

**ALERT**



# SUDAN

“We keep saying that the situation is horrific and grim. But, frankly, we are running out of words to describe the horror of what is happening in Sudan. What is happening is verging on pure evil.”

—Clementine Nkweta-Salami,  
UN Deputy Special Representative  
and Humanitarian Coordinator, Sudan

**CIVILIANS IN SUDAN, A COUNTRY THAT EXPERIENCED A GENOCIDE** two decades ago, are now at risk of genocide again. In 2003–2005, the Sudanese army and allied “Janjaweed” Arab militias committed what the US government determined was a genocide in Sudan’s Darfur region, killing over 200,000 people and displacing more than two million. The victims were primarily from the non-Arab Fur, Zaghawa, and Masalit communities. **Today, these same communities are being targeted on the basis of their identity and again face the risk of genocide.**

In April 2023, fighting broke out in Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and a powerful paramilitary group that evolved from the Janjaweed, known as the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). These groups had previously joined forces in 2019, following widespread protests in which the Sudanese people called for a transition to democracy, to oust President Omar al-Bashir, who is alleged by the International Criminal Court to have committed genocide. However, in 2021, the SAF and RSF overthrew the transitional government that had replaced al-Bashir and installed their own leaders. In April 2023 disagreements between the SAF and RSF leadership exploded into open warfare between their forces. The conflict quickly spread across Sudan as both sides sought to control more territory and mobilize new allies and recruits.

Since April 2023 the war has spread across most of Sudan, particularly affecting Sudan’s capital, Khartoum, and the nearby city of Omdurman, as well as the regions of Darfur and Kordofan, and Gezira state. More than 15,000 people have been killed, and over eight million have been displaced. In the Darfur region, the RSF and allied militias have revived a campaign of brutal violence against non-Arab ethnic communities, committing mass killings, rape, and the murder of tribal leaders. The SAF has carried out indiscriminate aerial bombings. The United Nations (UN) Special Advisor

on the Prevention of Genocide has warned that the risk of another genocide in Darfur is high. In December 2023, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken determined that war crimes had been committed by the SAF and RSF, and that crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing had been committed by the RSF and allied militias in Darfur.

Multiple mediation processes have been initiated to halt the fighting, with little sign of a breakthrough. Aid organizations struggle to access vulnerable communities, and the humanitarian needs for Sudan remain underfunded. The UN warns of a high risk of famine, and 70 percent of hospitals in conflict-affected Sudanese states are nonfunctional.

The Museum's **Simon-Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide** is deeply concerned about reports of mass atrocities. The US and other concerned countries should:

- Urgently prioritize atrocity prevention, including high-level diplomatic pressure and targeted sanctions to deter belligerents from committing mass atrocities and arms embargoes to degrade their capacity to commit crimes.
- Protect vulnerable civilian populations by increasing funding for humanitarian needs and ensuring financial support for Sudanese civil society.
- Support justice and accountability by ensuring adequate funding and access for justice mechanisms, as well as training and funding for local documentation efforts.
- Facilitate inclusive civilian leadership in all mediation and political processes, including the full, equal, and meaningful participation of traditionally marginalized groups, such as youth, women, and survivors of atrocity crimes, in shaping Sudan's future.

#### **YOUR VOICE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

Learn more at [ushmm.org/sudan](https://ushmm.org/sudan)

Previous page: Sudanese women, who fled the conflict in Murnei in Sudan's Darfur region, wait beside their belongings to be registered by UN High Commissioner for Refugees upon crossing the border between Sudan and Chad, in Adre, Chad, July 26, 2023. *REUTERS/Zobra Bensemra*



**WHAT YOU DO MATTERS.** We can all play a role in helping prevent genocide and related crimes against humanity. Action takes many forms, and every action counts. You can:

**Stay informed.** Follow the news; visit our website to learn more about communities at risk, [ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries](https://ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries).

**Join the Museum community.** Sign up to receive email updates and follow us on Facebook @CenterForThePreventionOfGenocide and X (Twitter) @CPG\_USHMM.

**Engage with your community.** Spread the word about what you've learned with friends, family, and colleagues.

**Support education and relief efforts.** Find out more about organizations that help, what they are doing in response to mass atrocities, and how you can assist.

**Contact the media.** Tell television, radio, newspaper, and online journalists that you want better coverage of places at risk of genocide and other mass atrocities; visit their websites, tag them on social media, call them, and send emails that provide feedback on their coverage.

**Contact your elected representatives.** Alert them to the need to protect civilians, stop the violence, provide humanitarian assistance if needed, and promote solutions to crises.

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