Saving Sudan from Itself: Addressing the Structural Fault Lines

Col Festus Aboagye (Rtd)

Abstract

Sudan has faced internal political turmoil and fragmentary armed conflicts since independence in 1956. Transitioning from a dependent territory to a politically and democratically stable independent country has been challenging. The conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on 15 April 2023 resulted from a power struggle between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary group, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). This confrontation has far-reaching consequences for Sudan's political stability, security situation, and humanitarian conditions, impeding national reconciliation and regional and international peace and stability. The clash highlights the challenges faced by the transitional government and the urgent need for pragmatic measures to address factionalism within the military and underscores the need for a more comprehensive understanding of the underlying causes, dynamics, and implications of the conflict. This paper aims to contribute to scholarly discussions on conflict resolution, political extremism, and state capture by the military and the prospects for national peace and regional and international peace and stability by addressing the structural causes of conflict rather than the triggers. The paper used a qualitative approach relying on content analysis method. The material requirement is the use of secondary sources.

Keywords: *Conflict, military, coups, politics, government, security, militia, factionalism, protracted social conflicts.*

Introduction

Without a doubt, Sudan has, since independence in 1956, grappled with internal political turmoil and fragmentary armed conflicts for decades. For Sudan, achieving statehood has been the most significant and easy endeavour. However, transforming and transitioning from a dependent territory to a politically and democratically stable independent country has been challenging. This debacle occurred on 15 April 2023, when Khartoum and the world were consternated about heavy gunfire, explosions, and airstrikes in Sudan's capital. The heavy exchanges emanated from a power struggle between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the powerful paramilitary group, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The power struggle was essentially a showdown between the leader of the country's Transitional Sovereignty Council (TSC) and former army commander, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his number two-man, General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, also known as "Hemedti", commander of the redoubtable paramilitary group, the RSF. The two generals were battling to control an already chaotic military-security state.

The confrontation between the SAF and the RSF, one of the most significant events in Sudan's recent history, has had and will continue to have far-reaching consequences for Sudan's political stability, security situation, and humanitarian conditions, impeding national reconciliation as well as regional and international peace and stability. Domestically, the clash has highlighted the challenges faced by the transitional government and the urgent need for pragmatic measures to address the factionalism within the military. The confrontation, stemming from incompatibilities over the RSF's integration into the Sudanese security apparatus, exacerbated pre-existing political tensions within Sudan and created a power vacuum in which more instability was fuelled. It underscored that the RSF was indispensable to any future government and security framework. It further highlighted the factionalism within Sudan's military

and the transitional government's ineffectual ability to consolidate its political control. In humanitarian terms, the conflict has undermined Sudan's responsibility to protect the civilian population and, amid the ongoing crisis, to facilitate humanitarian access. All these have thwarted regional and international efforts in promoting a sustainable and inclusive peaceful resolution to the conflicts, albeit short-term, through dialogue, reconciliation, and a commitment to justice ACLED (2023a). Regarding causality, the clashes formed part of the saga of the al-Burhan and Hemedti power struggle after the removal of Sudan's former leader, Omar al-Bashir, in April 2019. Tensions had brewed over the relaunch of the political process for the country's transition to a civilian government under the more recent framework agreement, particularly the integration of the RSF into the military (ACLED, 2023b).

None of the diplomatic pronouncements and initiatives deployed throughout the conflict achieved a discernible shift in the balance of power. On the contrary, several ceasefires collapsed or failed to take hold as the conflict entered its eleventh week in late June 2023 because of the unrelenting postures and actions of the SAF and RSF; the conflict continued unabated, escalated in Khartoum, and spiralled out of control across the country, with an incalculable humanitarian toll. However, there were indications of rising tensions. Besides increased military exercises, coupled with the imposition of security inspections and frequent closures of roads and bridges weeks before the confrontation, the two protagonists, despite the public smokescreen of unity, also undertook rival diplomatic missions to neighbouring countries to solicit support (ACLED, 2023a). So why was the intelligence missed, and why did these measures fail to prevent the conflict?

This analytical paper examines the SAF and RSF confrontation in Sudan in 2023 to understand better this critical event's underlying causes, dynamics, and implications. It argues that the elusive and

tortuous post-Bashir transition was only the proximate cause of the conflict, rooted in more profound state fragility, protracted social conflicts and bad civil-military, with an economic subtext. By conducting a thorough analysis of the situation, including an exploration, albeit briefly, of the political, security, and humanitarian factors at play, this paper aims to shed light on the motivations and actions of both the SAF and RSF groups and how they engendered an elusive and tortuous transition in Sudan. Additionally, it seeks to assess the impact of this confrontation on the wider Sudanese society, including its effects on peace, stability, human rights, and the political transition. Through a comprehensive examination of this event, the paper also aims to contribute to scholarly discussions on conflict resolution, political extremism and state capture by the military, and the prospects for national peace and regional and international peace and stability by addressing the structural causes of conflict rather than the triggers.

The paper focuses on the syndrome of Sudan's persistent conflicts and their historical context and antecedents, highlighting the perils of political adventuring in creating extra-constitutional quasi-non-state paramilitary forces, as well as minding the pitfall of international community inaction and regionalisation as conflict prolongation factors. It concludes with the need for a structural prevention approach in resolving the root causes of Sudan's protracted conflict. It proffers some broad recommendations on Sudan's national and regional security and stability. The paper used a qualitative approach relying on content analysis method. The material requirement is the use of secondary sources.

Sudan's Persistent Conflicts: Historical Context and Antecedents

Since independence in 1956 from the condominium of Egypt and the United Kingdom, the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Sudan has

suffered from numerous changes in government emanating from tensions among its diverse cultural, religious, and political constituencies. In summary, Sudan has witnessed several constitutions and regime changes—depending on the counting method, six military coups in 1964, 1985, 1989, 2019, and 2021, and now 2023 and possibly still counting. First, the newly independent country was torn apart from 1955-1972 by the costly and divisive civil war, mainly in the south but punctuated by violent incidents in the north (Britannica, 2023a). Although the Addis Ababa Agreement (1972) ended the conflict, it did so temporarily. In 1983 the civil war resumed, exacerbated by the relative lack of economic development in the south as a new source of regional grievance, coupled with northern leaders' continuing attempts to Islamise the Sudanese legal system. After unsuccessful attempts to end the civil war through numerous light prevention efforts–discussions, ceasefires, and agreements, the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) ended the war with a semi-autonomous status for South Sudan, which gained independence on 9 July 2011 following an independence referendum. The road to normalcy was shattered by the popular uprising in 2019 and further set back by the 2021 military coup.

As the north-south war ended, the twenty-year-long conflict in the Darfur region was emerging with more humanitarian effects in civilian deaths and displacement of people, further inflaming violence. After a 2004 ceasefire and the deployment of the AU Mission in Sudan-Darfur (AMIS), by 2007, the conflict had resulted in a humanitarian crisis that had killed 300,000 people and displaced 2.5 million. Even though subsequent mediation efforts in Abuja (2006), Tripoli (2007) and Doha (2009) failed to bridge the gaps between Khartoum and the armed opposition groups of Darfur, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) authorised the AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), which drew-down in 2019. Despite the August 2020 peace agreement signed between Sudan's Transitional Government and

the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), Arab militias, the Janjaweed, have continued to target civilians, resulting in several severe violent episodes since 2021 and the continued displacement of at least half a million people who remain in camps in Darfur, two decades after the conflict broke. The World Food Programme reported in 2022 that 65 per cent of the population in West Darfur is food insecure—the highest level in Sudan. According to Human Rights Watch, there is no meaningful action by Sudan's transitional government or the current military rulers to address the underlying causes of the violence in Darfur, including marginalisation and disputes over control of and access to land and natural resources (Aljazeera, 2023).

Although the transitional government established in August 2019 had been working to implement reforms and restore stability, progress was slow and beset with four significant challenges: political, economic, social and security. Ongoing tensions between the military and civilian factions within the government define the political difficulties. At such a slow reform rate, recent tensions between the army and the RSF around disagreements over the RSF's integration into the military and who should oversee that process quickly boiled to the surface (EIU, 2023). This sets back efforts to restore the country to civilian rule and end the political crisis sparked by the 25 October 2021 military coup. In the economic domain, Sudan was facing an economic crisis informed by high inflation and a shortage of essential goods. This, in turn, led to widespread protests and social unrest. As the World Bank (2023) notes, Sudan's economic woes stemmed from South Sudan's secession, which led to multiple economic shocks, including the loss of oil revenue that had accounted for more than half of the Sudan government's revenue and 95 per cent of its exports, reducing economic growth and resulting in double-digit consumer price inflation, which, together with increased fuel prices, triggered violent protests in September 2013 and continues

to affect economic stability. According to the CIA (Factbook, 2023), Sudan's real GDP per capita (estimated has been declining from $4,100 (2019) to $3,900 (2020) to $3,700 as the consumer price inflation rate (estimated) kept increasing from 50.99 per cent (2019) to 150.32 per cent (2020) and 382.82 per cent (2021).

State Fragility and Bad Civil-Military Relations

The decades-long political instability, economic crisis, social unrest, and protracted military involvement in politics, besides the specificities of other structural contexts, such as the historical and external factors, arguably make Sudan a fragile state.1 Added to that are the episodes of protracted social conflicts in Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile states, contextualised within Azar's theory of protracted social conflict representing prolonged and violent struggles by communal groups for such basic needs as security, recognition, acceptance, and access to political institutions and economic participation, which provide the sources of many contemporary conflicts within (rather than between) states (Ramsbotham, 2005). Internally, too, it is arguable that Sudan's security sector has been misgoverned as a result of a syndrome of strongmen vis-a-vis weak institutions and multiple faulty security policies more for the regime than state security—the military expansion after 1969 to cope with the long-running rebellion in the south; the establishment of the militia in 1990–91 that was later augmented with the incorporation of the Janjaweed that had been active in the early 2000s, by 2013/14, into the new RSF; coupled with the institutionalisation of a military draft to supply recruits for the war with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) rebels. As noted in the CIA (2023), the dominance of Sudan's military regimes on the national political landscape since independence also presents undertones of the Islamic orientation of these regimes and the officer corps. Nevertheless, exploring the external interests informing this phenomenon is outside the paper's scope. It suffices to note that religious

identity, with the admixture of ethnocentrism, has constituted a factor in many of the regional conflicts in Sudan.

Post-independence, Sudan has been governed by fifteen entities comprising three (20 per cent) five-member multiparty sovereignty councils/committees, three (20 per cent) civilians, seven (47 per cent) SAF transitional military councils, and lately, two (13 per cent) military-dominated sovereignty councils. Institutionally, the military (SAF) has occupied power for 50 per cent of the entities.

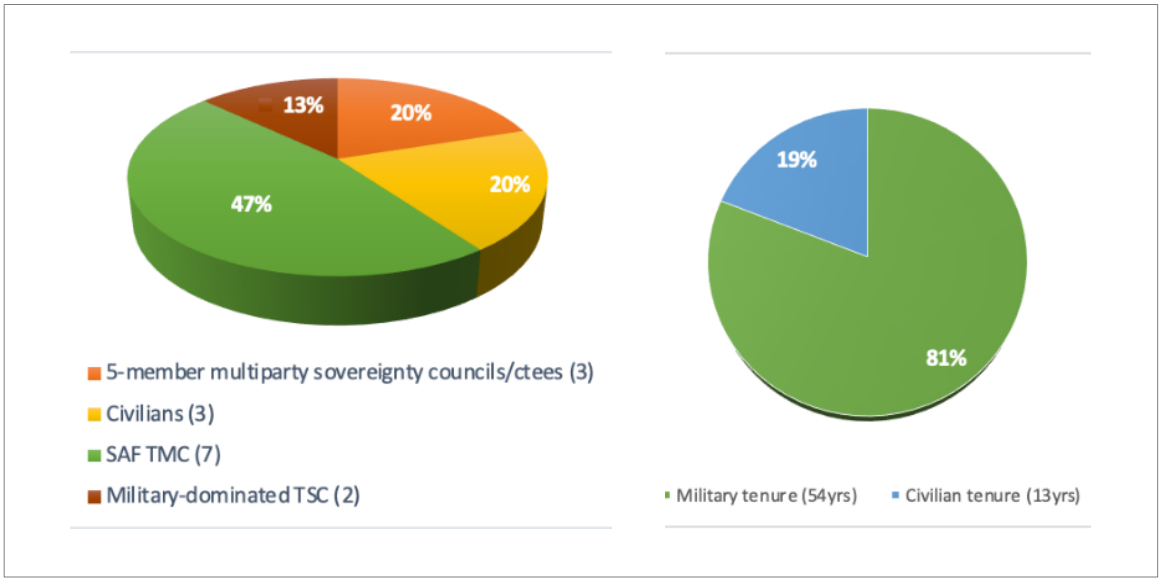
See Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1: Heads of State of Sudan, 1956-

Srl	Entity	Administration	Duration	Remarks
	5-member Council	Sovereignty Council	1 Jan 56–17 Nov 58	Civilian. Multiparty. 2 yrs, 320 days.
	General Ibrahim Abboud	SAF Supreme Council	17 Nov 58–16 Nov 64	Military. 5 yrs, 365 days.
	Sirr Al-Khatim Al-Khalifa	National Umma Party	16 Nov–3 Dec 64	Civilian. Forced resignation after 18 days.
	5-member Committee	First Committee of Sovereignty	3 Dec 64–10 Jun 65	Civilian. Multiparty; 180 days.
	5-member Committee	Second Committee of Sovereignty	10 Jun 65–8 Jul 65	Civilian. Multiparty; 28 days.
	Ismail al-Azhari–Chairman	Democratic Unionist Party	8 Jul 65–25 May 69	Civilian. 3 yrs, 321 days, Deposed.
	Lt Gen Jaafar Nimeiri–Chairman/President	SAF National Revolutionary Command Council Sudanese Socialist Union	25 May 69-6 Apr 85 (71–77–85)	Military. 15 yrs, 316 days. Overthrown in a communist coup in Jul 71; reinstated after a Nimeiri presidency referendum on 15 Sep 1971. Civilian. Returned to power twice as the sole candidate in presidential elections in Apr 77 and Apr 83.
	FM Abdel Swar al-Dahab	SAF Transitional Military Council	6 Apr 85–6 May 86	Military. 1 yr 30 days. Handed over power after '86 parliamentary election.
	Ahmed al-Mirghani–Chairman	Democratic Unionist Party Supreme Council	6 May 86–30 Jun 89	After multi-party elections. Deposed after 3 yrs, 55 days.
	Lt Gen Omar al-Bashir–Chairman	SAF Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation National Congress Party	30 Jun 89–11 Apr 19 (96-2000-2010-2015)	Military. Deposed after 29 yrs, 285 days. Incarcerated, tried, and convicted on multiple corruption charges. General elections held in 1996, 2000, 2010 and 2015. No voting took place in 11 southern districts in the '96 elections because of the civil war. Opposition groups boycotted the 96, 2010 and 2015 elections.
	Lt Gen Ahmed Awad Ibn Auf	SAF Transitional Military Council National Congress Party	11–13 Apr 2019	Resigned after being in office for a day.
	Lt Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan	SAF	12 Apr–20 Aug 2019	Military. 130 days.
	Sovereignty Council	Transitional Sovereignty Council	20 Aug 2019–25 Oct 2021	11-member civilian-military (TMC and FFC). 39-month transition to have ended with general elections. Overthrown by the SAF after 2 yrs, 65 days.
	Lt Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan	SAF Transitional Military Council	25 Oct–11 Nov 2021	Dissolved the TSC. Lasted 17 days.
	Sovereignty Council	Transitional Sovereignty Council	11 Nov 2021–	Reinstated a reshuffled TSC.1 yr, 170 days. Still counting as the incumbent.

Source: Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_heads_of_state_of_Sudan)

Figure 1: Comparative Civilian and Military Tenures of Office



Source: Generated by the Author from the data in Table 1.

In terms of tenures of office, however, the picture is very different from the institutional share of power. For about fifty-four (81 per cent) of its sixty-seven years of independence, non-consecutively between 1958–2023, Sudan has been ruled by six military men between the ranks of General and Field Marshal: General Ibrahim Abboud, Filed Marshal Jaafar Mohamed el-Nimeiri, Field Marshal Abdel Rahman Swar al-Dahab, Field Marshal Omar al-Bashir, Lieutenant General Ahmed Awad Ibn Auf, and Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, some multiple times. General Ibrahim Abboud assumed the position of head of state as Chairman of the Supreme Council after leading a military coup in 1958, resigning in 1965 due to general discontent around the rule of the military regime. Field Marshal Jaafar Mohamed el-Nimeiri, commander of the armed forces, ruled Sudan for sixteen years (1969–85) after seizing power in a military revolution in May 1969 as a Colonel and was deposed in a popular revolt in 1985. He was overthrown by military officers who established the Transitional Military Council led by Field Marshal al-Dahab from

1985-86. Omar al-Bashir overthrew the intervening elected Supreme Council government of Ahmed al-Mighani (1986–89) until 2019, when he was also ousted in a military coup, thus ruling the country for 30 years.

For the rest of the time, Sudan was governed by three sovereignty councils; the first five-member Sovereignty Council of rival nationalist factions ruled from January 1956 to November 1958 (two years and ten months), overthrown by Abboud, The second was the Committee of Sovereignty After Sirr Al-Khatim Al-Khalifa's (a senior civil servant) eighteen-day rule post-Abboud, for about a year (1964-65) before the leader of the National Unionist Party leader, Ismail al-Azhari, became president with limited powers from July 1965 until Nimeiri's National Revolutionary Command Council deposed him in 1969 (four years) and his subsequent one-party state from 1971–85. After multi-party elections, the Supreme Council of Ahmed al-Mighani was the last genuinely civilian administration from 1986–89 (3 years). The narrative of Sudan's military dominance on the political landscape implies that instead of being controlled and directed by the highest civilian authorities in the nation-state, the military has defied this logic of civil-military relations (Feaver, 1999) through a sophisticated system of coups. This ought to be rectified in returning Sudan to normalcy. The phenomenon could also be seen in the context of state capture (Kjaer, 2023), defined basically as the domination of policymaking by private, often corporate power or interest groups, or the dominance of strong and powerful interest groups over public bureaucracies ostensibly to reduce complexity or to refer to the permanent representation of well-organised hierarchical interest groups in the state apparatus. State capture in the corporatism context reflects the state's capitulation to specific interests. In a pluralist democracy, this form of state capture carries risks.

Considering its incessant regional conflicts since the state's inception, it is a guesstimate that the military's hold on political power in Sudan derives from the antithesis of Georges Clemenceau's dictum that "war is too important [not] to be left to the generals" or that "war is too serious a matter [not] to entrust to military men." ii It is a mindset that the armed forces are the best guarantor of the country's security and stability project, which is opposed to the democratic norms of military subservience to civilian authority. This misconception plays out in parts of Africa from the Maghreb to the wider Horn of Africa, especially the Sahel, where the rise of intractable insurgencies aroused the anger of the militaries in Mali (Fornof & Cole, 2012) and Burkina Faso (Moderan & Koné, 2022) to take power multiple times since 2012.iii Resolving Sudan's regional conflicts will make a civil war less likely and neutralise the justification for incessant military coups.

The Janjaweed and the RSF: From a Non-State to a State Actor

To put the current state of the conflict in Sudan into perspective, placing the trajectory and role of the protagonist RSF and its leader in the proper context as an irregular spoiler group is essential. The Janjaweed's strategic, operational, and tactical role in Sudan's defence and security architecture constituted a significant dimension of the country's fragility. The Janjaweed's transformation from a non-state armed group to a state actor arguably started in 1999-2000 when Khartoum began arming the Janjaweed forces in the face of the threats of insurgencies in Western and Northern Darfur. The Khartoum government then employed the Janjaweed as the vanguard and main counter-insurgency force against the escalation of the insurgency by the SLM/A and JEM. Despite soft-power efforts of the international community, the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS)iv restructured the group in August 2013 into the RSF, with better funded and equipped than the SAF. It drew its recruits from across Sudan beyond its original Darfuri Arab

groups to fight against rebel groups in Darfur, South Kordofan,v and the Blue Nile states, including the Sudan People's Liberation Army-North (SPLA-N) in the Nuba Mountains (CIA, 2023; ICG, 2013; de Waal, 2023). By 2006, several Janjaweed members were absorbed into the SAF, as the Janjaweed expanded to include some Arab tribes in eastern Darfur, not historically associated with the original Janjaweed.vi

The RSF is reportedly involved in business enterprises, such as gold mining (AC, 2023) in the Jebel Amer gold mines of Darfur, after defeating and capturing its arch-rival, Musa Hilal, who had rebelled against Bashir and refused to disarm the Popular Defence Forces; Musa Hilal and Hemedti hail from the same Arab Rizeigat tribe. When Sudan joined the Emirati-Saudi-led coalition's intervention in Yemen in March 2015, Bashir contributed as many as 40,000 troops during the peak of the war (2016-17).vii While Burhan, the current SAF chief, commanded Sudan's force, most fighters were drawn from Hemedti's RSF, making him some cash, too (de Waal, 2023). With the escalation of the Darfur conflict in 2003, the Janjaweed became one of the leading players in the battle against other Darfur rebel groups, notably the SLM/A, founded originally as the Darfur Liberation Front by members of three indigenous ethnic groups, the Fur, Zaghawa and Masalit, including Abdul Wahid al-Nur (Fur ethnicity) and Minni Minnawi (Zaghawa ethnicity); and the JEM founded by Khalil Ibrahim (Zaghawa ethnicity). Both the SLM/A and JEM were founded in 2002 following the publication of the Black Book in 2000, highlighting Sudan's structural inequalities.

Formed under Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo (aka Hemedti) as its commander in 2013, the RSF enjoyed a special but awkward place, initially under the NISS and later under the direct command of Bashir as his praetorian guard. Because of this, the RSF was better funded and equipped than the SAF and drew its recruits from across Sudan beyond its original Darfuri Arab

groups. Besides accusations of human rights abuses against civilians, the RSF is reportedly involved in business enterprises, such as gold mining (AC, 2023) in the Jebel Amer gold mines of Darfur, after defeating and capturing its arch-rival, Musa Hilal, who had rebelled against Bashir and refused to disarm the Popular Defence Forces; Musa Hilal and Hemedti hail from the same Arab Rizeigat tribe. When Sudan joined the Emirati-Saudi-led coalition's intervention in Yemen in March 2015, Bashir contributed as many as 40,000 troops during the peak of the war (2016-17).viii While Burhan, the current SAF chief, commanded Sudan's force, most fighters were drawn from Hemedti's RSF, making him some cash too (de Waal, 2023). Thus, the RSF is essentially a paramilitary group formed and led by General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti), considered one of the most powerful men in Sudan, a counter-insurgency force in the Darfur region. The group has since been involved in various other conflicts across the country. It has been accused of numerous human rights violations, including mass rape, torture, extrajudicial killings, forcible recruitment of child soldiers, and displacement of civilians from their homes. In 2004, the US State Department cited Musa Hilal and other leading Janjaweed commanders as suspected genocide criminals. It had declared the Janjaweed killings in Darfur as genocideix by October 2007 in the wake of an estimated 200,000-400,000 civilian killings over the previous three years (Kessler & Lynch, 2004).

Despite these criticisms, but also and because of them, RSF remains a powerful force in Sudan. The group has played a vital role, albeit negative, in the conflict in the Darfur region and has also been involved in the ongoing conflict in South Sudan. It is, therefore, imperative to find a constructive arrangement for its integration during the transition to civilian rule in Sudan.

An Elusive and Tortuous Transition

After the 2019 popular uprising led to the overthrow of long-time dictator Omar al-Bashir, who had ruled the country for 30 years, Sudan embarked on a thirty-nine-month transition to democracy from 20 Aug 2019. However, the transition to a democratic government and efforts to address the country's many challenges have been confronted by political turmoil, social unrest, and military conflict. On 6 June 2019, the AU PSC suspended Sudan's participation in all AU activities until establishing a civilian-led Transitional Authority as the only way to allow Sudan to exit from its current crisis (AU, 2023). The PSC further decided to impose punitive measures on individuals and entities obstructing the establishment of the civilian-led Transitional Authority should the Transition Military Council (TMC) fail to hand over power to such a civilian-led authority. Sudan's transition involves the ongoing political and social change process following the ousting of former President Omar al-Bashir in April 2019. The end of Bashir's thirty-year rule was a momentous event for the country, which was plagued by civil wars, economic instability, and political unrest for decades. Since his removal, Sudan has been undergoing a complex and challenging transition towards democracy, with the formation of a transitional government and the adoption of a new constitution. The transition has been marked by political negotiations, protests, and outbreaks of violence but also by hopeful signs of progress.

The constitutional declaration's framework established a Transitional Sovereignty Council (TSC) composed of five military and six civilian members.x The Council's leadership pragmatically started with General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, for the first twenty-one months, alternating to a civilian leader for the remaining eighteen months of the thirty-nine-month transition period (AR, 2021). Abdallah Hamdok,xi chosen by the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC), became the prime minister and appointed a cabinet selected from a list proposed by the FFC,

other than two appointed by military leaders on the council. A legislative assembly of no more than 300 members was provided for but not immediately formed. However, per the 2020 Juba Agreement,xii al-Burhan was to continue to lead the Sovereignty Council for another 20 months rather than stepping down as planned in February 2021 (France 24, 2020). The transitional government, led by Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, was working to address the country's most pressing issues, including the economic crisis, human rights abuses, and the ongoing conflicts in Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile states. Despite the challenges, there have been some notable achievements in the transition process, such as signing a peace agreement with rebel groups in October 2020 and lifting Sudan from the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism in December 2020. However, Sudan's path toward normalcy was shattered by the popular uprising in April 2019, when its 2005 interim constitution was suspended, to be succeeded by a constitutional declaration (IDEA, 2022)xiii signed between the Transitional Military Council and the FFC, an alliance of civilian groups.

In a further blow to the transition ambitions, the October 2021 military coup (AC, 2023), led by Hemedti under the pretext of political wrangling among the civilian opposition, resistance committees and the powerful protest movement, derailed the transition with the dissolution of the Sovereignty Council, pushing the elections back to July 2023 (ICG, 2023). All hopes of a change were nailed on 11 November 2021 when. General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan announced the establishment of a new Sovereignty Councilxiv headed by himself (AR, 2021). Although the new Council later reinstated the previous prime minister, it did not include any FFC members and several figures calling for a rapid power transfer to civilians. As a result, the FFC withdrew its support, as did many other civilian groups and political parties. The General's move was an audacious breach of the AU-mediated agreement in August 2019 with civilian parties.

Diplomatically, resolving the widely divergent ten-year timeline to integrate the RSF into the SAF vis-a-vis Burhan's shorter timeline to complete the integration before the elections in two years could be problematic (AC, 2023). It is imperative, however, for all stakeholders, national, regional, and international, to support the UN-backed Political Framework Agreement of 5 December 2022, with adjustments for a revised roadmap toward a Final Political Agreement set initially on 1 April, an interim Constitution on 6 April and a consensual Prime Minister on 11 April. There is a need to reset these missed deadlines to maintain and restore Sudan's national security and stability for a sustainable transition.

The Burhan-Hemedti rivalry also has the hallmarks of a clash of personalities and egos. Without formal education and being a trader by occupation, Hemedti might be viewed with disrespect by Burhan as one without a proper military college education; Hemedti was only awarded the title of 'General' on account of his proficiency as a field commander in the Janjaweed brigade in Southern Darfur at the height of the 2003–05 war before joining a mutiny against the government a few years later (de Waal, 2023). While Hemedti may exalt himself as a political entrepreneur with credentials as an architect of state mercenarism, he might also discount Burhan's status as SAF commander-in-chief, despite the military's impressive real estate in Khartoum, with tanks, artillery, and airpower, but with limited battle-hardened infantry units. Burhan could view Hemedti as a non-establishment outsider to Sudanese politics since the 19th Century. Although the RSF denied receiving aid from Russia and Libya, CNN (Elbagir et al., 2023) reported that Dagalo had benefited from Russian involvement in Sudan for years and is the primary recipient of Moscow's weapons and training. Nevertheless, with alleged links to Field Marshal Khalifa Belqasim Haftar, commander of the Tobruk-based Libyan National Army (LNA) and strategic Emirati alliance, Hemedti, who claims a higher

moral cause of defending democracy in Sudan, labelling Burhan a "radical Islamist," possesses the attributes of a proverbial spoiler against Burhan who has support from Egypt. To both generals and the SAF and the RSF, this is an existential fight playing out in a pure power struggle for control of Sudan, as Alan Boswell of the Crisis Group has opined.

Aside from the personality clash, Africa Confidential (2023) has averred that the Burhan-Hemedti rivalry plays out on the technical integration of the 110-000–strong RSF—up from fewer than 50,000 in 2017 into the national armed forces of 140,000 personnel as stipulated in the Framework Agreement (2022). As posited by the Council on Foreign Relations (Zaidan, 2023), the most desirable outcome of the crisis would be the SAF's elimination of the RSF. This outcome will obviate another Somali-type scenario where warlords and militants feud for state control. Being almost equally balanced—SAF-RSF relative strengths of 1.3:1—and controlling bases across the country, the SAF may find it difficult, if not disastrous, to attempt to destroy the RSF, which could then retreat to its stronghold in Darfur and West Sudan (Schipani et al., 2023). That retreat could reignite the Hilal-Hemedti duel (Nashed, 3 May 2023). However, an RSF win over the SAF, including in Darfur, or even a stalemate, will have disastrous consequences for the country, region, and beyond. Integrating the two military organisations into one force will face other challenges, including the vast differences in training and pay structure, let alone the conflicting ideological orientations (AC, 2023). These must be among the rational reasons why Burhan's directive in late 2019 to integrate the RSF into the SAF fully did not happen before the fallout between them. The RSF's integration question has some resonance with Ethiopia's daring attempts to forcibly disarm the country's regional special forces after the rather devastating two-year war with Tigray (2020-22). In this context, however, it is plausible that lessons from Ethiopia's regional conflict could inform the RSF's integration

with or without disarmament. The Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's offer to mediate between the feuding Sudanese Generals should be seen in this light, having earlier deployed Ethiopian experts to advise on Sudan's transition. However, Ethiopia appears to lack the credentials of an honest broker.

Towards a Structural Prevention Approach: Resolving Regionalisation and Prolongation Factors

Regarding international conflict resolution practice, it is permissible to argue that the international community's approach to Sudan's conflict in Darfur from the early 2000s has contributed to the current conflict. At that time, before supporting the AU Mission in Sudan-Darfur (AMIS), the UN's political engagement in Darfur involved four wide-ranging arrangements, namely: a) Operation LIFELINE SUDAN-Humanitarian Assistance, 1989; b) UN Advance Mission in Sudan (UNAMIS), 11 June 2004–24 March 2005, with the involvement of Canadian Operation SAFARI in early April–October 2005; c) UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), 24 March 2005 – July 2011; and d) the UN Assistance Cell for the AU (UNAC-AU) in December 2004 to 2005. The UN's main effortxv came from the AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), established under UNSCR 1769 (2007), until 2020.xvi However, predicated on the 2019 revolution that fundamentally changed the political dynamics on the ground,xvii the UNSC, per resolution 2363 (2017), decided to draw down UNAMID's troop and police strength and ultimately withdrew the force on 31 December 2020, replacing it with the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS). This precipitate withdrawal of the international community's presence in Sudan, which failed to address Darfur's complex humanitarian challenges and mass atrocities, implied an exit without peace. Even as the jury was still out on the long-term contribution of the AU and UN conflict management effort in Sudan-Darfur, the human rights violations and the structural issues of

marginalisation resurfaced and escalated before and as soon as UNAMID withdrew in 2020 (Aljazeera, 2023).

In the wake of the confrontation in Khartoum, the international community mounted a flurry of diplomatic pronouncements. The UN Secretary-General António Guterres and the head of the UN Mission in the country strongly condemned the violence as other senior officials voiced concerns (UN News, 2023). Naturally, the African Union's (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC), on 16 April 2023, also strongly condemned the armed confrontation between the two sides throughout Sudan, called for an immediate ceasefire by the two parties without conditions, and, among others, demanded the SAF and the RSF swiftly embrace a peaceful solution and inclusive dialogue while firmly rejecting any external interference that could complicate the situation (AU PSC, 2023). Meanwhile, at the sub-regional level, the Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) expressed extreme alarm about the fighting between the SAF and the RSF, indicating that IGAD was following the situation closely and urging both sides to cease fighting immediately, de-escalate the situation, and resolve their differences through dialogue. IGAD appointed the Presidents of Djibouti, Kenya, and South Sudan mediation envoys. The League of Arab States (LAS), or Arab League, also condemned the fighting in Sudan and called for calm as Egypt and South Sudan jointly announced their intention to mediate between Sudan's warring parties (AA, 2023).

Resolving the current conflict needs to transcend the focus on efforts at establishing a humanitarian or a permanent ceasefire to create conditions for consolidating the Political Framework Agreement (5 Dec 2022) or a successor agreement between the military and civilian leaders based on a promise by the generals to relinquish "much" of their political power. Through five conferences, the framework agreement sought to reach a

consensus on the sticky issues—dismantling the former regime, justice and transitional justice, peace, the eastern Sudan crisis, and security reform. To achieve the framework agreement's objectives, the Quad's separate channels (external partners formed by the US and Saudi Arabia, the backbone, and the UK and UAE) should merge with the trilateral mechanism (AU, IGAD and the UN). The Communiqué of participating institutions/organisations in the Ministerial Special Session on Sudan (20 April 2023) instead stressed the leadership role of the Chairperson of the AU Commission, preferring "the Trilateral Mechanism to coordinate with the LAS, the European Union, the Troika and bilateral actors, to immediately engage the leadership of the SAF and the RSF, as well as other key stakeholders, to ensure the implementation of its Communiqué." In the multilateral context, too, the AU should bear in mind that much as Sudan is in Africa, the Sudan crisis is also an Arab problem. The AU should therefore learn from the 'gunkhole' approach in the Libyan crisis (2011) and work closely with the Arab League.

The ongoing rivalry between the junta leaders blocks the urgent return to civil rule and risks exposing Sudan to external intervention. This scenario was alluded to in the AU PSC's Communiqué (16 Apr 2023). The high-stakes national power balancing dynamics could first escalate Sudan's regional conflicts on many proximate (integration of the RSF) and structural issues (purging the SAF of ideological remnants of the former regime) as a condition for the RSF's integration, besides the endemic marginalisation and economic inequalities. The threat of a civil war in a polarised state could further risk an external intervention by some neighbouring states and regional countries, like Somalia, Libya, the DRC or Lebanon. Empirical evidence points to diverse external interests or involvements in the Sudan crisis by Egypt, Eritrea, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Russia (ambitiously seeking a naval presence on the Red Sea Coast), UAE, and Yemen. Egypt and Israel are two of the outside actors worth noting because they

may seek to influence Sudan's crisis and the risk of regionalisation of the violence. First, given that Egypt has traditionally supported the Sudanese army across the different regimes in Khartoum, Egypt-Sudan relations, in the context of the deadlocked talks with Ethiopia over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), take on an additional meaning and vital importance. For Israel, Cafiero (NewArab, 2023) makes a poignant argument that although its security establishment may not be united on Sudan's conflict—its foreign ministry, like Egypt, leans towards Burhan, while the Mossad, like the UAE and Libya's Khalifa Haftar, has deep ties with Hemedti, it is in its strategic interest to enrol more Arab countries in its normalisation agenda through the Abraham Accords.xviii In this context, in Cafiero's view, Israel will likely exploit Sudan's decision in October 2020 to, at least partly, join the Accords, like the UAE and Bahrain. It wants to ensure that the military, whether Burhan or Hemedti or some combination, dominates Sudan's politics. This, according to Nader Hashemi, implies. However, although Israel may be pursuing rapprochement with Arab countries, it does not necessarily favour democratic development in Sudan and other Arab countries. Such Arab democracies may demand Israeli concessions to the Palestinians as a condition for diplomatic relations.

The more extended the crisis lasts, therefore, the more likely Sudan, with extensive bordersxix and 'ungoverned spaces', could become a haven for domestic, regional, and international terrorist groups reminiscent of its previous designation by the US as a state sponsor of terrorism (1993–2002) (State Dept, 2022). To mitigate such escalation, the UNSC and the international community should consider imposing an arms embargo on Sudan. On a granular scale, they should also place the armed leaders under sanctions, including an asset freeze and travel bans. Resolving Sudan's conflict also requires not only political and diplomatic processes. It should also involve the application of international law as soft power. Although the Government of

Sudan (GoS) has refused to cooperate with the ICC in executing the Court's arrest warrants served for Sudanese officials,xx including former President Omar al-Bashir, for crimes committed in Darfur, the ICC should continue pursuing these cases. Moreover, although the AU has accused the ICC of bias against African rulers regarding accountability for mass atrocities committed in Africa, and the Arab League expressed its "solidarity with Sudan and reject[ion] of the ICC decision against Bashir" as far back as 2009, the Court should work with the international community to ensure justice is served (Shilaho, 2018; Jamshidi, 2013). It should also investigate and hold accountable those responsible for crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide. This should include collaborators of the former government deposed in 2019 who escaped from prison during the recent fighting and by government forces, militias, and rebel groups in the current Sudan crisis, including the crackdown on peaceful protests and excessive force by security forces (Ibrahim & Mohamed, 2023). To achieve these ends, the ICC should also work with the Sudanese government to ensure that those responsible for crimes are held accountable and that victims receive justice and reparations.

Conclusion and Broad Recommendations

The confrontation between the SAF and the RSF has had far-reaching consequences for Sudan's political stability, security, and humanitarian conditions. The clash has highlighted the challenges faced by the transitional government and the urgent need for robust measures to address the factionalism within the military while vigorously promoting efforts to prioritise the protection of civilians, facilitate humanitarian access, and promote a peaceful resolution to the conflicts. Ultimately, sustainable and inclusive peace can only be achieved through dialogue, reconciliation, and a commitment to justice. One of the significant causes of Sudan's fragility is the decades of conflict and civil war since its independence in 1956, especially the

intermitted north-south war (1955-2005) and the Darfur conflict (2003–). From its tribal militia origins, the Janjaweed has become a power and security broker in Sudan's volatile security landscape and precarious political, economic, and social dynamics, especially after its incorporation into the RSF in 2013. The RSF will likely remain a controversial and divisive force in Sudan, defying the calls for greater accountability and oversight of the group's actions. Despite these challenges, there was hope for Sudan's recovery in 2019 following the peaceful revolution that led to the ousting of its long-serving leader, Omar al-Bashir. Although the new government was expected to work to address some of the country's challenges, including economic reform and peace negotiations, the country's transition was derailed by another military coup.

The narrative of Sudan's decades-long political-military instability and insecurity suggests that all stakeholders need a new approach. The UN, AU, IGAD and other international bodies, while taking cognisance of the thorny issue of state sovereignty, nonetheless, should work collaboratively with Sudan to revert to an all-inclusive transitional arrangement. Military usurpation of political power has not worked eighty-one per cent of the time and cannot be expected to work nineteen per cent of the time. Empowering Sudan's bad leaders will thus continue to be counterproductive. The SAF and RSF confrontation has posed a significant obstacle to achieving temporary peace to pave the way for reconciliation and positive peace in Sudan's troubled history. The clash undermined the progress made in recent years towards resolving conflicts and addressing grievances. Continued hostilities will prevent dialogue and compromise, and perpetuate cyclic violence, hindering efforts to establish a stable and inclusive government. The Sudan crisis calls into serious question the AU's commitment to upholding the principle of the right to intervene in a Member State under Article 4(h) of the AU Constitutive Actxxi regarding

the Union's right to intervene in a Member State under a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances involving war crimes, genocide (Kessler & Lynch, 2004) and crimes against humanity. President Yoweri Museveni (Uganda) labelled this quandary a tragedy and mockery of Africa (Agaba, 2023). The crisis sets back the AU's "Silencing the Guns" flagship project under the AU's Agenda 2063, which already missed the mark in 2020 in accelerating Africa's economic growth and development. In the current power struggle and mistrust situation, the RSF is unlikely to accept integration into the SAF without external supervision and assistance. However, it also appears plausible for the military to "keep its house in order" before a final transition to fully-fledged civilian rule. However, the end of the transitory marriage of convenience between Burhan and Hemedti also provides an opportunity to return the parties to a mediated settlement in Sudan. For long-term stability, however, Sudan should pay serious attention to its regional conflicts in Darfur, South Kordofan, and the Blue Nile states centring on structural inequalities to avoid the risk of a civil war which may lead to external intervention. It is plausible to argue that Sudan direly needs constitutional and other law reforms of the security and justice sector institutions, including the SAF, RSF, NISS, and the Central Reserve Police, for a more inclusive and equal society. This must be accompanied by accountability for the grave violations of human rights and a truth and reconciliation process for national healing. These efforts will help to redeem the enormous investments already made in Sudan.

For Africa's fragile democracies, the political elite and the officer corps of security institutions, the narrative of state capture by Sudan's military should serve as an instructive warning against co-opting political party militia and "foot soldiers" into state security architectures with reckless abandon because there will be dire consequences when the chickens come home to roost with a whirlwind.

Endnotes

[1] Of several definitions of 'fragile states' by key international actors", the African Development Bank (AFB), for instance, provides the following: Countries or situations with unique development challenges that have resulted from fragility and conflict, including weak institutional capacities and poor governance, economic and geographic isolation, economic disruption, social disruption, and insecurity.

[ii] See https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/547265-war-is-too-important-to-be-left-to-the-generals#:~:text=Quote%20by%20Georges%20Clemenceau%3A%20, and https://quotepark.com/quotes/1744344-georges-clemenceau-war-is-too-serious-a-matter-to-entrust-to-military/.

[iii] Mali experienced three coups in 2012, 2020 and 2021, besides two other coups in 1968 and 1991. See Emily Cole. Five Things to Know About Mali's Coup. USIP, 27 Aug 2020. Burkina Faso experienced attempted military seizures of power in 2015 and 2016, an uprising in 2014 and two successful coups in January and September 2022. See Ornella Moderan and Fahiraman Rodrigue Koné: What caused the coup in Burkina Faso? ISSToday, 3 Feb 2022.

[iv] The NISS is responsible for internal security and most intelligence matters, and functions independently of any ministry. The 2015 Constitutional amendments expanded NISS's mandate to include authorities traditionally reserved for the military and judiciary, including establishing courts and greater latitude in making arrests than other security services.

[v] The conflict stems from grievances over marginalisation, land dispossession, unimplemented promises, and frustration with Khartoum, particularly over the 2005 decision to abolish West Kordofan, the tribe's ethnically homogenous homeland. Besides marginalisation in all three states, Sudan generally fails to provide accountability for serious crimes committed during conflicts or other serious human rights violations.

[vi] In colloquial Arabic, the Janjaweed (Janjawīd) means "a man with a gun on a horse." The Janjaweed are members of nomadic "Arab" tribes in contention with Darfur's darker-skinned settled "African" farmers over natural grazing grounds and farmland with dwindling rainfall and water scarcity. They are a Sudanese Arab militia group operating in Sudan, particularly Darfur and eastern Chad and are alleged to be active in Yemen (Ray, Jun 2023). As Sudanese Arabs, the core of the Janjaweed originates from the Abbala (camel herder) background with significant recruitment from the Baggara (cattle herder) people. However, there are other instances of members from different tribes. The Janjaweed were initially known as the Popular Defence Forces under Musa Hilal, an Arab Rizeigat tribal chief (Nashed, 3 May 2023).

[vii] Sudan had reduced the size of the force to about a brigade (approximately 2–3,000 troops) by 2021.

[viii] Sudan had reduced the size of the force to about a brigade (approximately 2–3,000 troops)

by 2021.

[ix] See also Sudan Genocide Declaration Stirs World, https://web.archive.org/web/20131105222325/http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/july-dec04/sudan_genocide.html.

[x] Historically, Sudan was governed by a five-member Sovereignty Council immediately after independence in 1956.

[xi] After serving as prime minister from August to October 2019, Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok was kidnapped and freed later and reinstated as prime minister on 21 November 2021. He resigned on 2 January 2022.

[xii] The agreement aims to achieve stability and peace in Sudan after decades of multiple civil conflicts, which have killed more than 300,000 people and displaced more than 2.5 million, according to estimates, especially after the conflict in Darfur has expanded since 2003

[xiii] The declaration outlined a power-sharing agreement between the two sides. It provided a road map for governing the country until a democratically elected government could be installed, with expected elections in 2022.

[xiv] Before the 11 November coup, the 13-member Sovereign Council (CIA Factbook, 22 Jun 2023) consisted of five military-appointed civilians, five generals, and three representatives selected by former armed opposition groups.

[xv] In addition to UNAMID and UNMIS, the also established the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) in the disputed Abyei region along the Sudan–South Sudan border since 2011 to ensure security, protect civilians, strengthen the capacity of the Abyei Police Service, de-mine, monitor/verify the redeployment of armed forces from the area, and facilitate the flow of humanitarian aid; UNISFA had deployed about 2,000 personnel as of 2022

[xvi] UNAMID had protection of civilians as its core mandate but was also tasked to contribute to security for humanitarian assistance, monitor and verify implementation of agreements, assist an inclusive political process, contribute to the promotion of human rights and the rule of law, and monitor and report on the situation along the Chad-CAR borders. UNAMID had an authorised strength of 26,000 personnel, comprising a force of up to 19,555, 3,772 police—19 formed police units of up to 140 personnel each—and civilians.

[xvii] The UNSC and the Secretariat attached too much importance to unrealistic fixed dates in Darfur's fluid situation, GoS hostility that made the achievement of mandate objectives precarious, fatigue in Member State political support, and budgetary constraints.

[xviii] The Abraham Accords are a series of joint normalisation statements initially between Israel, the UAE, and Bahrain, effective since 15 Sep 2020.

[xix] Sudan is bounded on the north by Egypt, east by the Red Sea, Eritrea, and Ethiopia, south by South Sudan, west by the Central African Republic and Chad, and on the northwest

by Libya.

[xx] Five suspects remain under indictment by the Court: Ahmed Haroun, Ali Kushayb, Omar al-Bashir, Abdallah Banda and Abdel Rahim Mohammed Hussein.

[xxi] See https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/34873-file-constitutiveact_en.pdf.

References

ACLED (a). Fact Sheet: Conflict Surges in Sudan (24 May 2023). Online:https://acleddata.com/2023/04/28/fact-sheet-conflict-surges-in-sudan/.

ACLED (b). Context Assessment. New Political Deal Amid Rising Disorder in Sudan (3 Mar 2023). Online: https://acleddata.com/2023/03/03/context-assessment-new-political-deal- amidst-rising- political-disorder-in-sudan/.

Africa Confidential. (2023). Missed deadlines are part of the plan. Vol 64 No 8. Online: https://www.africaconfidential.com/article-preview/id/14398/Missed_deadlines_are_part of_the_plan.

Africa Report. (2021, November 12). Sudan: Burhan announces new Sovereignty Council. Jeune Afrique. Online: https://www.theafricareport.com/145954/sudan-burhan-announces-new-sovereignty-council/.

Agaba, N. (2023, April 17). Sudan Conflict: Museveni Calls for Immediate Cessation of Hostilities to 'Stop Mockery of Africa'.Kampala Post. Online: https://kampalapost.com/content/sudan -conflict-museveni-calls-immediate-cessation-hostilities-stop-mockery-africa.

Aljazeera. (2023, February 26). Twenty years since the war began in Sudan's Darfur, suffering continues. Online: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/2/26/20-years-since-war-began- in-sudans-darfur-suffering-continues.

Annual Reviews. (1999). Civil-Military Relations. Peter D. Feaver,

Annual Review of Political Science, Vol 2, 1999 (211-241). Online: https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev. polisci.2.1.211. Anadolu Agency. (2023, April 16). Arab League calls for immediate halt of military clashes in Sudan. Online: https://www.aa.com.tr/africa/egypt-south-sudan-officially-reopen-border- crossing/2512873.

AU. (2023, April 16). PSC (PSC/PR/COMM.1149). Online: https://peaceau.org/uploads/1149. comm-en.pdf.

AU. (2023, April 20). PSC Communiqué. Online: https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/com-the-ministerial-special-session-on-sudan-20-april-2023.pdf.

AU. (2023, April 16). PSC Communiqué, 1149th Meeting (PSC/PR/COMM.1149), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Online: https://peaceau.org/uploads/1149.comm-en.pdf.

AU. (2023, June 30). Sudan suspended from the African Union. Online: https://au.int/en/ articles/sudan-suspended-african-union.

Britannica. (2023a, June 29). Sudan. Online: https://www.britannica.com/place/Sudan.

Britannica. (2023b, May 26). Gaafar Mohamed el-Nimeiri. Online: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Gaafar Mohamed-el-Nimeiri.

Cafiero, G. (2023, May 2). The US and Israeli role in Sudan's path to war. The New Arab. Online: https://www.newarab.com/analysis/us-and-israeli-role-sudans-path-war.

Chothia, F., & Foulkes, I. (2023, May 2). Sudan crisis: Civilians facing catastrophe as 100,000 flee fighting – UN. BBC. Online: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-65448691.

CIA. (2023, June 22). Sudan. World Fact Book. Online: https://www.cia.gov/the-world- factbook/countries/sudan/.

De Waal, A. (2023). Sudan conflict: Hemedti – the warlord who built a paramilitary force more powerful than the state. The Conversation. Online: https://theconversation.com/sudan-conflict-hemedti-the-warlord-who-built-a-paramilitary-force-more-powerful-than-the state-203949.

EIU. (2023, April 17). Sudan. Power struggle set to derail Sudan's move to civilian rule. Online: https://country.eiu.com/article.aspx?articleid=1003179283&Country=Sudan&topic=Polit ics&subtopic=F_1.

Elbagir, N., et al. (2023, April 21). Exclusive: Evidence emerges of Russia's Wagner arming militia leader battling Sudan's army. CNN. Online: https://edition.cnn.com/2023/04/20/africa/wagner-sudan-russia-libya-intl/index.html.

Fornof, E., & Cole, E. (2020, August 27). Five Things to Know About Mali's Coup. USIP. Online: https://www.usip.org/publications/2020/08/five-things-know-about-malis-coup. France 24. (2020, October 3). Sudan govt, rebel groups sign landmark peace deal. Online: https://www.france24.com/en/20201003-sudan-govt-rebel-groups-sign-landmark-peace-deal.

Ibrahim, A., & Mohamed, H. (2023, April 26). Sudan updates: WHO says 60% of Khartoum health centres closed. Aljazeera. Online: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2023/4/26/sudan-live-news-truce-violations-worsen-civilian-suffering.

ICG. (2013, February 14). Sudan's spreading Conflict (I): War in South Kordofan. Report No. 198 /Africa. Online: https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/sudan/sudan-s-spreading- conflict-i-war-south-kordofan.

ICG. (2023, January 23). A Critical Window to Bolster Sudan's Next

Government.Online: https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/sudan/critical-window-bolster-sudans-next government.

IDEA. (2022, October 14). Sudan's 2019 Constitutional Declaration AND ITS Impact on the Transition. Online: https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/sudans-2019-constitution al-declaration-its-impact-transition.

Jamshidi, M. (2013). The enforcement gap: How the International Criminal Court failed in Darfur: Sudan's lack of cooperation is one among many compliance challenges facing the ICC's work in Darfur. Aljazeera. Retrieved March 25, 2013, from https://www.aljazeera.com/ opinions/2013/3/25/the-enforcement-gap-how-the-international-criminal-court-failed-in-darfur.

Kessler, G., & Lynch, C. (2004, September 10). U.S. Calls Killings in Sudan Genocide. Washington Post, p. A01. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A8364-2004Sep9.html.

Kjaer, A. M. (2023). State capture. Britannica. Retrieved from https://www.britannica.com/ topic/state-capture.

Mamiya, R., & Hansen, W. (2021). Assessing the effectiveness of the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). NUPI/EPON, 2020, pp. 20-21. Retrieved from https://effectivepeaceops.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/EPON_UNAMID_ Report.pdf.

Moderan, O., & Koné, F. R. (2022, February 3). What caused the coup in Burkina Faso? ISS Today. Retrieved from https://issafrica.org/iss-today/what-caused-the-coup-in-burkina-faso.

Nashed, M. (2023, May 3). Could an old tribal foe undercut Sudanese Hemedti? Aljazeera. Retrieved from https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/3/could-an-old-tribal-foe- undercut-sudans-hemedti.

Ramsbotham, O. (2005). The Analysis of Protracted Social Conflict: A Tribute to Edward Azar. Review of International Studies, 31(1), 109–126. Retrieved from https://www.bbau. ac.in/dept/dps/TM/Edward%20Azar.pdf.

Ray, M. (2023, June 17). Janjaweed. Britannica. Retrieved from https://www.britannica.com/ topic/Janjaweed.

Schipani, A., et al. (2023, April 17). Sudan conflict pitches military leaders into a struggle for control: Rift between president and deputy sparks fighting that threatens to erupt into civil war. FT. Retrieved from https://www.ft.com/content/b75628bb-e042-4116-8ba8-f6593d8432b3.

Shilaho, W. K. (2018, July 31). The International Criminal Court and the African Union: are the ICC a bulwark against impunity or an imperial Trojan horse? ACCORD. Retrieved from https://www.accord.org.za/ajcr-issues/the-international-criminal-court-and-the-african-union/#:~:text=The%20AU%20accuses%20the%20ICC,crimes%20against%20humanity %20and%20genocide.

The Guardian. (2009, June 5). Jaafar Nimeiri. Lawrence Joffe. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/jun/05/obituary-jaafar-nimeiri.

UN News. (2023, April 15). UN chief and officials condemn fighting between Sudanese forces. Retrieved from https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/04/1135702.

UN. (2023, April 15). Statement of IGAD on the unfolding security

situation in Sudan. ReliefWeb. Retrieved from https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/statement-igad-unfolding-security- situation-sudan-15-april-2023.

UN News. (2023, May 4). UN and partners launch $445 million plan to ease the Sudan crisis. Retrieved from https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/05/1136342.

UN. (n.d.). The Addis Ababa Agreement on the Problem of South Sudan. Peacemaker. Retrieved from https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SD_720312_Addis%20Ababa%20Agreement%20on%20the%20Problem%20of%20South%20Sudan.pdf.

US. (2022, October 24). US Relations with Sudan. State Department, Bureau of African Affairs. Retrieved from https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-sudan/#:~:text=After%20Brigadier%20General%20Omar%20al,U.S.%20Embassy%20operations%20in%201996.

VOA. (2023, May 15). West Darfur Governor Killing After Genocide Claims Raises Concern. Retrieved from https://www.voaafrica.com/a/west-darfur-governor-killing-raises-concern-/7138859.html.

WB. (2023, March 30). The World Bank in Sudan. Retrieved from https://www.worldbank.org/ en/country/sudan/overview.

Zaidan, Y. (2023, April 24). Hemeti's Rise in Sudan Is a Threat to Regional Stability: Countries that prefer peace to chaos should hope for a quick army victory over the RSF. Foreign Policy. Retrieved from https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/04/24/sudan-hemeti-conflict-rsf-regional-stability/?utm_source=dailybrief&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=DailyBrief2023Apr25&utm_term=DailyNewsBrief.