



To the attn. of:

Ms Kaja Kallas

High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the European Commission

Foreign Affairs Ministers of the EU member states

27 March 2025

Dear High Representative Kallas,

Dear EU Foreign Ministers,

TWO YEARS OF CONFLICT IN SUDAN MARRED BY GLOBAL FAILURE TO PROTECT CIVILIANS

Two years have now passed since the start of the devastating conflict in Sudan that continues to shatter the lives of thousands and decimate civilian infrastructure across the country, while the European Union (EU) and other international actors have failed to act meaningfully to protect civilians under attack.

The ongoing conflict in Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) that erupted in April 2023 has killed tens of thousands of people and injured many more. Sudan is currently facing the largest displacement crisis in the world. 12.9 million people have fled their homes, including 8.9 million internally displaced people (53% are children), while some 3.8 million others are refugees in neighbouring countries, many living in dire conditions.

Those still in Sudan face killings, summary executions, injury, rape, gang-rape, sexual slavery and other forms of sexual violence, torture and enforced disappearances and widespread looting – all amounting to war crimes and some of which may also amount to crimes against humanity. Children have been caught in the crossfire of aerial bombardments and shelling, resulting in numerous casualties and impacting severely on their safety, education and well-being. Since the start of the war, access to independent and reliable information has been under pressure as journalists are targeted by both parties with (death) threats, violence and attacks. Media infrastructure, including offices and equipment, has been looted, burned and deliberately destroyed.

Ethnically motivated killing, forced displacement and sexual violence by both parties have re-emerged, raising alarming parallels to the Darfur crisis of 2003-2005, when mass atrocities were committed against ethnic communities. The resurgence of these tactics heightens the risk of a return to the darkest days of Sudan's wars, when systematic ethnic cleansing and war crimes devastated entire communities.

Parties to the conflict have repeatedly deliberately blocked and/or looted humanitarian aid, and targeted emergency responders, again victimizing the survivors. Human rights defenders (HRDs), particularly those working on good governance initiatives, peace-building, documentation of human rights violations and sexual and gender-based violence have been singled out by both warring parties and targeted.

Diplomatic efforts have failed to bring a change in the behaviour of the warring parties or end the violations. The United States government's recent decision to suspend foreign aid only amplifies the urgency for robust and timely diplomatic action, life-saving assistance and renewed commitment to accountability for Sudan's civilian population, victims of human rights violations and civil society organizations working on the ground.

A European Parliament [resolution](#) of 13 March issued urgent calls to the warring parties and to the EU and its member states to act to protect civilians, provide sufficient humanitarian aid and hold the perpetrators of crimes to account.

At this two-year anniversary, our organizations **call for the situation in Sudan to be included as a full-fledged agenda item at the forthcoming Foreign Affairs Council on 14 April, with a view to redoubling EU action.**

We [continue](#) to call on the European Union and its member states to **act robustly and strategically for human rights of all those affected by the devastating conflict in Sudan:**

- **Condemn violations committed by all warring parties**, urging them to:
 - Immediately cease all forms of violence and attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, including indiscriminate attacks, summary executions and widespread rape and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls, as well as the destruction of homes, schools, and hospitals.
 - Cease targeted attacks and harassment of Sudanese activists, human rights defenders, journalists and civil society.
 - End the deliberate obstruction of aid, all attacks on humanitarian and health workers, including members of the Emergency Response Rooms (ERRs). Press all parties to the conflict to allow unhindered, safe and immediate humanitarian access, cooperating with the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and like-minded states to this end.
 - Restore communication services in all of Sudan, ending internet blackouts that violate Sudanese people's right to information, hinder the delivery of humanitarian and emergency services, impact on the safety and protection of civilians and obstruct crucial monitoring and reporting on ongoing violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.
- **Redouble EU action**
 - Use all instruments at the EU and member states' disposal to urgently respond to serious human rights and international humanitarian law violations in Sudan and to hold perpetrators to account for these violations.
 - Decide to issue Council Conclusions laying out the EU and member states' strategy to deliver concretely on their commitments on human rights, humanitarian law, justice, accountability and protection of civilians in Sudan and to make it clear to those responsible that they will be held accountable for the grave violations committed.
 - Increase emergency funding for the humanitarian response in Sudan as well as in refugee camps in neighbouring countries, including by local responders and human rights defenders. Ensure sufficient support to education in emergencies and lend specific support for the protection, care, treatment and support mechanisms for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.
- **Protect civilians**
 - Actively [support](#) other international and regional actors to mobilize robust initiatives for the protection of civilians, including monitoring and reporting on human rights violations and support to accountability efforts across Sudan.
 - Call on all third countries, including the United Arab Emirates, to respect the UN Security Council arms embargo on Darfur by refraining from all transfers of weapons and ammunition to the SAF, the RSF and other armed actors. Ensure that all countries and entities that have violated the Darfur arms embargo are held accountable.

- **Champion justice and accountability**

- Fully resource and support all ongoing efforts toward investigation and accountability, including the work of both the UN Human Rights Council and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' Fact-Finding Missions to Sudan.
- Ensure that the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) has adequate resources for all of its activities, including to investigate ongoing violations in Darfur. Give full political backing for the ICC's work and press for the expansion of its jurisdiction to international crimes committed in the whole of Sudan.
- Engage with the warring parties and neighbouring states to facilitate access for all these accountability mechanisms to territories under their control.
- Strengthen the use of universal jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute those responsible for grave violations in Sudan and ensure they do not find safe haven within EU member states.

- **Support Sudanese civilians, human rights defenders, civil society and journalists**

- Ensure genuine, broad-based consultation with Sudanese human rights defenders and civil society organizations, including local humanitarian responders and journalists – and the inclusion of their views and concerns in any peace process or other decision-making that affects them. In line with the EU Guidelines on HRDs, actively protect, promote and support their work.
- Ensure protection and support for people fleeing Sudan, opening safe and regular pathways, including out of Africa. Refrain from returning Sudanese nationals to Sudan or to any third country where they may be at risk of being returned to Sudan.
- Spearhead comprehensive access negotiations to ensure humanitarian aid flows through all possible points, including cross-border, crossline and air transport, and to enable equal access for all humanitarian actors, including INGOs and local responders in areas without UN presence, who can scale up effectively where access and resources improve.
- Ensure crucial longer-term support to Sudanese HRDs and journalists (including those in exile) to be able to continue their important work. Provide support to human rights defenders' relocation programs, offer safe refuge to those at risk and provide legal pathways for asylum.

We thank you for your attention and remain available should you have any additional questions.

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Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
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