**Committee: Security Council**

**Topic: The Question of the Sudan Conflict**

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**Summary**

Sudan’s civil war between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has plunged the nation into a catastrophic humanitarian and political crisis. Beginning in April 2023, the conflict has killed over 61,000 people and displaced over 11.5 million, making it the largest displacement crisis globally. While international mediation efforts have been frequent, no progress has been made toward a ceasefire, with both sides consistently violating agreements. Humanitarian access is severely restricted, famine looms, and ethnic violence in regions like Darfur has drawn accusations of war crimes. The situation poses significant risks of regional destabilisation.

**Definition of Key Terms**

SAF (Sudanese Armed Forces) - The national military of Sudan, led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

RSF (Rapid Support Forces) - A paramilitary force originating from the Janjaweed militias, led by Mohamed Hamdan “Hemedti” Dagalo, responsible for significant violence in Darfur.

Darfur - A region in western Sudan that has been a focal point of ethnic violence and humanitarian crises since the early 2000s

IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development - An East African trade bloc comprising eight member states, including some of Sudan's neighbours such as Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda

**Background Information**

Sudan’s civil war erupted on April 15, 2023, in the capital, Khartoum, marking the culmination of a long-simmering power struggle between two factions of the military regime. On one side stands the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the country’s de facto ruler. Opposing them are the paramilitary forces of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), commanded by former warlord General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, known as Hemedti.

The RSF traces its origins to the Janjaweed militia, a group infamous for perpetrating atrocities during the Darfur conflict over two decades ago. Then-President Omar al-Bashir initially formed the Janjaweed to suppress rebellions in Darfur, a region suffering from the political and economic marginalisation of its largely non-Arab population. Over time, the militia gained notoriety for mass killings, sexual violence, and other war crimes. By 2013, Bashir formalised the Janjaweed into the RSF, granting its leaders military ranks and deploying the force against fresh uprisings in South Darfur.

In 2019, the RSF and SAF cooperated to overthrow Bashir amid widespread protests demanding democracy. However, tensions between the two forces escalated as disagreements over a transition to civilian-led governance emerged. Analysts predicted a violent confrontation was inevitable, with the power struggle between Burhan and Hemedti reaching a boiling point in 2023.

The conflict has plunged Sudan into what the UN describes as one of the worst humanitarian crises in recent history. According to the BBC, over 61,000 people have been killed, and according to the UNHCR, 11.5 million have been forced to flee their homes, including nearly 3 million fleeing to neighbouring countries such as Chad and South Sudan. This displacement represents the largest ongoing refugee crisis globally, with underfunded humanitarian agencies struggling to meet basic needs. Famine conditions have already been declared in some areas, such as the Zamzam displacement camp in Darfur.

**Major Countries and Organisations Involved**

Sudan – The central conflict is between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti), resulting in a severe humanitarian crisis.

Russia – Russia has supported both factions with arms and mercenaries in the past, notably through the Wagner Group. Moscow's interest lies in securing resources and increasing its geopolitical influence in Africa, countering Western influence.

United States – The US has condemned human rights abuses, imposed sanctions, and provided humanitarian aid to refugees while pushing for peace talks, but with limited success.

United Nations – The UN has been providing humanitarian aid to refugees and monitoring human rights abuses but has struggled to secure a ceasefire or a lasting solution.

Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan - Neighboring countries hosting millions of Sudanese refugees. These nations face significant strain on their resources and risk further destabilisation

**Timeline of Events**

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| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Description** |

**2003** – The Darfur conflict begins as rebel groups in Darfur demand an end to political and economic marginalisation. The Sudanese government responds by arming the Janjaweed militia, which later evolves into the RSF.

**2005** – The Sudanese Comprehensive Peace Agreement ends the Second Sudanese Civil War, but violence in Darfur continues, with widespread human rights violations.

**2009** – The International Criminal Court (ICC) issues a warrant for President Bashir, accusing him of war crimes and genocide in Darfur.

**2011** - South Sudan secedes following decades of civil war.

**2013** – Bashir formalises the RSF as a paramilitary group, giving them military ranks and deploying them to crush rebellions, particularly in South Darfur.

**2019** –

* **April:** Massive protests oust President Bashir, and the SAF and RSF collaborate in his removal, leading to a power-sharing agreement between the military and civilian factions.
* **June:** The RSF is implicated in a massacre in Khartoum, killing over 100 protesters, leading to widespread violence.

**2021** – General Burhan and Hemedti orchestrate a coup, dissolving the civilian-led transitional government and reigniting protests.

**2022** – Tensions between Burhan and Hemedti increase, as both compete for power while Sudan’s transition to democracy falters.

**2023** –

* **April 15:** Fighting erupts in Khartoum between the SAF and RSF, escalating into full-scale civil war.
* **May:** International ceasefire talks in Jeddah fail to stop the violence as both sides break agreements.
* **June:** The RSF attacks central Sudan, with reports of ethnic violence in Darfur and mass casualties.
* **July:** The UN reports over 3 million displaced persons and famine conditions in Darfur.
* **August:** Attacks intensify in Darfur, and El Fasher, the last major city outside RSF control, is besieged.
* **October:** The RSF and SAF continue to fight, with no resolution in sight, while humanitarian conditions worsen.

**2024** –

* **January:** The UN reports war crimes by both sides and the escalation of atrocities in Darfur, marking the continuation of the humanitarian crisis.

**Relevant UN Treaties and Events**

UNSCR 1564 (2004): Addressed the Darfur crisis, calling for action against war crimes, and ‘imposed an arms embargo with immediate effect on all non-governmental entities and individuals, including the Janjaweed, operating in the states of North Darfur, South Darfur and West Darfur, Sudan’, as described by the UN security council.

UN Humanitarian Appeals (2023-2024): Raised funds for Sudan but were impeded by security issues preventing aid delivery.

UNHRC Sessions (2023-2024): Highlighted ethnic violence and potential war crimes in Sudan, particularly in Darfur.

**Previous Attempts to solve the Issue**

Peace Talks in Jeddah - Negotiations facilitated by Saudi Arabia and the U.S. have resulted in temporary ceasefires, but these have consistently been violated.

Sanctions - The U.S. and EU have imposed sanctions targeting SAF and RSF leaders and their financial networks, though their impact remains limited.

Humanitarian Aid Appeals - International organisations have sought to address the immediate crisis, but restricted access and ongoing violence hamper efforts.

Regional Diplomacy - Neighboring countries and organisations like IGAD have attempted to mediate peace, but competing interests among stakeholders hinder consensus.

**Possible Solutions**

Strengthened Mediation Efforts - Regional organizations and global powers must unite to broker a durable ceasefire, ensuring that enforcement mechanisms are robust and violations carry consequences.

Humanitarian Corridors - Establishing safe zones for aid delivery is crucial to prevent famine and reduce civilian suffering.

Targeted Sanctions - Expanding sanctions on key SAF and RSF financial and military networks could pressure the factions to negotiate.

Accountability Measures - Establishing international investigations into war crimes and sanctions against perpetrators could deter further violence.

Regional Stabilisation Initiatives - Neighbouring countries must receive support to manage refugee flows and prevent the conflict from spilling across borders.

**Bibliography & further reading**

[S/RES/1556 (2004) | Security Council](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/s/res/1556-%282004%29)

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