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Letter dated 14 April 2025 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) concerning the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) concerning the Sudan, and in accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution [2725 \(2024\)](#), I have the honour to transmit herewith the final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#).

The report was provided to the Committee on 23 December 2024 and was considered by the Committee on 9 April 2025.

I should be grateful if the present letter and the report were brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Jérôme **Bonnafont**
President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the
Security Council Committee established pursuant to
resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) concerning the Sudan



Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan

Summary

In 2024, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) maintained control over the majority of Darfur, employing a multifaceted strategy to consolidate power. This included conducting targeted attacks on internally displaced persons, committing widespread acts of conflict-related sexual violence, inciting violence among communities to claim historically contested territories and detaining individuals perceived as aligned with the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF). Meanwhile, SAF, limited to isolated strongholds such as El Fasher, relied on indiscriminate and widespread air strikes and alliances with SAF-aligned joint forces and newly recruited militias to launch ground offensives in strategic areas.

The epicentre of the conflict was El Fasher. The battle began with SAF-initiated aerial bombardments targeting RSF-controlled neighbourhoods in the city, signalling the collapse of a ceasefire that had divided El Fasher among SAF, RSF and Darfurian armed movements since 2023. Ground confrontations followed as SAF secured alliances with key commanders from Darfurian groups, facilitating the formation of a SAF-aligned joint force that seized control of critical areas, including the buffer zone. RSF employed tactics similar to those used in Nyala, Zalingei and El Geneina, advancing into the city centre through prolonged engagements and coordinated assaults.

The civilian population bore the brunt of the conflict, with over 470,000 people displaced from El Fasher alone and many more subjected to arbitrary arrests, sexual violence and targeted killings. The humanitarian crisis was further compounded by the obstruction of aid delivery, with both SAF and RSF exploiting bureaucratic processes and checkpoints to control resources. Civilians in RSF-controlled territories faced acute food shortages and endemic violence, while indiscriminate air strikes by SAF decimated critical infrastructure, leaving urban populations trapped and vulnerable.

RSF utilized logistical networks to sustain their campaigns, exploiting regional and international connections. Its access to sophisticated weaponry, combined with its decentralized supply chains, allowed it to counter SAF air superiority. These operations were supported by illicit economic activities, including the looting of resources like gum arabic and gold.

The regional implications of the Darfur conflict extended beyond the borders of the Sudan, destabilizing neighbouring countries such as Chad, Libya and South Sudan. Cross-border recruitment and the mobilization of transnational communities fuelled regional insecurity. International mediation efforts, hampered by competing interests and entrenched positions, failed to address the underlying drivers of the conflict or produce a viable path toward resolution.

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 2 of its resolution [2725 \(2024\)](#), the Security Council requested the Panel of Experts on the Sudan to provide to the Council, after discussion with the Committee, a final report by 13 January 2025 with its findings and recommendations. In the present report, the Panel outlines its findings.

2. The Panel visited Port Sudan in November 2024. It held meetings with members of the Darfurian armed movements signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement, General Ibrahim Gabir – a member of the Transitional Sovereign Council, as well as members of the General Intelligence Service, the Humanitarian Aid Commission, the Military Intelligence Service, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior, the National Coordination Mechanism,¹ the Peace Commission and the Unit to Combat Violence Against Children and Women. The Panel wishes to express its appreciation to the Government of the Sudan for the support it received during the reporting period and its visit to Port Sudan.

3. In addition, the Panel held meetings and conducted telephone interviews with a number of interlocutors, including members of the Government of the Sudan, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), the Darfurian armed movements, both signatories and non-signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement, as well as representatives of civil society, including internally displaced persons, refugees, victims and eyewitnesses of violence, women's organizations and members of local communities. It also met with representatives from United Nations agencies and programmes and the diplomatic community. During its mandate, the Panel conducted visits to Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and the United Arab Emirates. Unfortunately, despite official correspondence and engagements in New York with the Permanent Mission of Chad to the United Nations, Chad did not respond to the Panel's request to visit the border areas with Darfur.

4. The Panel worked in full conformity with the best practices and methods recommended by the Security Council Informal Working Group on General Issues of Sanctions (see [S/2006/997](#)) (see annex 1).

II. Conflict dynamics

A. Fragmentation and proliferation of armed actors and their war strategies

5. The fragmentation and proliferation of armed actors, as well as the overlap of military and civilian spaces, shaped the dynamics of violence. This led to widespread displacement and violations of international humanitarian law.

1. SAF and the SAF-aligned joint forces

6. In 2024, the conflict in Darfur was defined by contrasting military strategies as SAF, RSF and SAF-aligned joint forces² vied to secure and consolidate control in the region. SAF, with a limited physical presence – primarily a small contingent stationed in El Fasher – relied heavily on SAF-aligned joint forces and allied militias to conduct

¹ The mechanism that facilitated the Panel's visit to Port Sudan.

² A force comprising members of a number of signatory groups to the Juba Peace Agreement, including the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi (SLA/MM), the Justice and Equality Movement-Gibril Ibrahim (JEM), the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army Transitional Council-Osman Abdul Jabar (SLA/TC/Osman Abdul Jabar faction) and the Sudan Liberation Forces-Abdallah Janna (GSLF-Janna faction). See para. 30 and [S/2024/65](#).

ground operations (see sect. III below). SAF-aligned joint forces and militias, alongside RSF fighters, became the primary ground combatants, engaging in direct confrontations over contested territories, such as El Fasher, North Darfur. A key feature of the SAF military strategy was the use of offensive military overflights and widespread and indiscriminate air strikes on RSF-controlled territories and over disputed areas. Such military overflights and indiscriminate air strikes are prohibited pursuant to paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#), violated international humanitarian law and amounted to war crimes (see sect. V below).

2. RSF

7. In RSF-controlled territories, which encompassed most of Darfur, RSF employed a strategy to instil fear and consolidate control. This approach included targeted attacks against internally displaced persons, inciting violence to seize historically contested areas, committing conflict-related sexual violence and conducting a systematic campaign of arbitrary arrests and detentions targeting individuals perceived as aligned with SAF. These actions served either to strengthen RSF dominance or to empower allied militias to act on their behalf, further entrenching their control over the region.

3. Darfurian armed groups

8. In 2024, the armed movements in Darfur experienced further fragmentation (see [S/2024/65](#) paras. 7–12). Shifting allegiances created new dynamics on the ground, with groups splitting over political and military strategies. While some military leaders chose to cooperate with SAF, others sought to maintain independence, deepening divisions within the movements. As noted below, several commanders based in El Fasher pledged allegiance to SAF, a move that violated the terms of a local ceasefire and escalated military operations in the city (see para. 20).³

Table 1
Leaders and commanders of SAF-aligned and non-aligned groups

<i>Group</i>	<i>Political leader</i>	<i>Key commander in Darfur</i>
SAF-aligned		
Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi (SLA/MM)	Minni Minawi	Juma Haggar
Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)	Gibril Ibrahim	Tijani Duhaib
Gathering of the Sudan Liberation Forces (GSLF)/Janna faction	Abdallah Janna	Aboud Adam Khater
Sudan Liberation Movement/ Army-Transitional Council (SLA/TC)/ Osman Abdul Jabar faction	Salah Adam Tor “Rasas”	Osman Abdul Jabar Osman
Non-aligned forces		
SLA/TC	Al-Hadi Idris	Saleh Osman, known as Jabal Si
GSLF	Al-Tahir Hajar	Ahmed Abu Tonga and Abdulrahim Yagoup

³ Juma Haggar (SLM/MM), Abdallah Janna (GSLF/Janna faction), Osman Abdul Jabar (SLA/TC/Osman Abdul Jabar faction) and Tijani Duhaib (JEM).

<i>Group</i>	<i>Political leader</i>	<i>Key commander in Darfur</i>
JEM/Sandal faction	Suleiman Sandal	Mohamed Bushara Yahya “Disco”
the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW)	Abdul Wahid	Yusif Ahmed Yusif “Karjakola”

B. Ethnically based recruitment

9. The warring parties continued to engage in extensive ethnic-based recruitment efforts. They continued to rely on local armed militias assembled at a community level, which they mobilized, logistically supported and used as auxiliary forces (see [S/2024/65](#), para. 19).

1. SAF-aligned joint force⁴

10. In May, SAF-aligned joint forces escalated recruitment initiatives in North Darfur to consolidate control over El Fasher and strategic supply routes. Following the events of 11 May in El Fasher, a Zaghawa conference was convened on 15 May in Um Haras, a village near the border with Chad and the administrative centre of Dar Zaghawa (the land of the Zaghawa). The conference culminated in a resolution to mobilize Zaghawa members as a countermeasure against RSF. This mobilization unfolded in two phases: the recruitment of militia members; and the integration of militia fighters into SAF-aligned joint forces.

11. The recruitment was coordinated predominantly by the Zaghawa Council, a body established in 2005 comprising over 45 Zaghawa community leaders across the Sudan. The Zaghawa Council played a crucial role in organizing the mobilization efforts, ensuring broad participation from the community. These initiatives were driven by the Zaghawa’s longstanding antagonism toward RSF, who posed a perceived existential threat to their territorial stronghold in North Darfur. This motivation was further compounded by the fact that the Zaghawa community included high-profile figures, such as Minni Minawi and Gibril Ibrahim. Large recruitment campaigns took place across North Darfur, particularly in the localities of Kornoi and Umm Barru, where the two main training camps of SLA/MM and JEM remained (see [S/2022/48](#), para. 58).

12. In October and November, prominent Zaghawa political, military and community leaders travelled to Port Sudan. During these visits, they engaged with SAF and SAF-aligned forces to strengthen military cooperation. These discussions culminated in expanded recruitment efforts.

13. The recruitment efforts, bolstered by this alliance, were instrumental in maintaining SAF-aligned joint forces’ operational capacities in key locations, including El Fasher (see sect. III). This approach highlights the strategic importance of incorporating non-Arab Darfuri communities, such as the Zaghawa, into the broader SAF military campaign, mirroring similar strategies observed with other communities, such as the Fur and Masalit (see [S/2024/65](#), paras. 19–27).

2. Rapid Support Forces

14. In line with the 2023 recruitment strategy (see [S/2024/65](#), paras. 28–30), RSF continued to leverage a shared sense of Arab identity across Arab communities in

⁴ This section is based on interviews with 30 interlocutors, including community leaders and relevant armed groups, held from May to November 2024.

Darfur. This approach effectively maintained unity among historically rival groups, such as the Mahamid and Mahariya, who remained pivotal in reinforcing RSF ranks.⁵ RSF leaders have sustained close coordination with native administrations and community leaders, particularly in Central, South and West Darfur, where individuals were recruited along ethnic lines.⁶ The largest recruitment campaigns took place in North Darfur, particularly in Kuma, Basri, Saraf Umrah, Kutum and Kabkabiyah, North Darfur.⁷

15. At the end of November, media outlets reported the presence of Colombian mercenaries in Darfur, who had been allegedly contracted by a private security firm to support RSF.⁸ On 28 November, the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs acknowledged the presence of Colombian mercenaries in Darfur and announced the establishment of a special immediate response group to ensure the safe return of its nationals.⁹ According to information gathered by the Panel, the allegations were credible.¹⁰ The Government of Colombia formally apologized to the Government of the Sudan for the involvement of its nationals in the Darfur conflict (see annex 2).

III. El Fasher

16. In 2024, fighting broke out in key strategic military locations (see sect. XI.B and annex 5), with El Fasher emerging as the epicentre of the Darfur conflict. As the administrative capital of North Darfur and the only location in the region with a SAF presence, it was a key battleground in the struggle for territorial control. Intense urban warfare ensued, characterized by heavy artillery bombardments, ground confrontations between SAF-aligned joint forces and RSF in densely populated neighbourhoods, including internally displaced persons camps and SAF air strikes.

A. Unveiling the conflict

17. From April 2023 to January 2024, El Fasher experienced a period of relative peace following a ceasefire brokered by the former Governor of North Darfur, Nimir Mohamed Abdulrahman. This ceasefire divided the city between SAF, RSF and the Darfurian armed movements. RSF were allocated the northern side of the city, a central buffer zone was established under a joint force of the Darfurian armed movements to protect civilians, while SAF held control over the 6th Infantry Headquarters in the city centre (see S/2024/65).¹¹

18. The ceasefire held until early 2024, but the conflict unfolded gradually, with its roots traced back to the early months of the year. Between February and March, as

⁵ Interviews with RSF members, May–November 2024.

⁶ Interviews with members of different Arab communities, community leaders and RSF members, May–November 2024.

⁷ Interviews with former and acting SLA/AW, SLA/MM members, Zaghawa community in Eastern Chad and North Darfur in Kampala, Entebbe, Addis Ababa and by telephone, August–November 2024.

⁸ See <https://x.com/saeneen/status/1859637477398446086?s=48>.

⁹ See <https://x.com/cancilleriacol/status/1862285076219752617?s=48>.

¹⁰ Interviews with confidential sources, November 2024.

¹¹ The joint force comprised elements of SLM/MM, the Gathering of the Sudan Liberation Forces (GSLF), the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army Transitional Council (SLA/TC). This deal also included an agreement regarding the use of logistical routes and key towns, including Mellit (located 70km north of El Fasher). Historically, Mellit served as a crucial trade hub, connecting North Darfur with Libya and Chad for the trade of goods, livestock and resources. The agreement ensured that all actors could utilize Mellit for their logistical needs (See Panel's 2023 interim report and Panel's 2024 first quarterly update).

SAF lost control over large parts of Gezira State, it redirected its focus to El Fasher, deploying reinforcements from across Darfur to consolidate its positions. This shift in strategy spurred a parallel mobilization among Darfurian armed movements, militias and RSF, each striving to secure their positions (see sect. II.A).

19. In parallel, SAF initiated a campaign of military overflights and indiscriminate air strikes on densely populated neighbourhoods in the north-eastern parts of El Fasher.¹² They targeted areas under the control of RSF, which had fortified its position in the north side of the city since the signing of the ceasefire. These were followed by sporadic ground clashes between SAF and RSF in the eastern and northern neighbourhoods.¹³ During this period, the joint force of the Darfurian armed movements remained neutral, focusing on protecting the central and southern areas of the city.

20. By mid-April the situation worsened as key joint force field commanders, initially refusing to support SAF, declared their allegiance to SAF (see S/2024/65). Commanders who aligned with SAF included Juma Hagggar (SLM/MM), Abdallah Janna (GSLF/Janna faction), Osman Abdul Jabbar (SLA/TC/Osman Abdul Jabbar) and Tijani Duhaib (JEM/Gibril Ibrahim). Consequently, these commanders formed a SAF-aligned joint force that operated under an integrated command and control unit and took control over the previously established buffer zone. In contrast, SLA/TC/Al-Hadi Idris and GSLF/Tahir Hajar remained neutral and withdrew from the city.

21. The alignment of joint forces with SAF triggered intense urban warfare as armed actors vied for control over El Fasher. Throughout the conflict, SAF-aligned joint forces maintained their focus on securing vital areas, such as the grand market and the 6th Infantry Division Headquarters, while RSF concentrated its efforts on outflanking SAF positions and disrupting supply lines. RSF military tactics followed a pattern consistent with operations in other SAF-controlled cities, such as Nyala, Zalingei and El Geneina (see S/2024/65). This approach involved prolonged ground engagements and shelling, culminating in a focused assault on the division headquarters at the city's centre.

22. From mid-May to mid-June, heavy artillery and direct ground confrontations ensued between SAF-aligned joint forces and RSF in civilian neighbourhoods, particularly in the northern, eastern and south-eastern neighbourhoods. At the same time, SAF intensified air strikes in densely populated areas to support its ground operations (see sect. V).¹⁴ Civilians reported to the Panel regular "morning shelling sessions" in the city's western, southern and eastern areas.¹⁵ The conflict's intensity peaked by mid-June, after which RSF changed tactics from direct and prolonged confrontations to sporadic hit-and-run raids and mobile long-range shelling from the north-eastern outskirts. This change was driven by the death of RSF commander Abdallah Yagoub and the onset of the rainy season, which hindered troop movement and disrupted supply lines.

¹² The Panel verified 18 air strikes between 1 January and 10 May. See air strikes methodology in annex 1.

¹³ The most affected neighbourhoods during these months included the Nasser, El Nakhel and Gadeed el-Sayl areas in the eastern part of the city, Mellit Gate in northern El Fasher and the Abu Shouk internally displaced persons camp in northern El Fasher. Interviews with over 40 eyewitnesses, internally displaced persons and members of the joint force in El Fasher, May–July 2024.

¹⁴ Between 11 May and 16 June, the Panel verified 10 air strikes. Affected neighbourhoods during this period included areas in eastern El Fasher, such as Gashlack Aj Jaish, Al Wefaq, Azama, Gashlack Aj Jaish, Essalam, Al-Kifah, Al-Safa and Al-Kahraba, and south-eastern El Fasher, such as Al Salam, Al Wihda and Al Jawama'a, as well as in the south, including Essalam, South Al-Inqaz and Deim Silk. Interviews with over 40 eyewitnesses, local monitors and members of the different armed actors May–July 2024.

¹⁵ Interviews with over 20 eyewitnesses, May–June 2024.

23. Throughout July and August, RSF continued to employ hit-and-run raids to consolidate its hold, rendering previously inhabited locations unliveable. Meanwhile, SAF relied on air strikes and heavy shelling in civilian-populated zones in the eastern and south-eastern neighbourhoods, a strategy that temporarily halted RSF advances.

24. By September, RSF operations began targeting the defensive positions of SAF and SAF-aligned joint forces in the city centre, including the grand market and surrounding neighbourhoods. The clashes escalated, with RSF employing coordinated assaults from multiple directions, overwhelming SAF-aligned joint forces and SAF outer defences, and encircling key installations. The shrinking area of control of SAF-aligned forces reflected their weakened capacity to counter RSF offensives, particularly as RSF secured firepower superiority through the use of advanced weaponry and tactical positioning. At the end of November, due to shrinking space, SAF-aligned joint forces started to move towards the Zamzam internally displaced persons camp, triggering a series of attacks on the camp by RSF.¹⁶ The battles for control of the city persisted with no indication of subsiding.

B. International humanitarian law violations by the warring parties El Fasher¹⁷

25. All warring parties violated international humanitarian law and committed war crimes during the fighting for El Fasher.¹⁸ Indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian objects constituted war crimes. The mistreatment of civilians (including rape, killing, arrests, detentions and ill-treatment), forced displacement and pillaging amounted to further war crimes by the warring parties.¹⁹

1. Indiscriminate shelling and air strikes by warring parties in urban areas

26. From May to November, civilians endured continuous urban attacks. Civilian neighbourhoods were struck almost daily by heavy artillery and gunfire. Air strikes, shelling and stray bullets hit and destroyed homes, killing women and children within. Civilian homes, infrastructure, hospitals, markets and mosques, protected under international humanitarian law, were indiscriminately hit and at times targeted (see section III.B.4). During this time, civilians had limited access to food and medical services.

27. The total civilian death estimate is difficult to verify due to the intensity of the war in the city. At the time of writing, few civilians remained in the city centre. However, approximately 100,000 internally displaced persons remained in the Abu Shouk camp, which since May had been severely affected by crossfire between the parties and targeted RSF shelling. Those civilians who remained were trapped due to the lack of safe exit routes and the high costs to leave.

¹⁶ Interviews with members of the Darfuran armed movements, eyewitnesses, November 2024.

¹⁷ This section is based on interviews with over 80 civilians, including testimonies from eyewitnesses, individuals in affected neighbourhoods, local monitors, lawyers, journalists, health practitioners, internally displaced persons, refugees and members of local resistance committees, May–November 2024.

¹⁸ Customary international humanitarian law rules 7–10 on the principle of distinction between civilian objects and military objectives, rules 11–14 prohibiting indiscriminate attacks. Protocol II Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, art. 11 on protecting hospitals and art. 13 on protecting civilians.

¹⁹ Customary international humanitarian law rules 87, 90, 93 and 99.

2. Women and girls²⁰

28. Women and girls were killed in the indiscriminate attacks by the warring parties when looking for daily labour or fetching food or water, or died in their homes from indiscriminate shooting, shelling and air strikes. In July, a primary hospital confirmed seven cases of rape in which the victims identified the SAF-aligned joint force (two cases) and RSF (one case) as perpetrators. Furthermore, the Panel verified patterns of rape that occurred during active hostilities as RSF advanced through the city's neighbourhoods. The rape incidents were combined with attacks on homes, beatings and pillaging of property (see case below). The number of rape cases were expected to be higher, as victims were unable to gain access to healthcare and had severe communication constraints and due to the stigma associated with rape.

3. Attacks and occupation of homes: beatings, executions, rape and pillaging²¹

29. As part of hostilities, RSF and allied militia entered neighbourhoods and attacked, pillaged and occupied homes as a strategy to take control of an area and remove civilians. During the attacks, some civilians were able to flee, others were beaten or executed by gunfire, women were raped in front of family members and belongings were pillaged. For example, in June, four RSF soldiers entered a home in Thawra, broke a child's arm, tied up the husband and raped the wife. The soldiers looted the home, and the family subsequently fled the city.

30. Warring parties pillaged civilian homes. Eyewitnesses who fled northern neighbourhoods of El Fasher in May confirmed that SAF and the joint force had pillaged their homes and those of various others in the Abu Shouk internally displaced persons camp and neighbourhood.

4. Indiscriminate attacks and deliberate targeting of critical civilian objects²²

31. Indiscriminate attacks in densely populated areas by all warring parties damaged civilian objects, critical infrastructure, including homes, markets, hospitals and mosques. Indiscriminate attacks and any targeting of civilian objects are prohibited under international humanitarian law and constitute war crimes (see map below).²³

32. RSF targeted city markets. The grand market was hit multiple times by heavy shelling and, on 20 May, caused the death of at least seven people. On 3 July, during an RSF artillery attack on the southern part of the city, the Mawashi market was heavily shelled, killing no fewer than 15 people and injuring at least 29.²⁴ Both markets were continuously targeted during the reporting period. For example, on 21 and 26 September, the markets were severely hit again, killing at least 30 people.

²⁰ Interviews with eyewitnesses, local monitors, national organizations, internally displaced persons, refugees, people in affected neighbourhoods, local journalists and activists, June–November 2024.

²¹ Interviews with eyewitnesses, local monitors, national organizations, internally displaced persons, refugees, people in affected neighbourhoods, local journalists and activists, June–November 2024. This pattern was observed in south and southeast neighbourhoods as RSF expanded their attacks in Salam, Widha and Thawra.

²² Interviews with health professionals, local monitors, people in affected neighbourhoods, local lawyers and journalists, local civil society organizations, eyewitnesses and victims, May–November 2024.

²³ Customary international humanitarian law rules 7–10 on the principle of distinction between civilian objects and military objectives, and rules 11–14 prohibiting indiscriminate attacks. Protocol II Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, art. 11 on protecting hospitals and art. 13 on protecting civilians.

²⁴ Figures from the Director General of the Ministry of Health in North Darfur State, and interviews with local monitors, July 2024.

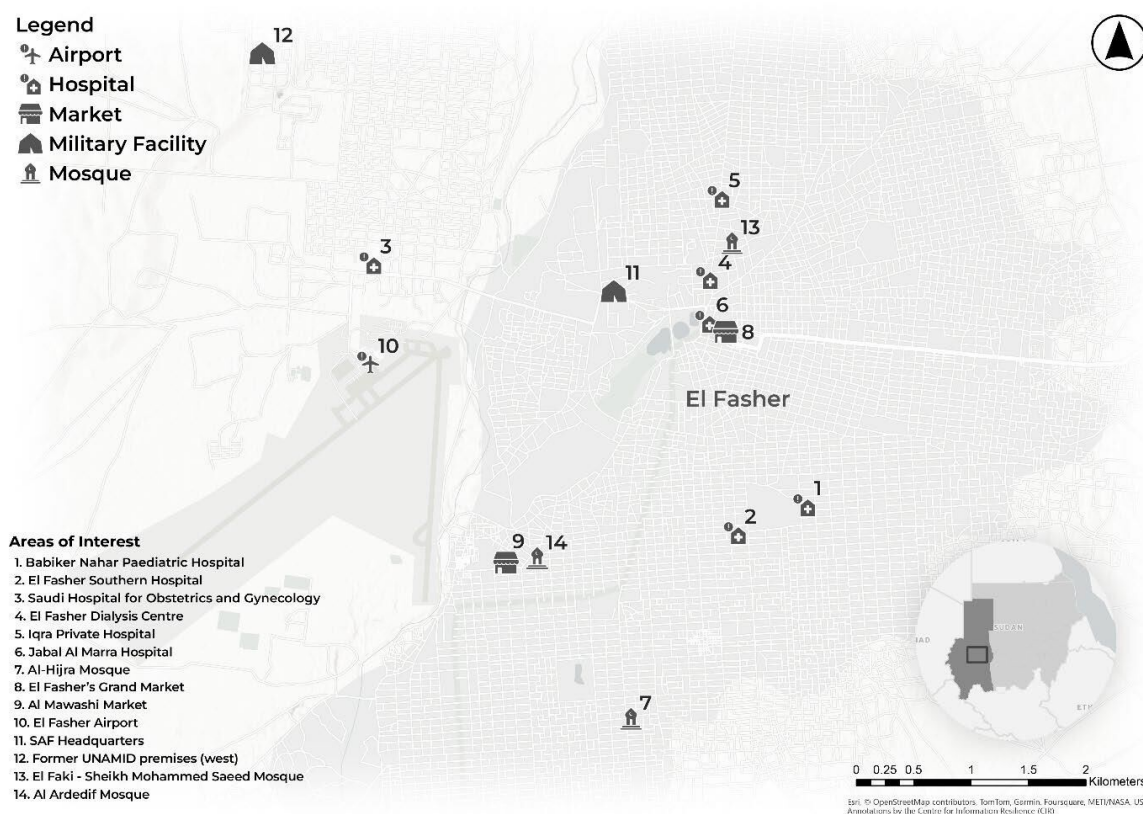
33. Hospitals and healthcare centres were continuously hit. At the time of writing, only one healthcare facility inside the city, the El Fasher Hospital for Obstetrics and Gynaecology (the “Saudi hospital”) remained partly operational despite being continuously hit by intense shelling. Between 11 May and 2 July, six hospitals and healthcare centres were hit by shelling from both sides. Some were hit multiple times whilst occupied by patients, as follows:

- On 11 May, a SAF air strike bomb landed 50 metres from the Babiker Nahar Children’s Health Centre, killing two children, a caretaker and a civilian when the ceiling collapsed
- In late May, as direct ground confrontations between RSF and the SAF-aligned joint force intensified, the frontline moved closer to the Southern Hospital, which was hit by shelling numerous times. On 8 June, RSF stormed the hospital, where the SAF-aligned joint force was treating injured soldiers among civilian patients. On 9 June, the hospital closed due to the intensity of the clashes
- On 21 and 27 June, the Saudi hospital was hit by RSF shelling multiple times with patients inside and was left only partially operational. The hospital, vital for civilians, was repeatedly targeted
- On 23 June, RSF shelled and destroyed the main dialysis centre in Darfur, depriving at least 94 patients of treatment
- On 25 June, RSF shelled the Iqra private clinic
- On 2 July, RSF destroyed the Jabbal Marra private hospital

34. Between 1 and 3 July, RSF shelling destroyed three mosques. The Hijrah mosque was hit on 1 July, killing least 11 civilians, including 10 children as young as 1 year of age. Shortly after, the El Faki Saeed mosque and Al Ardedif mosques were shelled.

Figure I

Map of El Fasher, showing locations of impacted civilian facilities and visualizing the continuous and indiscriminate attacks by all parties in highly populated areas



Source: Centre for Information Resilience. Credit: Esri, HERE, © OpenStreetMap contributors and the General Intelligence Service User Community, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (the boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. The final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined).

5. Dead bodies and makeshift graves²⁵

35. Eyewitnesses consistently observed the bodies of civilians, including women and children, killed by the shelling and air strikes. For example, in May in the Masani neighbourhood, eyewitnesses saw at least 15 dead bodies on the street. The Panel interviewed eyewitnesses who assisted with the burying of victims, including numerous children. At night, when hostilities subsided, residents organized to retrieve the bodies and bury them in accessible cemeteries.²⁶ When this was not possible, the bodies were buried in residential compounds.

²⁵ Interviews with eyewitnesses, local monitors, national organizations, internally displaced persons, refugees, people in affected neighbourhoods, local journalists and activists, June–November 2024.

²⁶ Graves were dug near the southern hospital in the Thawra cemetery, Umm al-Qura cemetery and Salam cemetery.

6. Arbitrary arrests and detentions of civilians²⁷

36. Since mid-May, the SAF-aligned joint force has carried out widespread arbitrary arrests of civilians, young males, human rights activists and journalists suspected of collaborating with RSF. Young males from Arab communities were particularly targeted. Detainees were taken to the former African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur compound and held for up to two weeks in shipping containers (see point No. 12 in the above map for the precise location). The SAF-aligned joint force detainees lacked adequate food and water. Detainees were subjected to physical and psychological ill treatment, including severe beatings and verbal abuse. In addition, RSF conducted widespread random arrests and detentions of civilians in the eastern side of the city and in the periphery, particularly males and young people suspected to be informants. Since SAF has heavily bombed the eastern areas of the city, the location of those detained remains unknown.

7. Mass displacement

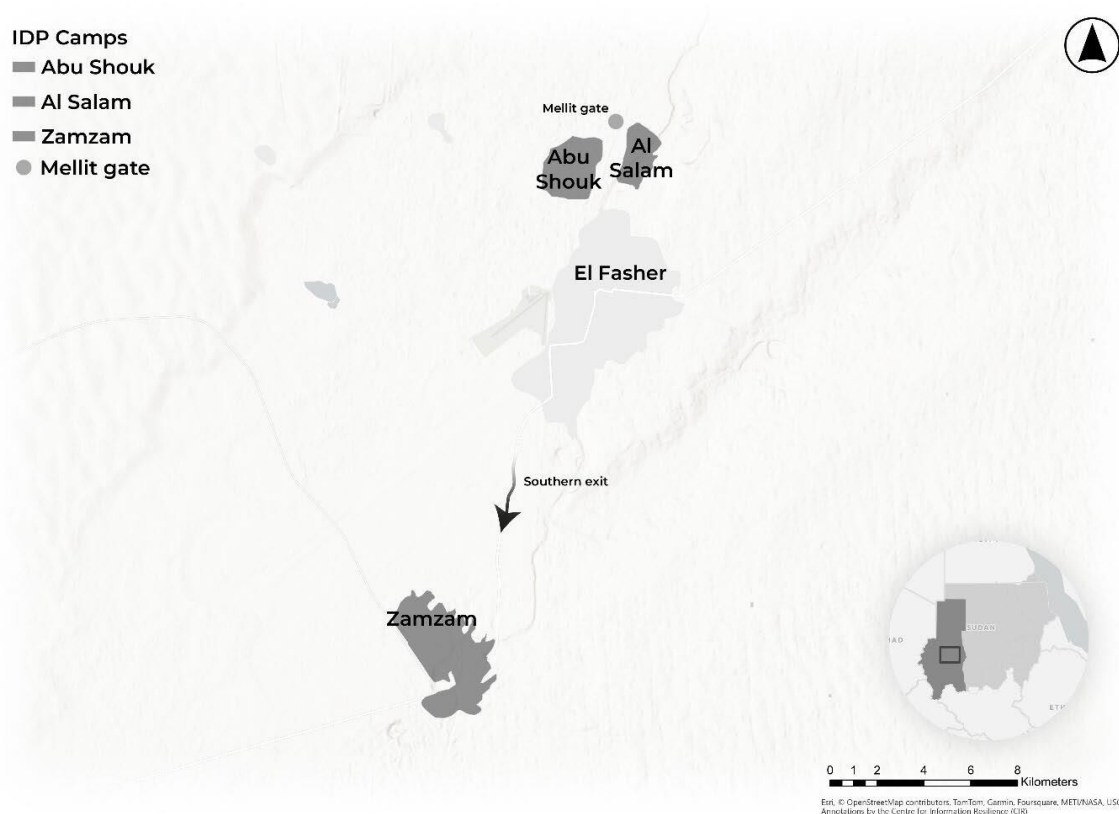
37. Since May, the attacks in urban areas have led to mass displacement from the north, east and south-east neighbourhoods. Since 1 April, at least 470,000 people have been displaced, often multiple times.²⁸ In the chaos of the urban warfare families were separated, many children remained unaccompanied in El Fasher.

38. Civilians fled the city through the southern exit to the Zamzam internally displaced persons camp, Dar Al Salam and various localities in North Darfur, as well as to Nyala and Zalingei. According to camp coordinators, over 200,000 internally displaced persons, including many women and children, had arrived in Tawila and Jebel Marra, areas controlled by the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW).

²⁷ This section is based on interviews with eyewitnesses, local monitors, national organizations, internally displaced persons, refugees, people in affected neighbourhoods, local journalists and activists, June–November 2024.

²⁸ See International Organization for Migration (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix Sudan, 17 October 2024 and 26 November 2024, available at <https://mailchi.mp/iom/dtm-sudan-focused-flash-alert-conflict-in-north-darfur-state-update-004?e=c095dde85b> and <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/dtm-sudan-mobility-update-11>.

Figure II

Map of El Fasher internally displaced persons camps and southern exit point

Source: Centre for Information Resilience. Credit: Esri, HERE, © OpenStreetMap contributors and the General Intelligence Service User Community, Norwegian Refugee Council, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (the boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. The final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined).

C. Warring parties' command and control structures

39. A few key commanders in RSF, SAF and the SAF-aligned joint force oversaw the military operations in El Fasher. Their strategic decisions and coordinated efforts played a crucial role in shaping the trajectory of the conflict, determining both the intensity and the outcome of the engagements within the city.

1. RSF²⁹

40. Operations in El Fasher were carried out under the supervision of the RSF area commander for North Darfur, Major General Sa'ria Al-Nour Ahmed Al Gubba, alongside Major General Ali Yagoub Gibril, who was killed on 14 June 2023. Following his death, Geddo Hamdon Abu Shok, sector commander for El Fasher, assumed his position.

²⁹ Interviews with local sources, including members of armed groups across Darfur, June–November 2024.

2. SAF³⁰

41. Throughout the year, General Mohamed Ahmed Alzafir and his second-in-command, Bakhit Abdalkarim Dabago, from the Zaghawa community and a former JEM member, directly commanded SAF elements in El Fasher. In addition, they helped coordinate the ground operations of the SAF-aligned joint force.

3. SAF-aligned joint force³¹

42. Since May, the SAF-aligned joint force has operated under an integrated command-and-control structure comprising key commanders from the various Darfurian armed movements signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement. These include Juma Hagggar (SLM/MM), Abdallah Janna (GSLF/Janna faction), Lieutenant General Aboud Adam Khater (GSLF/Janna faction) and Tijani Duhaib (JEM). SAF and the joint force coordinated sectoral movements primarily through Juma Hagggar and General Mohamed Ahmed Alzafir.

D. Drone usage in El Fasher warfare³²

43. Since the intensification of fighting in El Fasher, the use of drones was observed for combat and reconnaissance activities, primarily by RSF. SAF military intelligence has sporadically employed reconnaissance drones since June 2024.³³ Meanwhile, SAF-aligned joint forces expressed frustration over their limited access to uncrewed aerial vehicles, raising concerns that this disparity could potentially ignite a drone arms race in Darfur.³⁴ According to eyewitnesses, RSF deployed reconnaissance drones to monitor SAF-aligned joint force positions in central and southern areas, such as Silah Tibbi,³⁵ Thawra and Radif, to direct mortar fire from the east towards El Fasher.³⁶ In addition, the Panel confirmed the use of tactical jammers to protect key commanders against possible drone attacks by SAF.

IV. Violence in RSF-controlled territories across Darfur

44. RSF employed a calculated strategy to instil fear and consolidate control over territories, while civilian protection was absent. Approximately 5.5 million internally displaced persons endured entrenched poverty, acute malnutrition, lack of access to healthcare and overcrowded living conditions due to the prolonged conflict.³⁷

³⁰ Interviews with senior commanders and fighters involved in the operations, May–June 2024.

³¹ Interviews with senior commanders and political members from the SAF-aligned joint force who are part of the integrated and command unit, May–June 2024.

³² This section is based on multiple independent, cross-referenced and triangulated sources, and 17 interviews with direct witnesses (residents of El Fasher, RSF personnel, SAF and SAF-aligned joint force participants), further corroborated by photographic documentation from ground sources and verified social media content, June–November 2024.

³³ Multiple independent, cross-referenced sources with direct knowledge of military operations in El Fasher, interviewed between June and September 2024, confirmed the use of reconnaissance drones by military intelligence, June and September 2024.

³⁴ Interviews with senior members of Darfur armed groups from the SAF-aligned joint force, September 2024.

³⁵ In the vicinity of the SAF sixth division headquarters.

³⁶ Eyewitness accounts from residents and sources close to the operations, September and October 2024. The areas identified by the Panel include Jabal Halluf, Swilinga, Jabal Bachar, possibly Gadeed el-Sayl camp, and Jabal al Bursa, near Mina al-Barri.

³⁷ See IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix, available at <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/dtm-sudan-mobility-update-11>.

A. Widespread and targeted attacks against internally displaced persons in RSF-controlled areas³⁸

45. Internally displaced persons were particularly vulnerable to targeted and widespread harassment, looting, arbitrary arrests and detentions, extortion and violent armed attacks by RSF and allied militia.³⁹ Attacks often resulted in severe injuries and at times executions. Attacks against women, girls, men and young males took place in rural areas when leaving the camps to go farming or looking for work and at times within the internally displaced persons camps. For example, on 8 November, in the Mukjar internally displaced persons camp in Central Darfur, two armed allied militia summarily executed a 24-year-old man. The young man was shot in the chest when refusing to hand over his belongings. On 16 November, in the Kassab internally displaced persons camp in North Darfur, RSF arbitrarily arrested a prominent community leader, who remained detained in Kutum at the time of writing.⁴⁰ RSF demanded access and control of the camp in return for his release. Internally displaced persons feared being arbitrarily detained and were confined to the camp.

B. Widespread conflict-related sexual violence in RSF-controlled areas⁴¹

46. Lack of security and rule of law combined with overall impunity exacerbated conflict-related sexual violence. Women and girls faced widespread sexual violence; those living in isolated internally displaced persons camps and remote villages in North, Central, West and South Darfur were particularly vulnerable.

47. Acute malnutrition, shortages of food and livelihoods forced women and girls to go to remote areas to farm, collect firewood, fetch water or seek daily labour, exposing them to severe protection risks. Women and girls as young as 12 years were subjected to harassment, threats, physical assaults, whippings, severe beatings and sexual violence, including rape and gang rape.⁴² The victims identified RSF soldiers, allied militia and at times camel or cattle herders from the Arab communities as perpetrators.

³⁸ Multiple interviews with over 30 internally displaced persons in affected camps, camp leaders, youth leaders, women representatives, local monitors, eyewitnesses and victims in North, South, West and Central Darfur, May–November 2024.

³⁹ Attacks took place in the following internally displaced persons camps: Central Darfur camps in Mukjar, Bindisi, Um Dukhun, Wadi Salih and Nertiti; South Darfur Kalma camp; North Darfur Kassab camp, Shangil Tobaya camp, Tabit camp and Zamzam camp.

⁴⁰ RSF commanders Ibrahim Abdullah Ibrahim (Arabiya Kero) and Mohamed Eli Eltahir coordinated these operations.

⁴¹ This section is based on multiple interviews with over 33 interlocutors, including internally displaced persons (including representatives of internally displaced women and internally displaced community leaders), medical professionals, reliable sexual and gender-based violence local monitors and non-governmental organization staff in North, Central, West and South Darfur, as well as refugees and women rights activists. The Panel uses the term “conflict-related sexual violence” as sexual violence that forms part of a wider pattern of violence and is occurring within a context impunity in Darfur, directly linked to the conflict.

⁴² In Central Darfur, in the internally displaced persons camps in Mukjar, Bindisi, Um Dukhun, Wadi Salih, Nertiti. In South Darfur, in Nyala, the Kalma internally displaced persons camp, the rural area near Nyala, and Kass. In North Darfur, in El Fasher, Kutum, the Kassab internally displaced persons camp, and Kabkabiya, the Zamzam internally displaced persons camp, Tabit and nearby villages, Dar al-Salam, and Shangil Tobaya. In West Darfur, in El Geneina and Kuraynik.

48. Examples of conflict-related sexual violence include the following:

(a) In September in South Darfur, a woman who left the Kalma internally displaced persons camp to go farming was chased by five-armed militia, when caught she was told to put her breastfeeding baby down and was gang raped;

(b) In internally displaced persons camps in Central Darfur, women and girls were raped when leaving the camp to go farming. Furthermore, in the Mukjar internally displaced persons camp, RSF entered the homes of internally displaced persons, threatened the men, looted belongings and raped women and girls;⁴³

(c) In April, in North Darfur near the Kassab internally displaced persons camp, a group of women who had left the camp to collect firewood were attacked and beaten, and a young mother was raped.

49. Sexual exploitation in the form of survival sex was pervasive in larger cities in West, Central and South Darfur. Due to the lack of access to food and daily labour, women and girls were forced to sell sex to buy food. Survival sex was widely reported at the markets, while working as daily labourers, domestic workers and at times in internally displaced persons camps.⁴⁴

50. Throughout RSF-controlled areas of Darfur, women and girls lacked access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, including post-rape medical care. Pregnancies due to rape were common. Sexual violence was largely unreported due to the fear of stigma and retribution. The lack of healthcare centres, the absence of law enforcement and judicial institutions further hampered the possibility of safely reporting incidents and receiving support.

C. Violence in Um Kaddadah and Tawisha (North Darfur)⁴⁵

51. In regions like Um Kaddadah and Tawisha, located 176 kilometres west of El Fasher, the rise of RSF exacerbated a security vacuum and governance crisis, especially for non-Arab communities. This vacuum allowed RSF allied militias to seize historically contested territories, intensifying the war over resources and land.

52. At the end of 2023, RSF established unchallenged control over Um Kaddadah and Tawisha, areas traditionally home to both Arab communities, including the Basah and the African Baharti community. The RSF alliance with the Basah community was strategic and highly consequential. By providing arms, ammunition and occasionally logistical support, such as vehicles, RSF empowered Basah militias to launch aggressive campaigns to dominate contested areas. Their rhetoric further emboldened these militias, fostering an environment in which acts of aggression were both tolerated and encouraged.

53. This dynamic was illustrated on 19 May in the village of Shagani (in the region of Tawisha), when RSF, alongside allied militias, launched an attack. The assault resulted in the deaths of at least seven civilians. By the end of the day, Shagani had been completely destroyed – set ablaze and emptied of its Barti inhabitants. The attack forced approximately 2,000 households to displace, seeking refuge in nearby villages within the regions of Tawisha and Um Kaddadah.

⁴³ Central Darfur internally displaced persons camps in Mukjar, Bindisi, Um Dukhun and Wadi Salih.

⁴⁴ El Geneina, Nyala, Kass, and the Central Darfur internally displaced persons camps.

⁴⁵ This section is based on 10 interviews with a broad range of sources, including eyewitnesses, victims and members of Arab communities, May–June 2024.

V. Widespread and indiscriminate SAF air strike attacks across Darfur⁴⁶

54. Throughout the year, SAF intensified its use of air strikes and conducted widespread and indiscriminate strikes targeting civilian areas across Darfur. Indiscriminate air strikes violated international humanitarian law and amounted to war crimes, as well as violating paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#).⁴⁷ Between 1 January to 10 November, the Panel verified 140 air strikes hitting 20 urban areas across Darfur (see map below).⁴⁸ Air strikes hit civilians, homes, neighbourhoods, heavily populated areas, internally displaced persons camps and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals and busy markets. Larger towns were often hit with multiple strikes, killing and injuring several hundreds of civilians, including women and children, amid limited healthcare facilities. Furthermore, the air strikes disrupted the ability of civilians to carry out daily activities in safety.⁴⁹

55. Examples of air strikes that indiscriminately hit civilians and civilian objects, in violation of international humanitarian law include the following (see annex 3 for further examples):

- On 4 August, the Zamzam internally displaced persons camp in North Darfur, the largest camp in Darfur hosting at least 500,000 people, was hit by two air strikes damaging over 16 homes and injuring civilians, including children
- On 20 August, in Ed Daein, East Darfur, a hospital and nearby school hosting internally displaced persons was hit by an air strike, killing at least 11 civilians, including women and children (see annex 3)
- On 16 September, in Nyala, South Darfur, an RSF detention centre holding hundreds of prisoners was hit, killing guards and prisoners (see annex 3)⁵⁰
- On 4 October in Kuma, North Darfur, a busy market was hit by an air strike, killing approximately 65 civilians, including 13 children and injuring 200 people

The Panel has addressed an official letter to the Government of the Sudan through its Permanent Representative to the United Nations, inquiring about the air strikes. In its response dated 17 December 2024, the Government stated that the SAF actions had been carried out in compliance with international humanitarian law, particularly the principles of distinction, military necessity and proportionality (see annex 6).

⁴⁶ The Panel verified all air strikes through a combination of at least three independent sources, including on the ground interlocutors, eyewitness accounts, open-source reporting, geolocation of user-generated content, and geo-located satellite imagery confirming ground damage.

⁴⁷ Customary international humanitarian law rules 7–10 on the principle of distinction between civilian objects and military objectives, and rules 11–14 prohibiting indiscriminate attacks. Protocol II Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, art. 11 on protecting hospitals and art. 13 on protecting civilians. In paragraph 6 of its resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#), the Security Council demanded that the Government of Sudan cease conducting offensive military flights in and over the Darfur region.

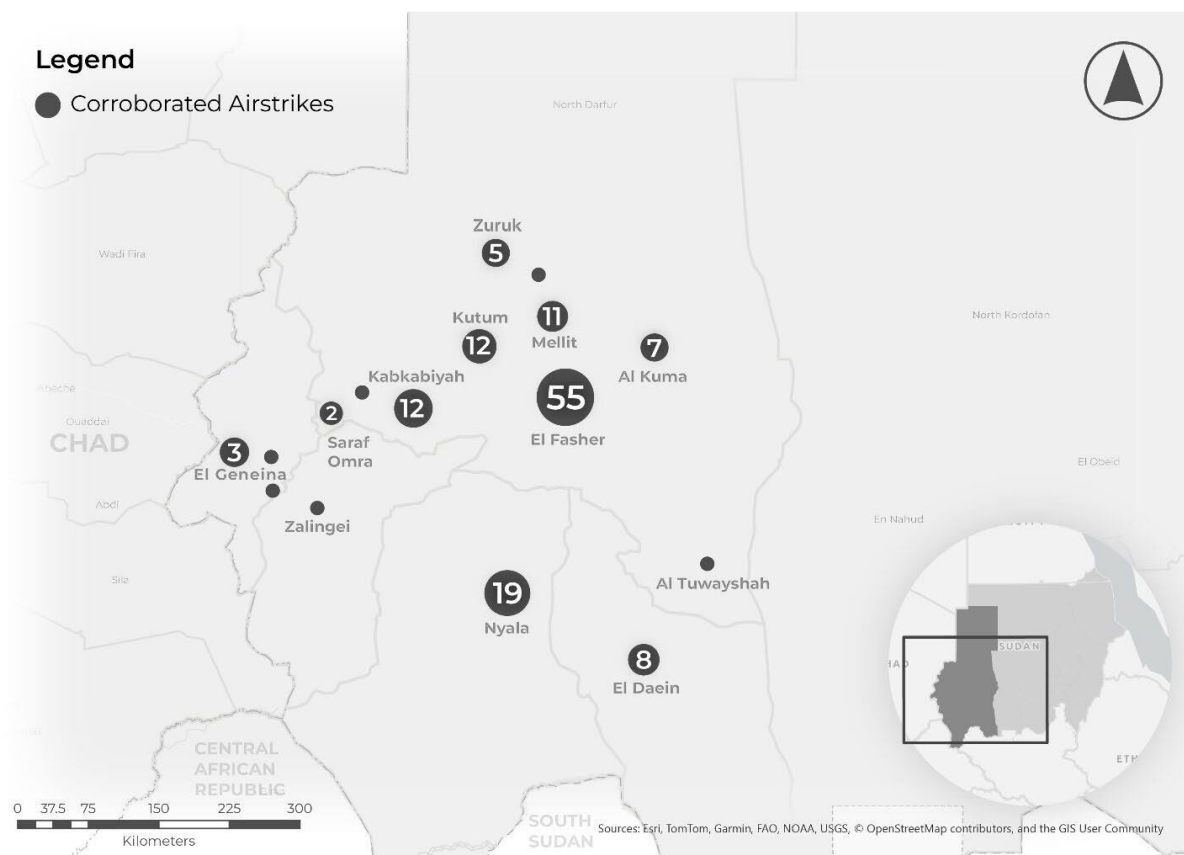
⁴⁸ Cities, towns and villages with verified air strike attacks include the following: El Fasher, Kuma, Koma, Mellit, Kutum, Saraf Umrah, Kabkabiyah, Tawisha, Zuruk, Talbadiyah, Jabal Amir, Garqaf and Um Salaya (North Darfur); Zalingei (Central Darfur); Nyala and Kashalongo (South Darfur); El Geneina, Murnei and Galala (West Darfur); and El Daein (East Darfur).

⁴⁹ Additional information is on file with the Secretariat and available upon request.

⁵⁰ Former National Security and Intelligence Services centre.

Figure III

Map showing verified air strikes across Darfur between 1 January and 10 November 2024



Source: Centre for Information Resilience. Credit: Esri, HERE, © OpenStreetMap contributors and the General Intelligence Service User Community (the boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. The final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined).

VI. Blocking of humanitarian aid by the warring parties

56. The risk of famine in Darfur continued, with 2.1 million people facing emergency levels of food insecurity.⁵¹ Darfurians in North, South, West and Central Darfur, with those trapped in areas affected by conflict and areas with a high concentration of internally displaced persons, were at particular at risk of starvation. The Government of the Sudan stated to the Panel that any hunger was due to the RSF strategy of using “starvation as a weapon of war”.⁵² The Humanitarian Aid Commission stated that RSF had blocked and diverted food aid from reaching internally displaced persons as part of this strategy.

57. The Adré, Chad, border crossing remained open, but bureaucratic impediments continued to hamper access to Darfur. Its reopening allowed for an increase in aid,

⁵¹ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, Sudan Acute Food Insecurity Situation, October 2024 to February 2025, available at www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1157066/?iso3=SDN; and Famine Early Warning Systems Network, 9 October 2024, available at <https://fews.net/east-africa/sudan/alert/october-2024>.

⁵² Meetings with representatives of the Government of the Sudan, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Humanitarian Aid Commission.

and approximately 529 trucks crossed from Adré into Darfur carrying aid for about 1.8 million people, including 132 World Food Programme (WFP) trucks with food assistance for an estimated 721,000 people.⁵³ The Humanitarian Aid Commission delayed authorizations for convoys to travel from Port Sudan, approvals at times taking two months.⁵⁴ Replicating the Humanitarian Aid Commission bureaucracy, RSF established the Sudanese Agency for Relief and Humanitarian Operations for all humanitarian activities in RSF-controlled areas.⁵⁵ The Agency was unable to coordinate with local RSF commanders to ensure the safe passages of convoys. Consequently, despite Agency clearances, taxes and fees continued to be imposed by RSF and allied militias at checkpoints. Looting remained an additional challenge. For example, in June, three WFP trucks on the way to Zalingei were looted in RSF-controlled Central Darfur.⁵⁶

VII. Impact of the conflict on regional security and stability

A. Chad⁵⁷

58. From May, the role of the Zaghawa community in the Darfur conflict emerged as a significant factor contributing to regional instability. In the aftermath of the initial battle for El Fasher (see sect. III), political leaders of the Zaghawa community in the Sudan voiced serious concerns regarding the Chadian authorities' inaction in response to RSF attacks on Zaghawa districts and villages in North Darfur.⁵⁸ Although the Zaghawa constituted a small proportion of the population, they dominated the security and military institutions of Chad. This dynamic raised the potential for the formation of a strong opposition movement rooted in the Zaghawa communal interests.⁵⁹

59. Panel interlocutors also reported that Zaghawa individuals in areas near Am Djarass were recruited into SAF-aligned joint forces, particularly SLA/MM and JEM. This recruitment reflected widespread dissatisfaction among Chadian Zaghawa regarding the inaction by the Government of Chad when Zaghawa communities were under attack during the fighting in El Fasher. Minni Minawi confirmed that Chadian Zaghawa fighters had joined SAF-aligned joint forces, citing shared ethnic ties and aligned interests as key factors.⁶⁰

60. In March 2024, Ousmane Dillo, a prominent Zaghawa figure and member of the opposition Parti socialiste sans frontières (PSF), joined SLA/MM forces in the El

⁵³ Interviews with senior humanitarian interlocutors, May–November 2024. Figures represent access between 15 August to 30 November 2024.

⁵⁴ Interviews with senior humanitarian interlocutors, May–November 2024.

⁵⁵ Since November 2023, RSF has fully controlled West, Central and South Darfur.

⁵⁶ The Panel estimated that 27 metric tons of food were looted that could have fed 3,200 people.

⁵⁷ The Panel requested information regarding the participation of Chadian nationals Ousmane Dillo and Abdallah Jumeni in a letter dated 5 December 2024, addressed to the Permanent Mission of Chad to the United Nations. In its response dated 16 December 2024, the Permanent Mission stated that the Government remained firmly committed to maintaining a neutral stance in the Sudan conflict. The response further clarified that the individuals in question had been acting in their personal capacities and did not represent the country. In addition, it emphasized that, under current legislation, any participation by Chadian nationals in foreign conflicts without official authorization was considered a criminal act.

⁵⁸ Interviews in person and by telephone with leaders of the Zaghawa community, independent researchers, individuals from the Sudanese diaspora, and diplomats in Kampala, Nairobi, Juba, Cairo and Port Sudan, August–November 2024.

⁵⁹ See <https://minorityrights.org/country/chad/>.

⁶⁰ Interviews in person and by telephone with former and acting SLA/AW, SLA/MM members and Zaghawa political and community leaders in Kampala, Entebbe, Nairobi and Addis Ababa, August–November 2024; see also <https://tchadone.com/post/7395/>.

Fasher area. By June, after participating in the fighting in El Fasher, Mr. Dillo's group relocated to Dongola, the capital of Northern State in the Sudan. Conversely, another Chadian opposition group, the Front pour l'alternance et la concorde au Tchad (FACT), led by Abdallah Jumeni of the Goran tribe, established contacts with RSF in February 2024. Subsequently, FACT forces joined RSF regiments operating in West and South Darfur.⁶¹

61. To curb the entry and transit of opposition groups into its territory, the Government of Chad deployed troops along the border of the Ouaddaï region on 12 September. This area, adjacent to North Darfur's Tina area, has historically been regarded as a Zaghawa stronghold.⁶² In parallel, SAF and JEM moved reinforcements to Tina from the Sudanese side of the border, positioning forces north of the town to sever RSF supply routes (see sect. III.A.3) Meanwhile, the Sudanese contingent of the Sudanese-Chadian joint forces remained stationed in Abéché in Chad, in accordance with an existing agreement with the Chadian authorities.⁶³

B. Libya

62. The security situation in cross-border areas remained fragile. Since May 2024, Darfuri armed groups continued to operate in southern Libya, as follows:⁶⁴

- Former JEM regiments under the command of General Abdallah Banda, predominantly Zaghawa. This force, comprising 300 to 400 fighters and up to 100 vehicles, was stationed near Sabha (see para. 96)
- JEM regiments led by Abdel Karim Cholloy, numbering 100 to 200 fighters, were based in Atrun, approximately 65 kilometres from the Sudanese border, close to Sabha
- SLM-MM defectors from the early 2000s, primarily Zaghawa and commanded by Jarelnabi Abdul Kareem. This contingent included 200 to 300 fighters stationed around the borders between Chad and North Darfur. The group was engaged in providing security for oil smuggling operations and the transportation of used cars for resale on behalf of RSF
- Groups of former Musa Hilal fighters led by Harun Makhir, comprising 100 to 250 fighters, stationed near the border with Chad in the Oazu area
- Forces under the command of Mansour Arbab, predominantly Masalit, included up to 100 fighters stationed near Jufrahc (southern Libya)

63. In early September, forces under the command of Abdallah Banda and Mansour Arbab crossed the border from southern Libya into eastern Chad, using routes around Tina before proceeding to El Malha in North Darfur. The primary objective of this manoeuvre was to reinforce SAF-aligned joint forces in the El Fasher area, with a particular focus on unblocking the road to Mellit, which remained under the control of RSF.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Interviews in person and by telephone with members of the Masalit community, RSF senior officials and former SLA/AW members in Kampala, Nairobi, Juba and Cairo, August–November 2024.

⁶² See <https://nabdsudan.net/?p=139000> (available in Arabic only).

⁶³ Interviews in person with SAF, military intelligence, diplomats and General Intelligence Service members in Port Sudan, November 2024.

⁶⁴ Interviews in person and by telephone with former and acting SLA/AW and SLA/MM members, people from the Sudanese diaspora, traders from North and Central Darfur, and independent researchers, in Kampala, Nairobi, Cairo, El Fasher and Juba, August–November 2024.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

C. Central African Republic

64. The security situation along the border areas between the Central African Republic and Darfur remained fragile. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) reduced its presence in the Umm Dafog area due to insufficient military capacity. Meanwhile, RSF continued active recruitment efforts among opposition groups of the Central African Republic, particularly the Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique, which controlled parts of the Vakaga area along the Sudanese border. Sources informed the Panel about an RSF military camp in Sikikede, reportedly used as a recruitment base targeting individuals from the Runga community in Vakaga.⁶⁶

65. Separately, the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement (CPC), led by Ali Mahamat Darassa, declared its willingness to negotiate with the Government in Bangui on 26 July. Despite the fact that this initiative was not supported by the CPC political coordinator, François Bozizé, there were no indications that the radical wing of CPC planned to align with RSF.⁶⁷

66. The porous nature of the Sudanese-Central African Republic border, coupled with a governance vacuum in Central Darfur, resulted in continuous migration of people. On 14 October, General Mohamed Adam Bangoz, RSF commander for the Central Darfur sector, announced the establishment of a Salamat community emirate by a group called “Awlad Baraka and Mubarak,” which had recently arrived from the Central African Republic.⁶⁸ The influx of Salamat migrants was attributed to RSF recruitment among Arab tribes in northern Central African Republic and eastern Chad.⁶⁹

67. The Panel raised this issue with the Government of the Sudan officials, who confirmed the prior presence of small Salamat groups in the Turaij areas south of Zalingei. They expressed serious concerns over the arrival of foreign groups in areas traditionally inhabited by other communities, emphasizing that restoring the pre-war demographic status quo would be a priority. Community leaders and activists from the Fur community strongly opposed the establishment by RSF of a new emirate, characterizing it as part of a broader RSF strategy to expand land control for allied communities and create parallel administrations. This initiative was seen as exacerbating tensions and undermining traditional governance structures in Central Darfur.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Interviews with individuals from MINUSCA, traders from the Central African Republic and South Darfur, and SAF officials, in Addis Ababa, Nairobi, Kampala and Juba, September–November 2024.

⁶⁷ See annex 4, and www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20240816-centrafrique-le-gouvernement-re%C3%A7oit-le-repr%C3%A9sentant-d-un-ex-chef-des-rebelles-cpc; interviews in person and by telephone with traders from the Central African Republic and South Darfur, and individuals from MINUSCA and the Sudanese diaspora, and SAF, in Nairobi, Kampala and Port Sudan, September–November 2024.

⁶⁸ See <https://countervortex.org/blog/sudan-fur-leaders-reject-rsf-backed-emirate/>.

⁶⁹ Interviews with individuals from the Sudanese diaspora, traders from South and Central Darfur, and independent researchers in Bangui, Nairobi and Kampala, November 2024.

⁷⁰ Interviews in person and by telephone with Fur community leaders, Fur members of SLA/AW and SLA/MM, individuals from the Sudanese diaspora, and individuals from the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Defence, General Intelligence Service and Sudan Humanitarian Aid Commission, in Nairobi and Port Sudan, November 2024.

D. South Sudan

68. The security situation along the cross-border areas between east Darfur and South Sudan remained tense. In late August, RSF regiments crossed the border into Western Bahr el Ghazal, Raja County, seizing control of Kafia Kinji, Sungu, Hofra and Al Naha to establish military camps.⁷¹ Simultaneously, the Panel received credible reports of RSF emissaries conducting recruitment efforts among Nuer communities in the Bentiu area, Unity State. This recruitment activity was perceived as part of an RSF strategy to exploit the historically fragile relationship between the Nuer and Dinka communities, potentially instigating a new crisis.⁷²

69. In March, the Commander of the 4th Infantry Division of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces in Unity State, Major General William Manyang Mayak, confirmed the collaboration of RSF with the South Sudan People's Movement/Army (SSPM/A), led by General Stephen Buay Rolnyang.⁷³ Interlocutors informed the Panel that SSPM/A forces had reportedly been preparing to launch attacks on the Heglig oil fields between April and June 2024 as part of RSF efforts to pressure the Government of South Sudan.⁷⁴

70. However, during an interview with the Panel, General Rolnyang denied any formal alliance with RSF. He emphasized that he could not account for all South Sudanese individuals from cross-border areas, who may have joined RSF ranks independently. The muted reaction from the Government of South Sudan to these RSF actions was attributed to the potential risk of RSF targeting vital oil pipelines, which would have serious economic consequences for South Sudan.⁷⁵

VIII. Impact of the conflict in Darfur on bilateral relations

A. Libya

71. Oil smuggling across the Libyan-Sudanese border continued unabated, fuelling economic instability and further entrenching armed group control in the region. A single drum of smuggled oil (250 litres) in southern Libya was priced at \$600, but nearly doubled in cost when reaching Darfur.⁷⁶ RSF sought to dominate several key smuggling routes, including the following:

- Owainat mountains – Hamrat Al Sheikh, North Kordofan, North Darfur
- Kufra – El Malha – (North Darfur)
- Kufra – Mellit (North Darfur)
- Sabha – Zuruk (North Darfur)

⁷¹ Interviews with RSF members and eyewitnesses, August 2024.

⁷² See www.sudanpost.com/spla-io-detains-rsf-commander-fighters-in-unity-state; interviews in person and by telephone with individuals from the South Sudanese diaspora, diplomats, traders from North Darfur and South Sudanese politicians, in Addis Ababa, Nairobi and Juba, September–November 2024.

⁷³ See <https://3ayin.com/en/southsudanrsf/>.

⁷⁴ Interviews in person and by telephone with individuals from the South Sudanese diaspora, former and acting South Sudanese officials and independent researchers, in Kampala, Nairobi, Addis Ababa and Juba, August–November 2024.

⁷⁵ The Panel requested further information from the Government of South Sudan and is awaiting a reply.

⁷⁶ Interviews in person and by telephone with former and acting SLA/AW members, traders from North and Central Darfur, individuals from the Sudanese diaspora and independent researchers on the Sudan, in Kampala, Entebbe and Juba, August–November 2024.

72. In August, the Sudanese Sovereign Council discussed the closure of the border with Libya to disrupt RSF military logistics.⁷⁷ However, the limited military capacity of SAF hindered the effective enforcement of that decision. Control of the Libyan-Sudanese border remained fragmented among various actors. Forces aligned with Khalifa Haftar managed the stretch from Sabha to Jufrah and monitored smuggling routes from Chad to Darfur. Meanwhile, the SAF-aligned joint force, predominantly Zaghawa fighters, controlled the Altroto to Bin Hansin border zone.⁷⁸

B. Chad

73. With parliamentary elections scheduled for December 2024, any confrontation with RSF could further destabilize Chad. The influx of Arab fighters into RSF ranks appeared to reduce the potential for anti-government mobilization within Chad.

74. Bilateral relations with the Sudan remained strained. In mid-October, the Sudanese Foreign Minister, Hussein Awad, accused Chad of supporting RSF, which possibly contributed to his dismissal on 3 November, amid concerns that such allegations could jeopardize border security cooperation.

C. South Sudan

75. The role of South Sudan as a mediator in the Sudanese conflict stemmed from its need to preserve relations with both RSF and SAF. Two critical concerns for South Sudan were the partial control of RSF over oil pipelines and the SPLM-N military pressure on SAF in West and South Kordofan. Negotiations between the South Sudanese Ministry of Petroleum engineers and RSF from August to October 2024 to secure access to the Unity State pipeline yielded no results. On 19 October, a delegation led by Presidential Advisor, Tut Gatluak, travelled to Port Sudan to negotiate with the Government of the Sudan access to the second pipeline originating in Upper Nile. However, the Government was unable to assist as RSF controlled a 35–40 km segment of the pipeline. The disruption in oil flow was projected to contract the South Sudanese economy by 5 per cent in 2024, exacerbating existing social instability.⁷⁹

IX. Mediation initiatives

76. Despite multiple international and regional efforts, peace talks remained largely ineffective due to the entrenched positions of both warring parties. As of late July, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan continued to reject engagement with RSF, while RSF consistently failed to comply with the protocols of the Jeddah Declaration of May 2023, which mandated the withdrawal of forces from occupied territories.⁸⁰ Progress was further hampered by fragmented political dynamics and competing regional

⁷⁷ See www.africanews.com/2019/09/26/sudan-will-close-its-borders-with-libya-and-central-africa-official/.

⁷⁸ Ibid., and interviews with former authorities of North Darfur State, traders from North and Central Darfur, former and acting SLA/AW and SLA/MM members, and Zaghawa tribe leaders, in Nairobi, Kampala, Cairo, Juba and Addis Ababa and by telephone, August–November 2024.

⁷⁹ See <https://sudantribune.com/article289002/>; interviews in person and by telephone with individuals from the South Sudanese diaspora, former and acting South Sudanese officials and independent researchers, in Kampala, Nairobi, Addis Ababa and Juba, August–November 2024.

⁸⁰ See <https://sudantribune.com/article288930/>; interviews in person and by telephone with senior members of SAF and RSF, diplomats and independent researchers, in Kampala, Addis Ababa, Nairobi and Port Sudan, September–November 2024.

interests, leaving prospects for a comprehensive resolution to the war slim in the absence of consensus among Sudanese actors and greater cohesion in external mediation efforts.

A. African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development

77. The suspension of the Sudan from the African Union in 2019 and the decision to freeze its membership of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in January 2024 significantly hindered regional mediation efforts. The Government of the Sudan did not recognize the joint initiatives of these organizations, complicating their ability to engage effectively.⁸¹ Nevertheless, the African Union and IGAD continued mediation efforts, with the second round of inclusive Sudanese political dialogue held in Addis Ababa from 9 to 12 August 2024. Participants included representatives from Taqaddum, the Umma Party, the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW), the Arab Socialist Baath Party and the Sudanese Communist Party.

78. However, the dialogue faced significant setbacks. SPLM-N and SLA/AW boycotted the event, as their proposal to include a reference to the Nairobi Declaration of May 2024 – emphasizing civil society’s enhanced role and the separation of religion and State – was rejected by other parties.⁸² Consequently, the dialogue concluded with the African Union Peace and Security Council merely underscoring the importance of joint efforts by the African Union and IGAD in promoting political dialogue. Panel interlocutors noted that, while such initiatives represented progress in the polarized political environment in the Sudan, achieving consensus among parties remained critical before any direct engagement between General al-Burhan and Hamdan Dagalo (also known as Hemedti) can occur.⁸³

79. On 15 November, IGAD envoy Lawrence Korbandi announced a proposal to deploy a 4,500-strong force to the Sudan, drawn from nations uninvolved in the conflict, to oversee the implementation of the Jeddah Declaration. However, interlocutors expressed scepticism regarding the initiative’s viability, citing divergent interests among IGAD members and strong opposition within the Sudan to the presence of foreign forces in its territory.⁸⁴

B. Geneva talks

80. The Geneva talks, held from 16 to 23 August, were organized jointly by Saudi Arabia and the United States of America, hosted by Switzerland and supported by international actors, including Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, the African Union, IGAD and the United Nations. Despite their potential to revive momentum regarding the Jeddah Declaration, both SAF and RSF criticized the proposed format. RSF

⁸¹ Interviews in person and by telephone with SAF members, Sudanese diplomats, GIS members and independent researchers, in Port Sudan and Nairobi, October–November 2024.

⁸² Interviews in person and by telephone with SPLM-N and SLA/AW members, African Union diplomats, independent researchers, and individuals from think tanks, in Kampala, Addis Ababa and Nairobi, September–October 2024. See also www.darfur24.com/en/2024/05/18/hamdok-abdel-wahed-nour-sign-nairobi-declaration/.

⁸³ Interviews in person and by telephone with SAF, SLA/AW, SLA/MM and SPLM-N members, individuals from the Sudanese diaspora, independent researchers and African Union diplomats, in Kampala, Entebbe, Nairobi and Addis Ababa, September–November 2024.

⁸⁴ Interviews by telephone with members of SAF, former and acting members of SLA/AW and SLA/MM, and individuals from the Sudanese diaspora, in Nairobi, Kampala and Addis Ababa, November 2024.

expressed dissatisfaction with facilitators' inability to secure SAF participation, while SAF declined to attend, preferring a bilateral format resembling the one adopted in Jeddah and opposing the involvement of the United Arab Emirates as an observer.⁸⁵ The absence of SAF limited the talks to discussions on humanitarian access and temporary cessation of hostilities. This narrow agenda further diminished prospects for a broader resolution, underscoring the persistent challenges in aligning the parties' divergent priorities under existing mediation frameworks.⁸⁶

X. Financing of armed groups

81. Pursuant to paragraph 3 of Security Council resolution [2725 \(2024\)](#), the Panel was mandated to further investigate all relevant funding sources, whether local, national or international, of the armed groups active in Darfur.

82. As the conflict continued unabated, it created opportunities for armed actors to expand illegal markets as sources of income to finance the war.

A. Smuggling of gum arabic (SLA/MM and RSF)

83. Global demand for gum Arabic remained high, while Sudanese gum accounted for nearly 80 per cent of the global gum Arabic market. Gum Arabic was an essential raw material worldwide, mainly used in the food industry as an emulsifier and stabilizer.⁸⁷ Annual production in the Sudan declined from 150,000 tons to 60,000 tons due to the conflict.⁸⁸ The price per quintal (100 kg) of Hashab gum had increased from an average of SDG 75,000 (\$124.69) to SDG 400,000 (\$665.00) in the production areas, whereas internationally the prices increased from \$2,200 to \$4,000 per quintal.⁸⁹ Due to the conflict, a loss of an estimated 90,000 tons of gum Arabic per year amounted to an estimated revenue loss, using a low of \$2,200 per quintal, of nearly \$198 million per annum.

84. Local traders from East Darfur and Nyala confirmed that around 3,700 tons, with an average value of \$14,578,000, had been looted from January to June 2024.⁹⁰ More producers were subject to looting in January 2024 in Zalingei (West Darfur), Al Mujald (West Kordofan) and El Geneina (West Darfur) by RSF and allied militias and SLA/MM.⁹¹ RSF commanders in Nyala acknowledged widespread looting by both commanders and soldiers. The looting of gum Arabic and other items was condoned by commanders as it was seen as compensation for both them and the soldiers,

⁸⁵ Interviews in person and by telephone with members of SAF, senior officials of the Government of the Sudan, senior RSF members, independent researchers and individuals from think tanks, in Addis Ababa, Kampala, Port Sudan and Nairobi, August–November 2024.

⁸⁶ Interviews in person and by telephone with SAF and Sudanese government senior officials, senior RSF members, independent researchers and individuals from think tanks, in Addis Ababa, Kampala, Port Sudan and Nairobi, August–November 2024.

⁸⁷ See www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sudan/eu-supports-continuation-production-gum-arabic-unique-natural-product-sudan_en?s=122; and interviews with staff from the Gum Arabic Company (a privately owned buyer and exporter of Sudanese gum Arabic) and local farmers, August–October 2024.

⁸⁸ See <https://sudanevents.com/index.php/2024/10/13/the-president-of-the-gum-arabic-exporters-division-in-an-interview-with-al-ahdath-sudan-still-dominates-the-global-gum-arabic-market/>.

⁸⁹ Local sources interviewed in October 2024; interviews with staff of the Gum Arabic Company and local farmers, July–October 2024.

⁹⁰ Interviews with four local traders who had been looted, seven local farmers and civilians, and former RSF combatants, October 2024.

⁹¹ Interviews with three former RSF combatants, two RSF commanders and 11 civilians and local monitors, October 2024.

ensuring their continued support and fighting, as some had not received salaries for nearly 12 months.

85. From January to October 2024, RSF were deployed on three of the four main roads leading from the city of El Obeid: from El Obeid to Um Ruwaba (147 km from El Obeid); from El Obeid to En Nahud (Central Sudan); and from El Obeid to Dalang (North of Kadugli), in North Kordofan State, one of the most important gum producing areas in the country.⁹²

86. The following individuals oversaw the looting or onward trade of gum Arabic:⁹³

- RSF commander Himaidan Mohammed, under the general command of Colonel Saleh Al-Futi of the South Darfur State, was overseeing operations in Nyala when major looting took place
- RSF allied militia leader Bakheit Ibrahim controlled/oversaw the roads between Nyala, Zalingei and El Geneina that were some of the gum transport routes, and was key in the looting operations of gum Arabic carrying trucks on those routes

87. The looted gum Arabic transport routes included the following:⁹⁴

- Via Adre, Chad
- Um Dukhun (Central Darfur) to Chad
- Songo (South Darfur) via Umm Dafog (South Darfur) to the Central African Republic
- Ed Daein (East Darfur) to Aweil (South Sudan)

88. In addition to the looting of gum Arabic, RSF also imposed fees of SDG 1 million (\$512.82) per truck with a 20-ton load in the border areas of Regeibat and Naam heading to South Sudan. RSF also demanded a zakat of SDG 100,000 (\$51.28) per truck. During the dry season, starting in December, around 10 trucks with 20-ton loads and 20 small vehicles carrying varying amounts of gum Arabic passed through these border posts per week. At the start of the rainy season, at the end of June, only small vehicles passed through the border posts, and from August to November no vehicles passed through.⁹⁵ The fees paid for the 10 trucks, on the basis of the above-mentioned figures, could amount to \$20,512.80 per month, excluding zakat.

89. From the information gathered by the Panel, it is estimated that the cargo volumes that reached the Chadian borders controlled by RSF annually fluctuated between 50,000 and 70,000 tons. The volumes transported through Tina to Libya along routes controlled by SAF and SLA/MM varied between 30,000 and 40,000 tons during the period from April to October 2024. Due to the conflict, it was not possible to travel to Darfur, and it was difficult to determine more accurate volumes. The information obtained indicated that the fees charged for one ton of gum Arabic were as much as \$2,200 at the Chadian and the Central African Republic borders, and around \$3,300 in Dabbah on the route from north Sudan to Egypt.⁹⁶

⁹² Interviews with RSF members, former RSF combatants and civilians, August–October 2024.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Interviews with RSF insiders, local monitors and transporters of gum Arabic, September–October 2024.

⁹⁵ Interviews with RSF insiders, former RSF combatants, local monitors, civilians and transporters of gum Arabic, August–October 2024.

⁹⁶ Interviews with staff from local authorities, staff from the Gum Arabic Company and local monitors, September–October 2024.

B. Gold mining (SLA/AW and RSF)⁹⁷

90. The Panel has consistently noted in its reports that gold mining has been a primary source of financing for SLA/AW.⁹⁸

91. SLA/AW, through general Abdelgadir Abdelrahman Ibrahim, known as “Gaddura”, and commander Mujeeb Elrahman Elzubair from the Abdul Wahid family, expanded its financial base by forming an alliance with RSF to facilitate the sale of gold from the Kidineer (Kidingir) gold mine, located in the East Jebel Marra locality. Information received indicated that production at the mine had reached an output of between 2 and 3 kilograms of gold per day. During June to October, the estimated value per kilogram of gold amounted to \$85,204.34 on formal markets, but in the mines the average price per kilogram was \$72,000. Those prices varied widely depending on the purity of the gold.⁹⁹ The Panel was informed that SLA/AW had been selling gold to RSF, as well as to RSF-affiliated gold traders in Darfur.

C. Four-wheel drive vehicles¹⁰⁰

92. In October, new developments emerged regarding the procurement of four-wheel drive vehicles for RSF fighters in El Fasher. According to information from a Rizeigat community leader, RSF facilitated the purchase of 200 vehicles from civilians in East Darfur, specifically in Ed Daein, Abu Matarig, Asalaya, El Ferdos and Abu Jabra.

93. The vehicles were acquired in cash, with prices ranging from SDG 50,000,000 to SDG 90,000,000 (\$25,641 to \$46,154), depending on their condition. The procurement process was managed informally, with no official transfer records. RSF commanders Elfaith Ghurashi (East Darfur) and Major Zakriza Mohamed (Ed Daein) oversaw the operation, utilizing a broker to secure the vehicles.

XI. Weapons supply and circulation in Darfur

94. RSF expanded logistical supply lines through territories in Chad and Libya, as well as Nyala Airport (see para. 94). In parallel, RSF developed a decentralized weaponry storage system to mitigate vulnerabilities to air strikes (see sect. XI. B). The group also introduced an uncrewed aerial vehicle (see para. 42).

A. External support to RSF¹⁰¹

95. As part of the investigation into external support to RSF (see paras. 41 and 42 of Panel’s final report (S/2024/65)), the Panel continued to investigate activities at Am Djarass airport and surrounding areas, including supply routes, to determine whether any military materiel and logistical supplies had been transferred into

⁹⁷ This section is based on information from interviews with former combatants, RSF commanders, SLA/AW commanders and nine sources in gold mining areas, July–October 2024.

⁹⁸ See S/2022/48, S/2021/40 and S/2020/36.

⁹⁹ According to <https://goldpricez.com/>.

¹⁰⁰ Interviews with former RSF combatants, a broker and 13 vehicle owners in El Daein and Abu Matarig who sold their vehicles to RSF, October 2024.

¹⁰¹ This section is based on reviews and analysis of activities and operations at Am Djarass, in addition to interviews with individuals with insider knowledge of the operations at Am Djarass, cross-border community members, RSF personnel and members of Darfuri armed groups familiar with the routes, May and November 2024.

Darfur.¹⁰² The Panel was unable to confirm transfers of military materiel from Am Djarass to Darfur at the time of writing. The Panel identified supply routes associated with RSF operations (see table below).

Table 2
Supply routes associated with RSF operations

<i>Destination</i>	<i>Route description</i>
El Fasher	Am Djarass Airport → Eastern. Kari Yari Camp → Khimery → Bir Mirgui → S. Zurug → Bir Mazza → Kutum → El Fasher (via Kafod road)
Omdurman/Khartoum	Am Djarass Airport → Eastern. Kari Yari Camp → Bir Mirgui → Sani Haya → Al Kouma → Omdurman
Kordofan and beyond	Am Djarass Airport → Eastern. Kari Yari Camp → Bir Mirgui → Wakhayim → Hamrat al-Sheikh → Various active frontlines

B. RSF logistics¹⁰³

96. In June, SAF-aligned joint forces initiated the “desert front” campaign across North and West Darfur. The operation sought to “starve RSF frontlines” by disrupting critical supply routes and isolating major logistical hubs such as Zuruk.¹⁰⁴ As part of this strategy, mobile units from the Zaghawa-dominated GSLF and SLM-MM targeted RSF transit points at Zuruk and Wadi Anbar (see annex 5).

97. The campaign escalated in September, with a second phase involving the mobilization of an additional 100 armed vehicles under the command of Abdallah Banda, a former JEM leader who had returned to Darfur from Libya (see paras. 61 and 62). Those forces, alongside additional mobile units, concentrated efforts on disrupting three critical RSF supply conduits in North and West Darfur: Sayah, Bir Mazza and the Kulbus crossing. Both sides engaged in regular ambushes and asset seizures.

98. In response, RSF adapted its logistical operations, decentralizing weapon and ammunition storage to mitigate the impact of SAF air strikes and ground attacks. By mid-2024, as SAF intensified operations around Zuruk, RSF established a new logistics command post at Bir Mirgui, North Darfur. Strategically positioned at the crossroads of Am Djarass, El Fasher and other transit routes, Bir Mirgui became the central hub for transferring supplies from Eastern Chad and Southern Libya to active frontlines.

99. RSF supply chain relied on a network of experienced mobile commanders and established cross-border connections. Abdallah Tijani Chaghab,¹⁰⁵ a former SLM-MM colonel who joined RSF in 2017, played a pivotal role in coordinating supply

¹⁰² The investigation covered Am Djarass airport activities between May and October 2024.

¹⁰³ This section is based on 28 interviews with RSF personnel, SAF-aligned joint forces, commanders of Darfurian armed groups involved in military operations, and eyewitnesses with direct knowledge of RSF logistical operations between Darfur, eastern Chad and southern Libya, June–November 2024.

¹⁰⁴ This term was used by one of the SAF-aligned joint force commanders during an interview with the Panel, September 2024.

¹⁰⁵ A former colonel in SLM-MM, Chaghab joined RSF in 2017. As of early June 2024, he was based around South Zuruk with a contingent of 100 men. Chaghab directed the movement of equipment from eastern Chad and Libya through Dar Zaghawa to Khartoum and key RSF frontlines, including El Fasher, frequently travelling to oversee operations.

movements through Chad, leveraging his Zaghawa heritage and local networks. Additional RSF commanders, including Fadeil El Naji and Mohamed Bakhit Ajab al-Dor (“Doydoy”), both former Sudan Revolutionary Awakening Council (SRAC) members, facilitated logistics between Chad, southern Libya and Darfur.¹⁰⁶

C. Nyala airlift: alternative supply¹⁰⁷

100. Between September and November, Nyala residents reported RSF activity at Nyala Airport.¹⁰⁸ This could represent a change in RSF supply logistics as Darfur airports had been non-operational since April 2023.¹⁰⁹ Using Nyala airport could be a way for RSF to take delivery of supplies more quickly than by the longer land routes from southern Libya and eastern Chad. It could also address vulnerabilities along stretched supply lines in North and West Darfur that saw renewed clashes between RSF and the SAF-aligned joint force since mid-September.¹¹⁰

101. Since September, RSF patrols and checkpoints restricted civilian access to the airport. Sources reported to the Panel that aeroplanes had been arriving at night, usually between 11 p.m. and 3 a.m., using infrared landing equipment.¹¹¹ Eyewitnesses observed RSF convoys – three to four escorted trucks – leaving shortly after the landings and heading north-west.

102. The Panel identified two routes for supplies from Nyala (see table below).

Table 3
Supply routes from Nyala

<i>Route start</i>	<i>Route details</i>	<i>Final destination</i>
Nyala	Munwashi (South Darfur) → Tabit (North Darfur) → Guellab (North Darfur)	El Fasher
Nyala	Douma (South Darfur) → Changal (North Darfur) → Khazzan Jadid (North Darfur) → Wadaa (North Darfur) → Kouma (North Darfur)	El Fasher/other frontlines, including Khartoum

103. In response, on 9 and 11 November, SAF launched retaliatory air strikes on Nyala airport and densely populated neighbourhoods such as Masani¹¹² (see sect. V) using Antonov An-12 aircraft.¹¹³

¹⁰⁶ RSF co-opted prominent militia and armed group leaders as mobile commanders, deploying them across key front lines depending on operational needs.

¹⁰⁷ This section is based on 23 interviews with eyewitnesses, RSF members, SAF-aligned joint forces, individuals with direct knowledge of operations at Nyala airport, local residents and members of SAF-aligned joint forces.

¹⁰⁸ The Panel verified aircraft landings on 21 and 24 September, and on 7, 12 and 13 November, through multiple interviews conducted between September and November 2024.

¹⁰⁹ Airports of Nyala, El Fasher and Geneina.

¹¹⁰ For example, ground confrontations between the RSF and SAF-aligned joint forces have taken place since the end of September at Bir Mazza, north of Kutum, and Kulbus (see section XI.B and annex 5), north of Geneina.

¹¹¹ First-hand sources of airport operations and the RSF activities.

¹¹² Such as Masani, Hay al-Matar and Hay el-Rahman.

¹¹³ Military sources involved in operations informed the Panel that an Antonov An-12 had been used in the Nyala air strikes. The SAF Air Force possesses five Antonov An-12, one Antonov An-26 and four Antonov An-30/32.

D. Interceptions of RSF materiel

104. On 19 November, a mobile unit commanded by Abdelmajed Hassan (GSLF/Janna faction) ambushed RSF vehicles that were transporting ammunition from southern Libya to Darfur.¹¹⁴ The ambush occurred at Jebel Eredi (North Darfur). Although most of the seized crates transporting military materiel were obliterated or defaced to remove identifying markings, the Panel was informed that the seized materiel contained eight crates of 81-mm high-explosive mortar rounds, 11 crates of 120-mm high-explosive mortar rounds and an undetermined number of 75-mm Type 69 rocket-propelled grenade ammunition. The Panel requested information from the possible manufacturers of the ammunition and from the relevant authorities in two Member States in order to trace the origin of the military materiel and its transfer to Darfur.

E. SAF airdrops¹¹⁵

105. Since April, the Panel verified 10 parachuted airdrops of military supplies to SAF and the SAF-aligned joint force in El Fasher.¹¹⁶ These contained ammunition, light weapons, satellite phones, food, medicines and cash.¹¹⁷ The Panel's analysis of a video from El Fasher showed SAF-aligned joint force fighters unboxing the airdropped 23x152mm cannon rounds for a ZSU-23 anti-aircraft weapon system.¹¹⁸ Since April 2024, airdrops became the only resupply channel for SAF and its allies, as RSF fortified its positions around Mellit and cut off overland routes. Additional airdrops in Umm Barru (see para. 11) delivered crucial supplies to bolster the SAF-aligned joint force desert campaign.¹¹⁹

F. Proliferation of arms black markets in Darfur¹²⁰

106. The proliferation of weapons fuelled the growth of arms black markets across Darfur. The Panel obtained information from Al Malaja and Al Qadra markets in Nyala, where arms predominantly stemmed from diversion and seizures.¹²¹ This included materiel captured by RSF from smaller SAF units and command posts during the takeover of South Darfur in November 2023, as well as stockpiles transported from Khartoum and other active frontlines.¹²² RSF fighters returning to South Darfur

¹¹⁴ This section is based on 14 interviews conducted with senior commanders and members of SAF-aligned joint forces overseeing the interception operations, individuals closely involved in the operation, and the RSF local command, corroborated through video footage shared with the Panel by GSLF/Jana faction.

¹¹⁵ This section is based on 18 interviews with commanders and fighters from SAF-aligned joint forces and RSF, as well as military sources and residents of El Fasher, supported by verified video evidence, from May to November 2024.

¹¹⁶ Several airdrops have taken place since mid-April, including on 16 and 26 April; 13, 18 and 24 May; 5 and 22 June; and 22, 24 and 27 August, corroborated by both footage and witness accounts from El Fasher. Two primary methods exist for aerial resupply – parachute drops and pallet sliding from low altitude. SAF has more frequently used parachute drops, which allow for safer delivery of supplies by cushioning the landing, though this can make the drop more visible to observers.

¹¹⁷ Corroborated through multiple independent sources and cross-referenced with prior findings.

¹¹⁸ The video quality made it difficult to determine the manufacturing dates.

¹¹⁹ Additional information is on file with the Secretariat and available upon request.

¹²⁰ The section is based on 18 interviews with Nyala residents and RSF fighters in South and West Darfur who provided insights on weapons market dynamics.

¹²¹ Data gathered from those markets include weapon types, prices, sources, ammunition availability, sales patterns, buyer/seller profiles and weapon origins.

¹²² For example, Munwashi garrison and Kass.

were reported to have sold weapons acquired on the battlefield, with some individuals carrying multiple firearms for resale.¹²³

Table 4

Weapons available on arms black markets

<i>Weapon type</i>	<i>Price (SDG)</i>	<i>Price (USD)</i>	<i>Notes</i>
FN FAL 7.62x51mm	1,500,000	600	—
Kalashnikov models	450,000–600,000	170–230	Various models
Tokarev rifle (Norinco CQ 3-56 copy)	2,000,000–2,500,000	770–960	Less popular due to higher price and scarce ammunition
DShK machine gun	Not specified		Heavy weapon, available

107. Additional arms black markets have emerged in RSF-controlled areas, notably in Saraf Umrah and Kabkabiya in North Darfur and Habila in West Darfur.

XII. Recommendations

108. The Panel recommends that the Committee:

(a) Remind the parties to the conflict in Darfur again to adhere to their obligations under international humanitarian law, including their obligations to protect civilians from violence, including women and girls from sexual violence, and remind the warring parties that those who commit violations of international humanitarian law or other atrocities may be subject to targeted sanctions measures in accordance with paragraph 3 (c) of Security Council resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#);

(b) Reiterate its demand that the Government of the Sudan immediately cease conducting offensive military flights in and over the Darfur region, in accordance with paragraph 6 of Council resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#);

(c) Remind all parties to the conflict of their binding obligations regarding the transfer of arms and military materiel to Darfur, under paragraphs 7 and 8 of Council resolution [1556 \(2004\)](#), and reiterate that those who breach the arms embargo may be designated for targeted measures in accordance with paragraph 3 (c) of Council resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#).

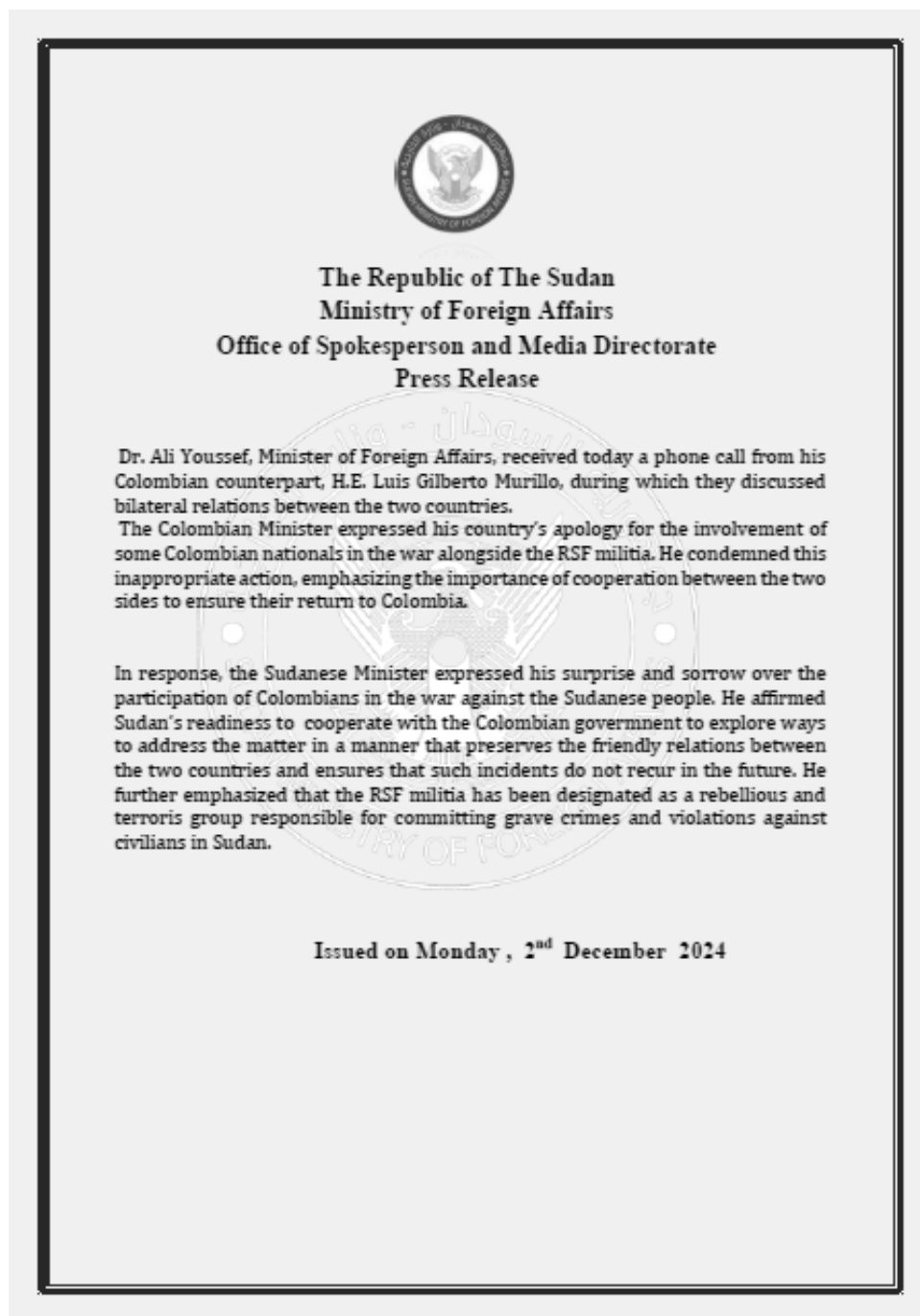
¹²³ Additional information is on file with the Secretariat and available upon request.

Annexes

Annex 1: Methodology

1. The Panel strived to adhere with the methodological standards recommended by the Informal Working Group of the Security Council on General Issues of Sanctions (S/2006/997). Those standards call for reliance on verified documents and, wherever possible, on first-hand, on-site observations by the experts themselves, including photographs (paragraph 22). Furthermore, the Panel endeavoured to ensure that its assertions were corroborated by solid information and that its findings are substantiated by credible sources (paragraph 23).
2. When physical inspection was not possible, the Panel sought to corroborate information using multiple, independent sources to appropriately meet the highest achievable standard, placing a higher value on statements by principal actors and firsthand witnesses to events.
3. The Panel used satellite imagery procured by the United Nations from private providers to support investigations, as well as open-source imagery.
4. While the Panel wishes to be as transparent as possible, in situations in which identifying sources would have exposed them or others to unacceptable safety risks, the Panel decided not to include identifying information in this document and instead relevant information was shared amongst at least two Panel members and is on file.
5. The Panel reviewed social media, but no information gathered was used as evidence unless it could be corroborated using multiple independent or technical sources, including eyewitnesses, to appropriately meet the highest achievable standard of proof.
6. The Panel used photographic evidence obtained from the public domain and provided by sources. However, photographs were not used as evidence unless corroborated by multiple independent experts, such as geolocation specialists and metadata analysts. In cases where this was not possible, photographs were only accepted as evidence if corroborated by at least three independent sources who were present at the time and place where the photographs were taken.
7. All airstrikes were verified using a combination of at least three independent sources, including on-the-ground interlocutors, eyewitness accounts, open-source reporting, geolocation of user-generated content, and geo-located satellite imagery which confirmed ground damage coinciding with specific airstrike.
8. The Panel has placed importance on the rule of consensus among the Panel members and agreed that, if differences and/or reservations arise during the development of the report, it would only adopt the text, conclusions and recommendations by a majority of four out of the five members. In the event of a recommendation for designation of an individual or an entity, such recommendation would be done based on consensus.
9. The Panel is committed to impartiality in investigating incidents of breaches to the sanctions regime by all parties.
10. The Panel is equally committed to the highest degree of fairness and has offered the opportunity to reply to Member States, individuals or entities in most incidents that are covered. Their response has been taken into consideration in the Panel's findings.
opportunity to reply

Annex 2: Press Release by the Republic of the Sudan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Office of the Spokesperson and Media Directorate, 2 December 2024, on a phone call from the Colombian Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E Luis Eduardo Murillo, to Dr. Ali Youssef, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sudan, apologizing for the involvement of Colombian nationals with the Rapid Support Forces.



Annex 3: SAF Airstrikes across Darfur¹²⁴

Map of Darfur providing examples of indiscriminate airstrikes in each of the five Darfur states. All airstrikes were verified through a combination of at least 3 different sources including: on the ground interlocutors, eyewitnesses, open-source reporting, geolocation of user-generated content and geo-located satellite imagery confirming damage on the ground.



Map showing locations of five airstrikes, case extracts detailed below, one per state in Darfur. All airstrikes were verified through a combination of at least 3 different sources including: on the ground interlocutors, eyewitnesses, open-source reporting, geolocation of user-generated content and satellite imagery confirming damage on the ground.

Source: The Centre for Information Resilience (CIR). Credit: Esri, HERE, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community. (The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.)

¹²⁴ Case studies are on file with the Secretariat, available upon request.

Annex 4: Press Communiqué of the Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC), July 26, 2024

COALITION DES PATRIOTES

POUR LE CHANGEMENT

COORDINATION GENERALE

COORDINATION MILITAIRE

ETAT MAJOR GENERAL

N°_036/ CPC /CG /CM/SP.024



REPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE

Unité – Dignité – Travail

**COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE DE LA
COALITION DES PATRIOTES POUR LE
CHANGEMENT (CPC), RELATIF A LA
SITUATION DANS NOTRE PAYS LA
REPUBLIQUE-CENTRAFRICAINE.**

L'histoire des nations est jalonnée d'épisodes tragiques, qui exigent des peuples un sens du sacrifice très élevé. Les femmes et hommes placés en situation de responsabilités doivent s'élever à la hauteur des enjeux et prendre les décisions dictées par les situations, en prenant la mesure de leur complexité. La république centrafricaine ne fait pas exception à cette loi de l'histoire. Les femmes et hommes, à quelque camp qu'ils appartiennent, aujourd'hui placés en situation d'exercer des responsabilités, se doivent d'en tirer toutes les leçons. La Coalition des Patriotes pour le Changement (CPC), qui regroupe diverses organisations patriotiques, en prend toute la mesure.

Face aux crimes multiples ciblant massivement et tout particulièrement certaines composantes de la population centrafricaine, de ce fait exposées à une extermination physique ; face au déni, par les gouvernants, des droits fondamentaux du peuple centrafricain ; confronté à l'autisme des responsables qui se sont succédé à la tête de l'Etat depuis plusieurs années, lesquels ont conçu, planifié et mis à exécution une politique d'exclusion et d'extermination, des patriotes filles et fils de la république centrafricaine ont été dans l'obligation morale de prendre leurs responsabilités face à l'histoire, en conformité avec les dispositions pertinentes du droit international qui reconnaît aux peuples opprimés le droit d'assurer leur survie. C'est dans ce cadre et en réponse à cette nécessité, que diverses organisations ont vu le jour le... comme mouvements politiques par vocation, militaires par nécessité.

Toutefois, ces mouvements politico-militaires, depuis leur création, ont toujours prôné le dialogue comme moyen privilégié de résolution de la mal gouvernance

Annex 5: SAF aligned joint force campaign against RSF logistics, background

The pattern of fighting in El Fasher was replicated in the desert locations of North Darfur, key areas for supplies through which fuel, ammunition, and military equipment has been moving from eastern Chad and southern Libya to Sudan since the onset of the current conflict in Sudan.

SAF-aligned Zaghawa groups, led by SLA/MM and the GSLf/Janna faction, had been coexisting and using the same supply roads throughout 2023. Loss of control over these key supply routes would seriously impair RSF's ability to conduct its military operations not just in Darfur but in other parts of Sudan. Whoever prevails in this territory would likely have the upper hand in the broader conflict in Darfur and the Sudan.

Similar to their tactics deployed at the beginning of war in El Fasher, from January to March, SAF conducted airstrikes against RSF's position around Zuruk. Without ground forces to capitalize on its airstrikes, SAF's campaign was limited impact on RSF logistics.

By June, as the battle in El Fasher was reaching its peak, SAF started relying on the local Zaghawa forces. In armed confrontations with RSF both in Zuruk and Wadi Ambar, SAF leveraged Zaghawa's knowledge of the terrain and the supply routes to dynamically engage RSF on the ground, in at least three confrontations which transpired on 3 June, 13 June and 14 July. Several Zaghawa commanders emerged during these battles, including:

Brigadier General Munir Hamid Arabia (Munir Malong): Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, GSLf/Juma faction, commander of Wadi Ambar and Wadi Hawar.

- Abdelaziz Miri: Mobile commander for SLM/MM in Wadi Hawar.
- Jerwa Abaker (Suni): Field commander for SLM/MM in northern Wadi Ambar.

Salah Mustafa (Salah Jok), a Zaghawa and former SLA/AW Inspector General previously stationed in Libya. Although Salah Mustafa fought alongside government forces independently in these battles, his role remains significant, as he was the main figure in SLA/AW, alongside Karjakola in in Libya (See Panel final report S/2021/40).

Annex 6: Response to the Panel's correspondence to the Government of Sudan dated 17 December 2024

Republic of the Sudan

Permanent Mission to the United Nations
New York
The Permanent Representative



جمهورية السودان
البعثة الدائمة لدى الأمم المتحدة
نيويورك
المندوب الدائم

No: SUN/324/2024

December 17, 2024

Dear Ms. Moncada,

I have the honor to refer to your letter dated 27 November 2024 regarding the Panel of Experts' request for information concerning airstrikes conducted by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) in Darfur. On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Sudan, I wish to reaffirm our full commitment to cooperating with the Panel and addressing any concerns raised. I take this opportunity to provide the following clarifications:

1. Nature and Role of the SAF:

The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) is a professional, non-partisan, and non-tribal institution that derives its authority from the 2019 Constitutional Document and operates under the Sudanese Armed Forces Act of 2007 (Amended 2019). It remains committed to upholding the Constitution, international law, and all treaties ratified by the Republic of Sudan, as well as respecting the customs and principles of warfare.

2. Constitutional and Legal Duties of the SAF:

The SAF bears the constitutional and legal responsibility of defending Sudan's sovereignty and protecting its people from internal and external threats. This duty is enshrined in domestic law and supported by Article 51 of the United Nations Charter (Right to Self-Defense). The current armed

conflict stems from an insurgency initiated on April 15, 2023, when the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) refused to obey legitimate military orders. This rebellion has escalated into widespread violence, threatening Sudan's sovereignty, constitutional order, and civilian infrastructure, it developed into a full pledged war of aggression sponsored by UAE.

3. RSF Insurgency and Atrocities:

The RSF has conducted large-scale terrorist and destructive operations across Sudan, particularly in Darfur, Gezira, Kordofan, and Blue Nile. Their actions include war crimes and crimes against humanity such as ethnic cleansing, genocide, destruction of infrastructure, hostage-taking, child recruitment, and the use of civilians as human shields. These atrocities, supported by regional powers including the UAE and Chad, constitute a direct violation of Security Council Resolutions 1591 (2005) and 2736 (2024). They are now under investigation by the ICC.

4. Clarification Regarding Airstrikes:

The SAF's military doctrine is inherently defensive, as stipulated by domestic law and reflected in the designation of the relevant ministry as the Ministry of Defense. While the figure of 100 airstrikes cited by the Panel is inaccurate and the sources questionable, it must be clarified that all SAF air operations are defensive, preventive, or humanitarian in nature. The SAF's actions are carried out in compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL), particularly the principles of distinction, military necessity, and proportionality.

5. Targeting and Precautionary Measures:

The SAF adheres to the principles and rules of IHL during all military operations:

- **Distinction:** SAF airstrikes are strictly limited to legitimate military targets that make an effective contribution to enemy operations. Civilian objects are never deliberately targeted.
- **Military Necessity and Proportionality:** The SAF ensures that any incidental loss of civilian life or damage to civilian objects is proportional to the anticipated military advantage.
- **Precautionary Measures:** The SAF employs rigorous procedures to ensure the protection of civilians, including:
 - Use of targeting and engagement cells within command structures, consisting of operational staff, legal advisers, and intelligence officers to validate targets and ensure compliance with IHL.
 - Issuance of prior warnings and advisories to civilians to avoid military zones and insurgent gatherings. Notable examples include the following circulars:
 - May 11, 2023
 - May 19, 2023
 - July 20, 2023
 - July 24, 2023
 - December 10, 2023
 - March 26, 2024.

6. RSF Violations of IHL:

The SAF wishes to highlight the RSF's systematic use of civilian facilities as military bases, storage depots, and launch sites for attacks. Such violations are in clear contravention of Article 51(7) of the First Geneva Protocol, which prohibits the use of civilians as human shields. The RSF has also

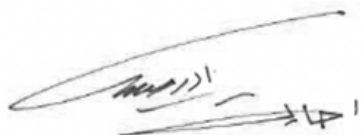
obtained sophisticated weapons through regional support, including deliveries from the UAE via Umm Jars Airport in Chad and military bases in Libya.

7. Compliance with International Obligations:

The SAF remains committed to fulfilling its constitutional and international obligations while defending Sudan's sovereignty and territorial integrity. All military operations are conducted with strict adherence to the principles of IHL, ensuring that the SAF fulfills its duty to protect civilians and restore stability in the country.

In conclusion, the SAF's actions are justified under Sudanese law, international humanitarian law, and the UN Charter. We urge the Panel of Experts to consider the broader context of the ongoing war of aggression and the extensive violations committed by the RSF. The Government of Sudan remains committed to cooperating with the Security Council and its relevant bodies to address all issues of mutual concern.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.



Al-Harith Idriss Al-Harith
Permanent Representative

Ms. Laura Victoria Bernal Moncada
Coordinator Panel of Experts on the Sudan
established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1591 (2005)