The situation in Sudan

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), meeting on the occasion of its 42nd Congress in Bogotá, Colombia,

Alarmed by the ongoing armed conflict that broke out on 15 April 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), building on a legacy of structural human rights violations and decades of impunity in Sudan;

Deeply concerned by the scale and severity of the conflict's humanitarian consequences, including what UN agencies—UNHCR, WFP, and OCHA—as of July 2025, described as the world's largest displacement and hunger crisis—with more than 12.8 million people internally displaced, over 3 million having fled to neighboring countries, and over half the population facing crisis levels of hunger;

Recognising the destabilising regional impact, especially in Chad, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Egypt, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, which face the dual pressures of refugee inflows and conflict spillover;

Strongly condemning the grave violations committed by both the RSF and SAF across Sudan, including in central Sudan, where FIDH's member organization SHRM documented serious abuses targeting rural populations. These include extrajudicial killings and massacres, mass displacement, looting and destruction of property and crops, arbitrary detention, torture, enforced disappearances, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and ethnically targeted and retaliatory violence.

Further alarmed by the findings of the most recent joint Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) by FIDH and ACJPS to Eastern Chad in August 2024, which documented the widespread and systematic use of SGBV as a weapon of war by the RSF, SAF, and allied militias, both inside Sudan and across the border in refugee camps;

Condemning, in light of these findings, the weaponisation of women's bodies as a strategy of ethnic persecution and forced displacement, particularly targeting Masalit women and girls;

Gravely concerned that SGBV persists in refugee camps in Chad, where women and girls—already fleeing atrocities—continue to face severe risks including sexual violence, forced marriages, trafficking, and lack of access to basic services, with perpetrators often living side-by-side with survivors under conditions of impunity and fear;

Highlighting the additional threat posed by active surveillance and intelligence-gathering reportedly conducted by RSF operatives within refugee camps using technologies such as Starlink, creating an environment of constant fear for SGBV survivors and Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs);

Applauding the critical and courageous work of WHRDs operating in refugee camps in Chad and beyond, who, despite these constraints, provide frontline psychosocial and documentation support to survivors of SGBV, and **urging** the international community to provide them with direct funding, legal recognition, and protection as community-based human rights actors;

Acknowledging the mounting body of evidence gathered by civil society actors and international bodies indicating that many of these acts may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and potentially genocide;

Reiterating that the recurrence of atrocity crimes in Sudan, including the continuation of abuses that originated in Darfur, is a direct consequence of the global community's collective failure to ensure accountability for past crimes;

Noting that national justice mechanisms remain paralysed by armed conflict, political instability, lack of judicial independence, and legal immunities granted to security forces under laws such as the 2007 Armed Forces Act, 2008 Police Act, and 2010 National Security Act;

Recognising that accountability efforts must be holistic, including not only criminal prosecutions but also truth-seeking, reparations, and institutional reform, and that these efforts must centre on the experiences and rights of victims and survivors;

Further recognising the role of community-based reconciliation initiatives such as **Judiyya**, while noting that they must be reformed and closely monitored to ensure they do not replace or undermine formal justice processes, especially when addressing SGBV;

Welcoming the announcement by the International Criminal Court (ICC) of expanded investigations into crimes committed since April 2023, and urging that such efforts be matched by victim engagement, transparency, and community outreach;

Affirming the potential role of the African Union, particularly its Peace and Security Council (PSC), which is mandated to respond to grave circumstances such as war crimes and crimes against humanity, including through the deployment of peace support operations with a civilian protection mandate, though its capacity in this regard remains underutilized; **further recognizing** the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), particularly its Joint FFM established under Resolution ACHPR/Res.590 (LXXX) 2024 to investigate violations in Sudan, as a vital mechanism for documentation and accountability; and **encouraging** the ratification of the Malabo Protocol to grant the African Court of Justice and Human and Peoples' Rights (ACJHR) jurisdiction over international crimes, thereby strengthening the continental justice framework;

Emphasizing the importance of sustained, independent international investigations into human rights violations in Sudan, including through full support and resourcing for the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission (UN FFM) on Sudan should its mandate be renewed, and urging that any future mechanisms ensure unfettered access, continuity of documentation efforts, and integration of evidence gathered by local civil society actors;

Condemning the role of external actors—including, in particular, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as the primary supplier of weapons, political, and diplomatic support to the RSF, as well as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Algeria, Russia, and Turkey for reportedly providing arms or military assistance to the SAF—in fueling the conflict in violation of the UN arms embargo and international law, as established under UNSC Resolutions 1556 (2004), 1591 (2005), and 1945 (2010), and reaffirmed through subsequent renewals including the 2025 extension of the Panel of Experts' mandate; **further noting** the failure of certain European manufacturers to prevent the diversion of exported military equipment to conflict actors via third-party states; and **calling** for targeted international sanctions and accountability measures against states, entities, and individuals involved in supplying or facilitating arms transfers in contravention of international law.

FIDH:

- Calls on all parties to the conflict in Sudan to:
    i. Immediately cease hostilities and abide by international humanitarian and human rights law;
    ii. End all attacks on civilians, civilian infrastructure, humanitarian workers, and medical personnel;
    iii. Allow safe, unhindered, and sustained humanitarian access to all affected regions;
    iv. Cease the use of starvation, forced displacement, and sexual violence as methods of warfare;
    v. Take active steps to restore civilian rule and create conditions necessary for justice and accountability.

- Urges the de facto authorities and all relevant Sudanese institutions to:
    i. Restore judicial independence and reform domestic legal frameworks by repealing immunity provisions in the Armed Forces Act, Police Act, and National Security Act, and removing other legal barriers to prosecuting international crimes;
    ii. Ratify the Rome Statute, the Malabo Protocol, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and align Sudanese legislation with international definitions of war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and the crime of aggression;
    iii. Facilitate full cooperation with the ICC, including executing existing arrest warrants and granting unimpeded access to ICC investigators;
    iv. Similarly, grant unimpeded access to the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan established under UN Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/RES/54/2 (2023), and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) Joint Fact-Finding Mission mandated by ACHPR Resolutions ACHPR/Res.590 (LXXX) 2024 and ACHPR/Res.635 (LXXXIII) 2025;
    v. Ensure victims' right to reparation by introducing enforceable legal provisions for compensation, rehabilitation, and other forms of redress into the national legal framework;
    vi. Recognise and support traditional mechanisms such as *Judiyya* as complementary to formal processes, provided they are reformed to address serious crimes and uphold survivors' rights;
    vii. Ensure full protection of civil society organisations, human rights defenders, journalists, and victims participating in accountability efforts;
    viii. Take immediate steps to prevent, investigate, and prosecute acts of SGBV, both inside Sudan and in displacement settings, including by establishing survivor-centered mechanisms, deploying female-led protection teams, ensuring access to post-rape care and psychosocial services, protecting witnesses from retaliation, and ensuring the fundamental rights of children born as a result of rape, including their right to a birth certificate, identity documentation, healthcare, and education.
- Calls upon the African Union and regional bodies (PSC, ACHPR, IGAD):
    i. Mandate and deploy an AU-led peacekeeping force with a robust civilian protection mandate, particularly in high-risk areas such as Darfur and border regions;
    ii. Take a more proactive role in addressing justice and accountability in Sudan, including integrating accountability into peace negotiations and supporting AU-led mediation efforts;
    iii. Facilitate full cooperation with the ICC, including by encouraging AU member states to execute outstanding arrest warrants and uphold their obligations under international law;
    iv. Support, if deemed appropriate, the establishment of a hybrid or special tribunal comprising Sudanese and international judges to prosecute atrocity crimes;
    v. Engage with civil society actors and WHRDs in refugee-hosting countries, including Chad, and ensure their protection, recognition, and inclusion in regional justice and peace processes;
    vi. Ensure adequate resources and political will to support the deployment of the ACHPR Sudan Fact-Finding Mission (FFM), and cooperate with relevant UN mechanisms.

- Calls upon the United Nations, in particular the Security Council and Human Rights Council, to:
    i. Renew and strengthen the mandate of the UN Sudan Fact-Finding Mission;
    ii. Work with regional actors to establish a civilian protection mission in Sudan, particularly in Darfur;
    iii. Impose a comprehensive arms embargo covering all of Sudan and enforce targeted sanctions against perpetrators of atrocity crimes and those enabling the conflict through financial or logistical support;
    iv. Ensure coordination between the UN Sudan FFM, ACHPR Sudan FFM, and the ICC to avoid duplication and maximise impact;
    v. Provide political, technical and material support for a hybrid or special court for Sudan if such a process is initiated.
- Calls upon the International Criminal Court (ICC) to:
    i. Strengthen its prosecutorial strategy by recognising the nexus and continuity between the crimes committed in Darfur and those in the broader conflict;
    ii. Increase outreach and engagement with Sudanese victims and civil society, including awareness campaigns to inform affected communities of their rights and the Court's work;
    iii. Collaborate with regional and national accountability initiatives and provide technical assistance as needed.
- Encourages all third-party states to:
    i. Utilise universal jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute individuals suspected of international crimes committed in Sudan;
    ii. Support international justice efforts by executing ICC arrest warrants and ensuring cooperation by all States Parties;
    iii. Leverage the International Court of Justice (ICJ) as a forum for seeking provisional measures and addressing violations of international obligations;
    iv. Cease support to Sudan's war economy, including halting financial and diplomatic support to enablers of the conflict or sanctions evasion;
    v. Provide financial, technical, and political support to Sudanese civil society organisations documenting violations and advocating for justice.
- Calls upon international human rights organizations to:
    i. Stand in solidarity with their Sudanese counterparts, who continue to operate under extremely dangerous and deteriorating conditions;
    ii. Raise their voices through advocacy and join or initiate coordinated campaigns aimed at ensuring that the suffering of Sudanese civilians is neither ignored by decision-makers nor overlooked by the global media;
    iii. Recognise that active international engagement is crucial to maintaining Sudan on the global agenda and upholding the principles of human dignity and protection for all.

FIDH reaffirms that sustainable peace in Sudan cannot be achieved without justice. The rights of victims to truth, accountability, and reparation must be central to any solution. The international community, regional actors, and Sudanese authorities must act urgently to dismantle impunity, confront the legacy of mass atrocities, and ensure justice for all survivors of this devastating conflict.