strengthen accountability for drone strikes that may amount to war crimes.

7. The State of Qatar



The State of Qatar reaffirmed its support for Sudan's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity and expressed concern over the deteriorating situation. It welcomed regional and international efforts to end the conflict and stressed the importance of a broad, Sudanese-owned political dialogue. Qatar condemned violations committed during the conflict and emphasised the obligation to respect international humanitarian law, particularly the prohibition against targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure. It also called for an end to foreign interference and referred to its humanitarian assistance to the Sudanese population.

8. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan



Jordan expressed concern over the deteriorating humanitarian situation, prolonged displacement and increasing humanitarian needs. It stressed the importance of respecting international humanitarian and human rights law and protecting civilians and civilian infrastructure, particularly hospitals, schools and markets. Jordan called for continued efforts to de-escalate tensions and promote dialogue aimed at restoring peace and stability. It reaffirmed the importance of Sudan's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity and supported a political solution that preserves State institutions and addresses the aspirations of the Sudanese people.

9. The Republic of Iraq



The Republic of Iraq welcomed the FFM's report while emphasising its respect for Sudan's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. It rejected actions that could undermine Sudan's security and stability and called for an immediate end to violations against civilians and unhindered humanitarian assistance. Iraq supported dialogue as the principal means of resolving the conflict and opposed violence that could obstruct a peaceful national dialogue.

10. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reaffirmed its support for Sudan and stressed that its priority was restoring stability and ending the suffering of the Sudanese population while preserving State institutions, unity and territorial integrity. It emphasised that the crisis requires a Sudanese-led political process responding to the aspirations of the Sudanese people. Saudi Arabia referred to the Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of Sudan, signed in 2023, and its calls for civilian protection and unhindered humanitarian access. It also highlighted its humanitarian assistance to Sudan and reaffirmed its support for continued political dialogue.

11. The United Arab Emirates



The United Arab Emirates (UAE) responded to the allegations made by other states by underscoring the importance of UN-mandated investigative mechanisms in addressing serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. It stated that it had engaged constructively with the FFM, including through meetings with its members and responses to requests for information. The UAE categorically denied any involvement in the conflict or the provision of arms or related material to any party since the outbreak of the conflict in April 2023, rejecting allegations of wrongdoing.

The UAE emphasised that its national legal framework allows perpetrators, including foreign contractors, to be held accountable for unlawful conduct and expressed its willingness to maintain dialogue with the FFM. It stressed that assessments concerning the conflict should be based on objective, impartial and robust evidence.

The UAE also stated that it was among the first countries to call for the extension of the arms embargo to the entire territory of Sudan. It reiterated its call for an end to all external military support to the warring parties, condemned violations of international law by both the SAF and RSF, and called for an urgent humanitarian truce, an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, and a comprehensive civilian-led political process independent of both warring parties and affiliated extremist groups.

V. Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organisations



Civil Society Organisations expressed grave concern over the continued deterioration of the human rights and humanitarian situation in Sudan, highlighting attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, markets and displacement camps, as well as killings, torture, arbitrary detention, forced displacement and widespread conflict-related sexual violence. They stressed that violations committed by the warring parties have been compounded by external military, financial and logistical support, including the transfer of weapons, drones and foreign personnel, which has contributed to prolonging the conflict.

The Organisations called for stronger enforcement and expansion of the arms embargo, an end to external support that risks facilitating violations, and greater international pressure on all actors involved. They further emphasised the need to strengthen accountability by investigating not only those directly committing violations but also individuals, companies and networks involved in financing, supplying or facilitating the conflict. They called for the renewal and adequate resourcing of the Fact-Finding Mission, enhanced cooperation with African and international accountability mechanisms, preservation of evidence, and effective protection of victims, survivors and witnesses. They also urged the international community to prioritise civilian protection, ensure safe and unhindered humanitarian access, support displaced populations and pursue a sustainable, civilian-led peace process.

VI. Concluding Remarks of the Fact-Finding Mission



In its concluding remarks, the Fact-Finding Mission thanked delegations for their support and highlighted the protection of civilians and accountability as imperative priorities, including within peace negotiations. It stressed that the conflict has extended far beyond traditional front lines, with the increasing use of drones and external weapons, technology, financing and personnel exposing civilians and essential infrastructure including hospitals, schools, markets, water points and displacement sites to attacks.

The Mission emphasised that external support is not a peripheral issue but a factor sustaining military operations and expanding the capabilities of the parties, thereby increasing risks to civilians. It called on States and other actors providing such support to exercise due diligence, prevent their assistance from contributing to violations or international crimes, investigate illicit activities within their jurisdictions and use diplomatic and economic influence to ensure compliance with international law. In this context, it reiterated its call for strict enforcement of the Darfur arms embargo and its extension to the whole of Sudan.

The Mission further highlighted the disproportionate impact of the conflict on women and children, particularly through conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence and attacks that deprive civilians of access to healthcare, water, food and livelihoods. It stressed the need to investigate these violations, protect survivors, victims and witnesses from intimidation and reprisals, and preserve evidence for future accountability.

Finally, the Mission called for stronger international accountability, including support for the ICC and ICJ and the exercise of jurisdiction to prosecute perpetrators wherever they are found. It also supported the establishment of a Sudan-specific tribunal in cooperation with the ICC, as well as confidence-building measures and mediation efforts. The Mission reiterated that there is no military solution to the conflict and that a sustainable peace requires addressing the external support mechanisms that fuel the war while ensuring accountability for international crimes.

VII. Geneva International Centre for Justice (GICJ) Position

Geneva International Centre for Justice (GICJ) expresses grave concern over the continued deterioration of the human rights and humanitarian situation in Sudan and strongly condemns violations of international humanitarian and human rights law committed against civilians. The increasing use of drones and other advanced weaponry, together with attacks on hospitals, schools, markets and displacement sites, demonstrates the urgent need to strengthen civilian protection and prevent further harm.

GICJ is particularly concerned by the role of external actors in supplying weapons, financing, technology and personnel that contribute to sustaining and intensifying the conflict. States and other actors must comply with their international obligations and refrain from providing assistance where there is a foreseeable risk that it could facilitate serious violations or international crimes. The arms embargo must be strictly enforced and extended to the whole of Sudan.

GICJ further stresses that accountability must remain central to any peace process. All perpetrators, as well as those who finance, supply or otherwise facilitate international crimes, must be held accountable regardless of their position or affiliation.

GICJ supports the continued work and adequate resourcing of the Fact-Finding Mission, the preservation of evidence, and effective protection for victims, survivors and witnesses from intimidation and reprisals. **GICJ** calls for an immediate and sustainable cessation of hostilities, unhindered humanitarian access and a genuinely inclusive, civilian-led peace process. There can be no sustainable peace without justice and accountability, and the international community must ensure that civilian lives are protected and that grave violations in Sudan do not become normalised.

