

Topic #1: The war in Sudan

I. Background Information

Sudan (The Republic of the Sudan) is a country in Northeast Africa. It has a population of 50 million people and occupies around 1,886,000 square kilometers, making it Africa's third-largest country by area and the third-largest by area in the Arab League (Arab world).

The current situation in Sudan being at war is created by a long historical chain of conflicts, political coups and lusts for power. To understand how this war in Sudan developed in today's form, one needs to get the information about the main actors.

First, it is important to describe Sudan's political and governmental history. As Sudan in general, is a country which experienced a few coups, the situations were always similar. Leader by leader has been brought down by military officers.

Abdel Al-Dahab was the one who installed a new democratic government which ruled just for a short time of 4 years ended when Omar al-Bashir made a new coup.

Omar al-Bashir ruled Sudan from 1989 to 2019 thanks to his strategy called coup-proofing to prevent another coup. He surrounded himself with protectors but kept each one in check so they couldn't overthrow him.

The Sudan's official army - Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) were in a strong relationship with him. The army brutalized civilians on his command in southern Sudan. As the army was tied up in the South, rebel groups attacked troops in the city in crisis, Darfur. This resulted in the situation in which Omar al-Bashir relied and armed local brutal Arab militias known as the Janjaweed, which focused on wiping out Darfuri rebels but also civilians at Bashir's direction. When SAF joined the Darfur conflict, these two troops together were responsible for destruction, mass killing, torture, rape and displacement of civilians.

What's more, Omar Al-Bashir searched in Janjaweed his protector, precisely one of the Janjaweed leaders, Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo and financially supported him.

The situation changed in 2011 when South Sudan gained its independence. In addition to the reduction of Omar Al-Bashir's power, Sudan lost many of its oil resources leaving the country poorer than it already was.

This resulted in making Janjaweed the official status as a paramilitary force called the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Omar Al-Bashir to expand his power supported both SAF and RSF financially, which escalated in the economic crisis.

In 2018 huge protests broke out by civilians. Those protests which lasted for months caused Omar Al-Bashir's removal from power in 2019. From this coup, Sudan is ruled by SAF and RSF.

The recent war in Sudan erupted in April 2023 between the two leading forces. Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. The armed conflict is affecting millions of lives in Sudan and causing mass displacement, food insecurity and education challenges that require immediate humanitarian help.

II. United Nations involvement

The UN's involvement in Sudan in history, has been multifaceted, focusing on humanitarian aid, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, human rights, and development.

UNHCR emergency teams are tirelessly working with authorities, partners and other UN agencies to provide support to newcomers, establish transit centers for rest and access to essential protection services, and distribute emergency supplies such as blankets, soap and mosquito nets. Inside Sudan, UNHCR is assisting both refugees and internally displaced people with shelter, non-food items and protection, as the security situation allows. UNHCR is also supporting education programming for children who have been displaced.

The UN Security Council is a key player in addressing the ongoing conflict in Sudan, wielding significant influence through its resolutions aimed at mitigating the crisis and fostering peace. Via resolutions The Security Council has adopted various resolutions to address the conflict, including demands for ceasefires.

Human rights monitoring became The UN's key impact in the war in Sudan. UN has called for investigations into widespread human rights abuses, including massacres, sexual violence, and the use of child soldiers. The UN Human Rights Council condemned it for atrocities and violations of international law.

III. Bloc positions and possible solutions

Generally, the most important is Ceasefire and humanitarian access. A priority for the UN and international community is to secure a ceasefire to allow the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Then, ensuring accountability for War Crimes and Human Rights Violations is key.

In what is concerning Sudanese civilians, humanitarian aid to Sudanese civilians must be prioritized.

In what is concerning Sudan's foreign relations, Sudan is generally in line with the Muslim Arab world, but the relations are also based on Sudan's economic ties with the People's Republic of China and Russia.

IV. Sources and useful links

Basic Information

<https://sudan.un.org/en/sdgs>

Explanation of the war

<https://www.unrefugees.org/news/sudan-crisis-explained/>

BBC news - Sudan's 'invisible crisis' - where more children are fleeing war than anywhere else

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c170kgr8e00o>

UN news - Sudan conflict

<https://news.un.org/en/focus/sudan-conflict>