

To Permanent Representatives of Member and Observer States of the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council (Geneva, Switzerland)

19 May 2022

Sudan: Ensure continued public debates on the human rights situation

Excellencies,

Following the military coup of 25 October 2021,¹ the UN Human Rights Council took urgent action by holding a special session, on 5 November 2021, and adopting a resolution requesting the High Commissioner to designate an Expert on Human Rights in the Sudan.²

As per resolution S-32/1, which was adopted by consensus with the support of the Group of African States, the Expert's mandate will be ongoing "until the restoration of [Sudan's] civilian-led Government." The Council made it clear that the term of office for the designated Expert will conclude "upon the restoration of [Sudan's] civilian-led Government."³

Ahead of the Council's 50th session (13 June-8 July 2022), we, the undersigned non-governmental organisations, are writing to urge your delegation to support the adoption of a resolution that ensures continued attention to Sudan's human rights situation through enhanced interactive dialogues at the Council's 52nd and 53rd regular sessions.

While the Expert's mandate is ongoing, a resolution is required for the Council to hold public debates and continue to formally discuss the situation. A resolution at the Council's 50th session would operationalise resolution S-32/1, which in its operative paragraph 19 called upon "the High Commissioner and the designated Expert to monitor human rights violations and abuses and to continue to bring information thereon to the attention of the Human Rights Council, and to advise on the further steps that may be needed if the situation continues to deteriorate."

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As the de facto military authorities are consolidating their power⁴ and human rights violations continue, including against peaceful protesters⁵ and in Darfur and other conflict areas,⁶ once-yearly reporting by the High Commissioner as part of her reports and updates under the Council's agenda item 2, followed by a general debate, would be insufficient to maintain an adequate level of attention to the country.

¹ DefendDefenders *et al.*, "Sudan: The UN Human Rights Council should act urgently and hold a special session," 28 October 2021, <https://defenddefenders.org/sudan-the-un-human-rights-council-should-act-urgently-and-hold-a-special-session/> (accessed 4 May 2022).

² DefendDefenders, "The UN Human Rights Council takes a step to address the crisis in Sudan," 5 November 2021, <https://defenddefenders.org/the-un-human-rights-council-takes-a-step-to-address-the-crisis-in-sudan/> (accessed 4 May 2022).

³ HRC resolution S-32/1, UN Doc. A/HRC/RES/S-32/1, available at <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G21/319/08/PDF/G2131908.pdf> (operative paragraphs 15 and 17).

⁴ Sudan Information Service, "Sudan Uprising Report: Build up to the military coup of 25 October," 6 November 2021, <https://www.sudaninthenews.com/political-briefings> (accessed 4 May 2022).

⁵ Human Rights Watch, "Sudan: Ongoing Clampdown on Peaceful Protesters 3 Months After Coup; Concrete Action Needed to End Repression," 3 February 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/02/03/sudan-ongoing-clampdown-peaceful-protesters> (accessed 4 May 2022).

⁶ African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS), "West Darfur: 35 people killed and a dozen injured in Jebel Moon attack as security continues to deteriorate in Sudan," 24 March 2022, <https://www.acjps.org/west-darfur-35-people-killed-and-a-dozen-injured-in-jebel-moon-attack-as-security-continues-to-deteriorate-across-sudan/> (accessed 9 May 2022).

The Council has a responsibility to follow up on its meaningful action on Sudan. It should ensure that the High Commissioner publicly and regularly reports on the human rights situation and that dedicated public debates continue to be held. The High Commissioner, with the assistance of the designated Expert on Human Rights in the Sudan, should be able to present updates and reports on the situation of human rights in Sudan.

Programme budget implications (PBIs) are required for the formal presentation of reports to the Council and holding of interactive dialogues and enhanced interactive dialogues. A resolution with the necessary PBIs could be approached from a technical perspective; it could be a procedural text that achieves just this: mobilising budget for reports and public debates on Sudan.

We believe that interactive dialogues on Sudan's human rights situation should be held in an enhanced format, allowing for the participation of various stakeholders, including UN agency and civil society representatives. We also believe that the Council should discuss the human rights situation in Sudan at least twice a year. Furthermore, we believe that to avoid any risk of a public reporting gap, the Council should act at its 50th session – the last session during which presentation of a comprehensive written report is currently planned.

Ahead of the Council's 50th session, we therefore urge your delegation to support the adoption of a resolution that:

- **Recalls resolution S-32/1, including its request that the High Commissioner and the designated Expert continue to report on human rights violations and abuses committed in Sudan and to advise on the further steps that may be needed;**
- **Requests the High Commissioner, with the assistance of the designated Expert on Human Rights in the Sudan, to update the Council at its 52nd session, in an enhanced interactive dialogue, on the situation of human rights in Sudan; and**
- **Further requests the High Commissioner, with the assistance of the designated Expert on Human Rights in the Sudan, to present to the Council, at its 53rd session, a comprehensive written report focusing on the situation of human rights in Sudan, to be followed by an enhanced interactive dialogue, and to continue to report on the situation of human rights in Sudan to the Council twice a year.**

We thank you for your attention to these pressing issues and stand ready to provide your delegation with further information as required.

Sincerely,

1. Act for Sudan
2. African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS)
3. African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS)
4. AfricanDefenders (Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network)
5. Amnesty International
6. Association of Sudanese-American Professors in America (ASAPA)
7. Atrocities Watch
8. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
9. CIVICUS
10. CSW (Christian Solidarity Worldwide)
11. Darfur Bar Association
12. Darfur Network for Monitoring and Documentation
13. DefendDefenders (East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project)
14. Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR)
15. Geneva for Human Rights / Genève pour les Droits de l'Homme (GHR)
16. Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (GCR2P)
17. Governance Programming Overseas
18. HAKI Africa – Kenya
19. HUDO Centre

20. Human Rights and Advocacy Network for Democracy – Sudan
21. Human Rights Watch
22. International Bar Association’s Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI)
23. International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)
24. International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
25. International Refugee Rights Initiative (IRRI)
26. International Service for Human Rights
27. Investors Against Genocide
28. Journalists for Human Rights (JHR) – Sudan
29. Justice Africa Sudan
30. Justice Centre for Advocacy and Legal Consultations – Sudan
31. Kamma Organisation for Development Initiatives (KODI)
32. Lawyers for Justice Sudan
33. Lawyers’ Rights Watch Canada
34. Massachusetts Coalition to Save Darfur
35. Never Again Coalition
36. Nubsud Human Rights Monitors Organization (NHRMO)
37. Physicians for Human Rights
38. REDRESS
39. Regional Centre for Training and Development of Civil Society (RCDCS) – Sudan
40. Regional Coalition for WHRDs in MENA (WHRDMENA Coalition)
41. Rights for Peace
42. Rights Realization Centre (RRC)
43. The Sentry
44. Sudan and South Sudan Forum e.V.
45. Sudan’s Doctors for Human Rights
46. The Sudanese Archives
47. Sudanese Human Rights Initiative (SHRI)
48. Sudanese Lawyers and Legal Practitioners’ Association in the UK
49. Sudanese Women Rights Action
50. Sudan Human Rights Monitor (SHRM)
51. Sudan Transparency and Policy Tracker
52. Sudan Unlimited
53. SUDO (UK)
54. Waging Peace