



Sudan Rights Watch Network

May 2025 report

Darfur Region ...

**Civilians between the hammer of systematic targeting
and the anvil of the humanitarian crisis**



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List of Abbreviations

RSF	Rapid Support Forces
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces
Joint Force	Joint Force
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
GC	Geneva Conventions
AP	Additional Protocol
ICC	International Criminal Court
AI	Amnesty International
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons



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1. Introduction

The Human Rights Monitoring Network – Sudan (HRMN-Sudan) is a Sudanese organization specializing in monitoring and documenting human rights violations, as well as tracking security incidents and rights abuses across Sudan, with a particular focus on the Darfur region. The network aims to advance human rights conditions and raise awareness of fundamental rights in the country.

HRMN-Sudan provides accurate and reliable information on the human rights situation in Darfur through periodic reports covering security incidents and violations. It also issues urgent bulletins on critical developments when necessary. These reports are based on data collected directly from field monitors in Darfur and leverage an advanced event-tracking system that delivers statistical analyses of human rights violations, their patterns, and locations.

Furthermore, the network advocates for justice, accountability, and the preservation of collective memory of abuses while supporting the rights of affected individuals and communities to foster a more equitable and rights-respecting society in Sudan.

2. Methodology

This report was prepared using data gathered by HRMN-Sudan's field monitors deployed across Darfur's five states. To ensure precise and efficient data collection, the network employs Kobo Toolbox, a platform customized with a detailed survey form designed to capture key information on human rights violations and security incidents.

The form includes questions on nature, patterns, and context of violations; perpetrator identification; and demographic/humanitarian details to better understand affected groups and their locations. Monitors in North, Central, West, South, and East Darfur submit data, which is





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then verified by legal analysts to guarantee accuracy. This methodology ensures reliable, secure data collection while upholding integrity, transparency, and credibility at all stages.

3. Report Summary

Human rights conditions in the Darfur region during May 2025 continue to deteriorate due to the ongoing armed conflict between the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), the Sudanese Armed Forces, and their allied parties.

Security incidents linked to the war and the absence of good governance are escalating, including: extrajudicial killings, targeting of residential neighborhoods and civilian infrastructure such as markets, health, and educational facilities, threats, gunfire in civilian gatherings, theft and looting under threat of weapons, sieges preventing civilians from accessing food, water, and healthcare, child recruitment, artillery and aerial shelling, arbitrary arrests, imprisonment of civilians without clear reasons, restrictions on women's activities, and other incidents indicating worsening security conditions across the five Darfur states, four of which are controlled by the RSF.

4. Legal Analysis

In full view of the international community, the parties to the armed conflict the RSF and the army continue to take civilian lives without restraint in Darfur, in the context of the "15 April War," classified under international humanitarian law as a non-international armed conflict. The humanitarian catastrophe worsens day by day.

According to documentation by the Human Rights Monitoring Network – Sudan through field sources, the RSF alone committed numerous atrocities against civilians in Darfur during May 2025, including: intentional killings, torture, arbitrary arrests, forced displacement and recruitment, abductions, looting, and the spread of fear and panic among civilians through systematic attacks based on ethnic and tribal lines, including deliberate artillery shelling of areas



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inhabited by civilians and civilian properties, particularly markets, IDP camps, and homes. The army was also reported to have conducted airstrikes in Koma, North Darfur, injuring civilians.

These incidents and violations constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity, representing gross violations of international criminal law. Applicable legal frameworks include:

1. Articles 6, 7, and 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, defining genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.
2. Common Article 3 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions.
3. Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions concerning rules governing the conduct of hostilities.
4. Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions on non-international armed conflicts, to which Sudan has been a party since 2006.
5. National context: The Sudanese Penal Code of 1991, amended in 2020, criminalizes these acts under Articles 186–192. However, the Sudanese judiciary remains unable to prosecute perpetrators in the current conflict due to:
 - Lack of judicial independence from the executive.
 - Weak capacity of the national judiciary to enforce the law.
 - Suspension of national courts in Darfur due to ongoing conflict, necessitating alternative regional and international judicial mechanisms, including the ICC, the African Court, and hybrid courts dedicated to addressing such crimes.

5. Security Situation

5.1 North Darfur

During May 2025, North Darfur experienced numerous security incidents. On 2 May, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) conducted artillery shelling across El Fasher, targeting the northern and western neighborhoods, causing extensive damage to civilian homes. On 5 May, RSF forces





attacked the city from the southeast, generating large plumes of smoke due to artillery bombardments. The following day, the RSF renewed shelling on Abu Shouk IDP camp, resulting in multiple civilian casualties.

On 8 May, the Sudanese army targeted RSF positions east of El Fasher using drones. On 9 May, RSF artillery strikes hit residential neighborhoods, causing civilian injuries and destruction of homes. On 10 May, shelling by RSF drones targeted northern neighborhoods, burning homes in southwest El Fasher, and further attacks on Abu Shouk camp killed an entire family.

On 11 May, explosions and smoke were reported in Fasher, Karkar, Qarqaf, and Jaqujoqo, likely from RSF heavy weaponry. On 12 May, RSF artillery continued targeting northern and western neighborhoods, including eight shells on the Saudi Hospital and the nearby Dar Al-Arqam shelter.

On 13–15 May, RSF shelling killed seven civilians in Awlad Al-Reef neighborhood, with ongoing attacks on Abu Shouk camp and Al-Shurfa neighborhood, resulting in numerous civilian and volunteer casualties. On 15 May, an RSF drone flew over the city but was intercepted by the Sudanese Armed Forces.

Between 16–20 May, fighting involved airstrikes by the army, continued RSF artillery targeting northern and western districts, including Abu Shouk and Daraja neighborhoods, and attacks on Nevesha and Abu Shouk markets, causing multiple civilian deaths and injuries. RSF forces also looted three villages northwest of El Fasher—Qulo, Qarni, and Hilla Al-Sheikh—burning Hilla Babiker, Hilla Sheikh, and Hilla Hashaba. On 26–27 May, RSF artillery targeted eastern, northern, and southwestern neighborhoods, including Al-Nasr, Al-Qubba, Al-Radeef, Al-Mawashi, and Al-Madraj.

5.2 South Darfur

South Darfur, under RSF administration, saw heightened tension, especially after an airstrike at Nyala International Airport. This was followed by extensive raids and arbitrary arrests in public spaces. The Police Hospital in Nyala forced staff to work for the RSF and subjected medical





personnel to military training, coinciding with mass recruitment of new RSF soldiers at Dumaya Camp west of Nyala, including adolescents. A new batch graduated on 8 May.

Crime, looting, and kidnappings increased, particularly in Nyala city and along the Mershing–Manwashi route. Perpetrators were often masked, armed, and sometimes wore RSF uniforms, using small, covered vehicles or motorcycles. RSF-aligned recruits were deployed in large groups across several locations in Nyala, including Wadi Burli and surrounding gardens, increasing looting in areas like Al-Jir and Texas neighborhoods. On 25 May, citizen Ahmed Ibrahim Ahmed was killed during an armed robbery in Texas, south of Wadi Nyala.

Large shipments of household items and vehicles entered Nyala on 22 May, some selling goods at the south side of the Al-Jenina market. Prison conditions remained dire; for example, Maryam, a pregnant woman in her third month, had been detained since April on murder charges, denied medical attention, and her husband was jailed for 24 hours when he protested. Authorities considered opening Daqrees prison north of Nyala to relieve overcrowding.

5.3 East Darfur

On 11 May, armed men in a Land Cruiser looted two ATOZ trucks traveling from Al-Duwayn to Gubish, West Kordofan. On 14 May, citizen Yahya Youssef Abkar was shot by an unknown assailant and hospitalized. On 16 May, teacher Abdullah Al-Bashir Al-Aqid was fatally wounded by stray gunfire on his abdomen, hitting his liver and spleen; surgeons refused further intervention.

On 18 May, RSF advisor Abu Nuba visited Al-Duwayn with a large security contingent, overseeing the graduation of new recruits from Totoloto Camp in Bahr Al-Arab locality. On 19 May, explosions and dust storms were reported in Al-Matar district, though sources remain unknown. On 20 May, four children under 18 were injured in a market explosion, including the amputation of one child's hand. On 24 May, an ATOZ vehicle traveling to Al-Laid locality, North Darfur, was looted, resulting in the death of a 50-year-old man. Armed assailants attempted to enter the city but were stopped by a civilian protection force, causing three deaths (two assailants and one protection force





member) and two injuries. On 28 May, six armed men in a Tucson vehicle looted nine mobile phones from citizens, assaulting two men Mujahid Mohamed Abdelkader (30) and Saleh Zakaria (46).

5.4 Central Darfur

Central Darfur, under RSF control, witnessed widespread incidents of looting, threats, and deliberate gunfire. On 28 April, brothers Abdullah Al-Nazeef (40) and Hussein Al-Nazeef (37) were attacked by armed men on a motorcycle while collecting materials; Hussein sustained a gunshot wound and head injury.

On 2 May, Hamza Osman Abdullah Babiker (41) was fatally shot in the neck during Maghrib prayer at Camp Five Minutes. On 4 May, two looting incidents occurred in Kingomiya neighborhood, involving the theft of phones from civilians and women. On 5 May, citizen Shogar Ahmed Shogar was shot, sustaining serious leg injuries. On 6 May, armed men raided IDP Abdelaziz Abdullah Idris's home, shooting him in the leg and stealing a battery and Starlink device.

Between 8–27 May, multiple incidents occurred, including threats and looting at Ronqatash Camp, shootings, robberies, and military overflights by the army near Zalingei and surrounding villages. Notable incidents include the killing of Abu Al-Bashar Yaqub (25) on 22 May, shootings in Bendsi locality, and thefts of shop property in Al-Hamidiyya neighborhood on 27 May.

5.5 West Darfur

West Darfur experienced military mobilization, especially in Jebel Moon and Kalbas localities, representing contact zones between RSF, the Sudanese army, and joint forces. RSF conducted large-scale searches, inciting hatred after attacks on Nyala and Port Sudan airports.

On 9–10 May, RSF mobilized 142 combat vehicles to Nahud and El Fasher. On 10 May, a warehouse at Geneina Airport was burned during RSF deployment of air defense systems, using the airport as a substitute for Nyala Airport.





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Notably, on 11 May, Abbas Asil (“Abbas Jebel Moon”) joined the RSF with 50 vehicles and 3,500 fighters, after defecting from the Sudan Liberation Army, engaging in battles in northern Geneina, Jebel Moon, Kalbas, and parts of Sarba locality. On 12 May, field leader Al-Amda Ali Al-Doudo returned from Khartoum with 87 military vehicles and 2,500 troops, hosted in a public festival. RSF-aligned local administrations primarily oversaw recruitment, with some civilians fleeing due to pressure.

On 18 May, RSF withdrew from Kalbas, Jebel Moon, Furbrenga, and Qoz Bida, consolidating forces in Geneina for redeployment to Kordofan. Military flights occurred on 19–20 May, including army air patrols, and on 22 May, RSF warplanes landed at Martyr Sabira Airport for four hours, with more than 20 trucks of weapons and ammunition moving toward Central Darfur’s Zalingei locality for logistical support.

6. Human Rights Violations

6.1 North Darfur

During May 2025, North Darfur witnessed multiple human rights violations. On 1 May, RSF artillery targeted Abu Shouk IDP camp, killing and injuring several IDPs and partially destroying some houses, also affecting Nevesha Market.

On 6 May, intense RSF artillery fire hit Abu Shouk camp, killing two and injuring more than 18 people. On 10 May, RSF continued artillery shelling on the camp, killing numerous civilians, including entire families. On the same day, shelling in El Fasher killed volunteer Mokhtar Mohamed Al-Nour Baydi and health center volunteer Abdul Salam, injured by an artillery shell.

On 14 May, RSF shelling killed more than four people and injured over five at Abu Shouk camp. On 15 May, RSF artillery struck a communal kitchen in Al-Shurfa neighborhood, killing seven and injuring five volunteers. On 18 May, RSF targeted Nevesha Market and Abu Shouk camp, killing at



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least 14 people and partially destroying shops. On 20 May, artillery attacks on Awlad Al-Reef, Al-Qubba, Al-Nasr, and Daraja neighborhoods killed seven and injured 11.

On 24 May, RSF artillery killed at least four IDPs at Abu Shouk camp. On 25 May, artillery fire injured six people and partially destroyed some homes. On 26 May, RSF targeted homes in Al-Qubba and Al-Nasr neighborhoods, causing partial destruction. On 27 May, artillery continued in Al-Mawashi and Al-Madraj neighborhoods, partially destroying properties.

6.2 South Darfur

Human rights violations increased under RSF control. At the start of May, Abdulrazak Hassan Jalis, head of Atash IDP camp administration, was killed along with two others by armed RSF-affiliated men on motorcycles after intervening to protect a youth under threat. This caused outrage among camp residents, closing Atash Market for a week.

On 5 May, a female pharmacist near the popular market was intercepted by armed men on a motorcycle; she was forced to leave her phone at home due to insecurity. Women, particularly workers, faced harassment and looting at workplaces and commuting routes, forcing some to abandon work.

On 14 May, Alhadi Idris, chief of the Fultah tribe, was killed in Tuls Market while attempting to mediate a conflict among RSF members. On 15 May, Fatima Omar (28) was threatened outside her home in Al-Jir near Wadi Burli while using the internet; an RSF-clad assailant demanded her phone and threatened her.

Vegetable traders at Jenina Market were harassed and assaulted, including beatings with whips, as RSF sought to enforce market closures. Many women refused to work in the Big Market due to insecurity and were forcibly expelled. On 26 May, a 19-year-old citizen was threatened, shot in the leg, and robbed at Jenina Market.





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6.3 East Darfur**

Human rights violations continued across East Darfur. On 2 May, Mohamed Wad Al-Faki was arrested by armed men in RSF uniforms from his workshop in Al-Duwayn, held without notification for three days, and released after paying a ransom of 10 million SDG out of a demanded 30 million.

Since 6 May, RSF launched arrest campaigns in Al-Duwayn targeting former Sudanese army soldiers, detaining them in command buildings with no clear justification.

6.4 Central Darfur

In Central Darfur, multiple violations occurred. On 3 May, an armed member of Sudan Liberation Movement led by Abdulwahid Nour was killed in the gold mining area “Raqbat Al-Jamal,” in Golo, Central Jebel Marra.

On 6 May, three men in Chadian jalabiyas robbed Mokhtar Mohamed Ahmed Sarour (36) in Kingomiya (Tara) neighborhood. On 14 May, Mohamed Al-Sayer Adam (65) was fatally stabbed in Wadi Azum, Zalingei, and the perpetrator was later arrested.

On 15 May, three RSF-clad men on motorcycles threatened Amer Abkar (20) and stole 20,000 SDG near the girls’ secondary school in Kingomiya. The same day, Issam (25), a shop owner, was assaulted at the watermelon market near the Zalingei Public Prosecution Office.

On 16 May, 11 citizens attending a wedding in Waro, Delij administrative unit, were injured by artillery fired by three accused individuals affiliated with Al-Amda Mahdi Najdin. Injured victims were hospitalized in Delij and Zalingei Teaching Hospital.





On 20 May, IDP Taj Al-Din Yaqoub Musa (27) was intercepted and robbed by two armed men, one in RSF uniform, near Al-Hamidiyya camp main road while returning from Nyala.

On 23 May, Sudan Liberation Movement soldiers under Abdulwahid Nour shot and killed Sadiq Brin, an RSF soldier, during inspection of two RSF vehicles at Nertiti city's western entrance.

On 23–24 May, heavy random gunfire in Zalingei city caused panic among residents. On 24 May, a weapon trader associated with RSF fired in the air at Al-Senter Market in Al-Hamidiyya camp, frightening residents. On the same day, RSF gunmen attacked three people traveling from Tarj Market to Delij, injuring three.

On 26 May, RSF gunmen in a Land Cruiser looted smartphones, laptops, and personal belongings from Islamic Relief staff between Umm Shalaya and Rumalia, approximately 106 km northwest of Zalingei.

6.5 West Darfur

On 15 May, lawyer Mohamed Al-Tayeb was arrested at his home for photographing an RSF military gathering; his phone was searched, revealing suspected communications with military intelligence and planning materials. On the same day, Samia Al-Hadi (27) was briefly detained at Adi border crossing from Chad for alleged collaboration with Bara'a Brigades; released after two hours.

RSF closed all tea vendors' shops at China Market (south of Geneina Big Market), alleging illicit trade, and deployed checkpoints, forcing café workers to appeal to civil authorities, but without response. Wi-Fi services at China Market remain closed. The state also reported a rise in home invasions, particularly in Geneina locality.





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7. Recommendations

1. To the RSF, the army, and allied forces: Stop targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure during military operations and provide safe corridors for the movement of civilians.
2. To all parties to the conflict: Respect and adhere to international humanitarian law and the four Geneva Conventions during the conflict, ensuring compliance with the principles of distinction and proportionality in all military operations.
3. Humanitarian actors and donors: Mobilize regional and international funding and actively ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance to those in need in IDP and refugee camps inside and outside Sudan.
4. To authorities and controlling parties nationwide: Ensure adequate protection for civilians in all aspects and areas of life, particularly in markets, travel routes, social gatherings, Wi-Fi centers, and within their homes.
5. To all civil society actors: Intensify efforts to monitor, document, and report human rights violations and security conditions affecting civilians during the ongoing conflict.
6. To regional and international legal and constitutional institutions: Ensure the enforcement of international law against all parties that violate human rights and target civilians during the war in Sudan.



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