



CITY UNDER SIEGE,

CHILDREN UNDER FIRE

RAPID SUPPORT FORCES' CRIMES AGAINST
HUMANITY IN NORTH DARFUR

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Cover photo: *Children playing in Shakshako displacement camp in Tawila, Sudan, in January 2026. Tawila is reportedly hosting 800,000 displaced people, mostly from El Fasher.* © Private

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ACRONYMS AND GLOSSARY

ACRONYM/TERM	DESCRIPTION
<i>abid</i> (sing.), <i>abeed</i> (pl.)	Derogatory term meaning slave
<i>abulday</i> (sing.), <i>abulda</i> (pl.)	Term used to refer to SAF troops or soldiers, carrying connotations of servitude or slavery, used by the RSF to denigrate non-Arabs in the military
ACERWC	African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
<i>ambay</i> (sing.), <i>ambayat</i> (pl.)	Derogatory term meaning slave or black person
berm	Earthen wall often constructed for defensive purposes or to restrict movement
CRPD	UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<i>falangay</i> (sing.), <i>falangayat</i> (pl.)	Term used in precolonial Darfur for servants or slaves tasked with menial jobs, and now used by the RSF to denigrate non-Arabs, including those it accuses of supporting the army
FFM	Fact-Finding Mission
GSLF	Gathering of Sudan Liberation Forces
<i>hille</i>	A local term commonly used in Darfur to refer to a small village, hamlet, or rural settlement
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP	Internally displaced person
IHL	International humanitarian law
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
Janjaweed	Arab militia groups mobilized by the Sudanese government from 2003 onwards and implicated in widespread attacks against non-Arab communities. In some interviews for this report, the term Janjaweed was used to refer to the RSF
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement led by Jibril Ibrahim
Joint Forces	A military coalition of predominantly non-Arab armed groups that formally aligned with the SAF in April 2024
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
OHCHR	Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights

ACRONYM/TERM	DESCRIPTION
RSF	Rapid Support Forces. Sudanese armed group that evolved from Janjaweed militias active during the Darfur conflict and was later formalized under Sudanese law. Since April 2023, the RSF has been fighting the SAF
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces, the national military force of Sudan
SDG	Sudanese pound, the currency
SLA	Sudan Liberation Army
SLA/AW	SLA faction led by Abdul Wahid Mohammed Ahmed el-Nur
SLA/MM	SLA faction led by Minni Arku Minawi
SLM-TC	Sudan Liberation Movement-Transitional Council
TMC	Transitional Military Council
UNAMID	United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur
UN FFM	UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan
UNITAMS	United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization



© ↑ The map above shows North Darfur state, as well as key cities and towns in North Darfur state.



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During nearly three years of brutal conflict, civilians in North Darfur have been unlawfully detained, tortured and killed on a massive scale. Women and girls have been raped and forced into sexual slavery. Children have not just been the collateral damage of this violence: very often, they are deliberate targets.

This report documents the Rapid Support Forces' (RSF's) slow and violent takeover of North Darfur and its capital, El Fasher, after it began fighting the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) in April 2023. The abuses, which amount to crimes against humanity under international law, displaced hundreds of thousands of children, exposing them to death and injury during attacks or while fleeing. Countless children have been orphaned.

Sudan's current crisis erupted against the backdrop of decades of armed conflict. When major violence escalated in April 2023 between the SAF and the RSF (a former government force), fighting was first concentrated in the capital, Khartoum. But it soon spread to other parts of the country, including Darfur, a region on the western border with Chad that has been wracked by cycles of conflict since the early 2000s. By November 2023, the RSF controlled four of the five state capitals in Darfur.

El Fasher was the lone holdout and last major stronghold in Darfur for the SAF and the allied Joint Forces (a coalition of local armed groups that draws heavily from the Zaghawa ethnic group). The area is of particular strategic importance due to its sizeable gold reserves and its position as a geographical hub linking Darfur to Libya and Chad along trans-Saharan trade routes. It became a prize the RSF seemed willing to take at any price – something made possible by the steady flow of weapons and other equipment from its foreign backers, most notably the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Beginning in 2024, the RSF attacked and burned villages, towns and displacement camps around El Fasher, forcing civilians to flee. It then besieged the city from May 2024 to October 2025, restricting food and aid as famine spread. When the RSF seized El Fasher on 26 October 2025, its fighters intercepted, executed and tortured civilians trying to flee, while others were killed inside the city, including scores of people at Saudi Maternity Hospital (Saudi Hospital), El Fasher's last functioning hospital.

Amnesty International concludes, on the basis of evidence gathered for this report, that the RSF committed a litany of war crimes in El Fasher and surrounding areas between mid-2024 and late 2025. Many were carried out as part of a widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population and amount to crimes against humanity. They include murder, forcible transfer, imprisonment, torture, rape, sexual slavery, other forms of sexual violence, enslavement and extermination.

The RSF repeatedly used derogatory and dehumanizing language in their attacks on residents of El Fasher and surrounding areas, most of whom belonged to non-Arab ethnic groups. Most of these terms, including the frequently used slur of *falangay* (singular) or *falangayat* (plural), invoke slavery or servitude, and can also imply an association with the military or allied forces. In practice, however, non-Arab civilians were often targeted irrespective of any demonstrated military affiliation. Amnesty International concludes that the RSF committed the crime against humanity of persecution on the basis of ethnicity in North Darfur.

Amnesty International further finds that the pattern of destroying villages in the Abu Zerega area, populated primarily by Zaghawa communities along with smaller numbers of other non-Arab ethnic groups, which took place between December 2024 and March 2025, is consistent with ethnic cleansing. This conclusion is reinforced by the RSF's continued control of these areas, preventing displaced populations from returning.

Amnesty International believes that acts documented in this report, as well as other suspected crimes under parallel investigation, may be relevant to the crime of genocide. Its investigation into this conduct is ongoing at the time of publication.

This report gathered sufficient evidence to publicly name three of the RSF commanders responsible for serious violations of international law. Extensive witness testimony identified two senior RSF commanders at the Mina al-Bari detention facility in El Fasher who were directly involved in abuses while also overseeing those carrying them out. Major General Gedo Hamdan Ahmed Mohamed, known as “Abu Shouk”, directed interrogations and participated in torture. Lieutenant Colonel Abbas Khater Bakhit ordered the torture of prisoners. The repeated nature of these violations supports both direct criminal responsibility and potential command responsibility.

Video evidence consistent with witness testimony also identified RSF commander Al-Fateh Abdullah Idris, more widely known as “Abu Lulu”, summarily executing captives in civilian clothing during a massacre of people attempting to flee El Fasher.

Amnesty International investigated the situation in El Fasher and surrounding areas for eight months, from August 2025 to April 2026. The organization interviewed 247 people for this report, including 208 survivors (169 adults and 39 children), who had experienced or witnessed conflict-related abuses, during a three-week trip to Chad and through remote interviews. Researchers also interviewed 18 representatives of local and international organizations with knowledge of the situation in North Darfur. The investigation was further supported by open-source analysis, including the verification of 89 videos and extensive analysis of satellite imagery from North Darfur.

On 10 June 2026, Amnesty International sent a letter to General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, head of the RSF, outlining the report's preliminary findings and requesting information about the conduct of RSF forces and a response to the allegations. At the time of publication, no response had been received.

Since the takeover of El Fasher, the RSF has maintained almost complete control over Darfur. Many of the abuses recounted here are continuing elsewhere in Sudan. Without urgent action, the patterns of egregious human rights violations documented in this report, and the severe harm to children, will continue unhindered.

1.1 CLOSING IN ON EL FASHER: A GRADUAL TAKEOVER

In April 2023, fighting started in Khartoum between the SAF, led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the RSF, led by General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (also known as “Hemedti”). Within a few weeks, the fighting spread to West Darfur state, where the RSF and its allied Arab militias killed thousands of civilians from the Masalit ethnic group, and forcibly displaced hundreds of thousands to neighbouring Chad.

When fighting started in West Darfur, community leaders in El Fasher negotiated a fragile truce with the RSF. The city became a refuge for many, absorbing hundreds of thousands of people displaced by violence elsewhere. But in October 2023, the RSF launched a large-scale attack on SAF positions inside El Fasher.

In November 2023, two of the largest groups within the Joint Forces ended their neutral stance and aligned with the SAF against the RSF. The move created tensions within the coalition, prompting two other groups to leave and paving the way for the remaining members to align with the SAF in April 2024.

The ferocious battle for El Fasher had begun: the SAF and Joint Forces on the one side, and the RSF and allied groups on the other.

“WATCH YOUR VILLAGE BURN”

As the RSF advanced on El Fasher in 2024, it captured towns and razed villages around the city, forcibly displacing thousands of civilians. Amnesty International interviewed 56 people, including 17 children, who witnessed RSF attacks on 22 villages or towns in North Darfur from November 2024 to early 2025. In these attacks, the RSF killed hundreds of civilians. The RSF also burned homes and other civilian infrastructure and carried out widespread looting.

This report focuses on RSF attacks on 12 predominantly Zaghawa communities in and around Abu Zerega town, which is about 35km south of El Fasher. These attacks took place in two waves. In December 2024, the RSF attacked Abu Zerega town and the villages immediately surrounding it, as well as villages west of the town. In March 2025, the RSF attacked villages east of the town, including Grawit Basham and Dar el Naim.

Residents of the Abu Zerega area shared a list of 122 people killed in the December 2024 attacks, including seven children. Amnesty International independently verified the deaths of 13 individuals on the list and received the names of an additional 15 people killed, five of whom were children. In relation to the March 2025 attacks, Amnesty International collected the names of 21 people who had been killed, including three teenage boys. Men and boys made up the vast majority of those killed and injured in the attacks.

Among those killed in December 2024 was a nine-year-old boy, whom the RSF shot in the back in Abu Zerega town. “I carried him on my shoulder,” said his grandmother, a Zaghawa woman, recalling to Amnesty International how she fled the town with him afterwards. “He was just asking for water and lost consciousness.”

Yagoub (a pseudonym), a 17-year-old Zaghawa boy, was in his village on the outskirts of Abu Zerega town when the RSF attacked in December 2024. Together with about 100 people who tried to flee, he was caught and forced back to the village at gunpoint:

“They tied me up and beat me with sticks and the back of an AK-47. Then one of them approached on a camel and said, ‘This is the child of a talangay’... and he just shot me in the leg.”

Yagoub now uses crutches to walk. He said that eight of his cousins, including four boys between the ages of 11 and 17, were killed in the same attack.

Those who did not immediately flee were killed or harassed until they did. In Dar el Naim, *Reham*, a Zaghawa woman and carer of two children with disabilities, said she tried to hide out on the family farm after the RSF torched her home during the March 2025 attack. Each day, RSF fighters found her and beat her. “They were saying, ‘You are not allowed to be here, you should go.’”

The RSF often burned homes and civilian infrastructure as part of their attacks. Using satellite imagery, Amnesty International confirmed that burning took place in 10 of the 12 locations near Abu Zerega town where RSF attacks were documented. The burning continued after most residents had fled and while the areas were under RSF control, suggesting an intent to render them uninhabitable. In Dar el Naim, an 85-year-old Zaghawa woman with limited mobility who stayed behind saw her eldest daughter die when the RSF set their house on fire; she guarded her daughter’s corpse for two days until another relative managed to rescue her.

None of the residents interviewed saw the SAF or Joint Forces in the villages or towns at the time of the attacks, and both SAF and Joint Forces representatives told Amnesty International their forces were not present in the area. Some communities had loosely organized civilian defence groups that resisted some RSF attacks, but they were quickly overpowered. All the individuals interviewed said they were not directly participating in hostilities, and witnesses consistently described those attacked or killed as civilians fleeing violence.

These actions violate international humanitarian law and amount to the war crimes of attacking a civilian population, murder, pillage, destroying an adversary’s property, forcible displacement and cruel treatment. They also amount to the crime against humanity of forcible transfer and are consistent with ethnic cleansing. While ethnic cleansing is not recognized as an independent crime under international law, Amnesty International uses the term in line with the UN Commission of Experts’ definition, which describes it as “a purposeful policy designed by one ethnic or religious group to remove by violent and terror-inspiring means the civilian population of another ethnic or religious group from certain geographic areas.”

People displaced by these attacks were forced to flee repeatedly. Many sought refuge in Zamzam, a camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) about 15km south of El Fasher that was established in the early 2000s. On 11 April 2025, the RSF launched a massive offensive against Zamzam, committing war crimes and forcing hundreds of thousands of civilians to flee. Targeted killings, torture, hostage-taking and rape were widely reported on the road out of Zamzam.

A CITY UNDER SIEGE

After capturing much of the area around El Fasher and emptying it of the civilian population, the RSF lay siege to the city for nearly 18 months, from May 2024 to October 2025. RSF forces made it extraordinarily difficult for civilians to flee, blocked supply routes into the city and prevented traders, humanitarian organizations, and others from bringing in essential goods.

On 13 June 2024, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2736, calling for an immediate halt to the fighting and the RSF siege of El Fasher, as well as increased humanitarian access. Hostilities nonetheless continued unabated, and El Fasher was steadily severed from the outside world. A “corridor” allowing people to leave El Fasher towards Tawila – a town about 60km west of El Fasher that is controlled by the Sudan

Liberation Army led by Abdul Wahid Mohammed Ahmed el-Nur (SLA/AW), an armed opposition group that has largely remained outside of the recent fighting – was kept open for about six months at the start of the siege, but was closed by the SLA/AW in late 2024 following tensions with the RSF. After its closure, many civilians were effectively trapped and too fearful to risk the violence reported on the roads out of the city.

With humanitarian agencies cut off from El Fasher, some people risked their lives trying to clandestinely bring food into the city; only a small and irregular trickle of supplies ever made it through. Prices rose astronomically. For example, the price of rice increased more than a hundredfold, from SDG 2,000-3,000 (about USD 8.50-12) to SDG 220,000-240,000 (approximately USD 64-70) per kilogram during the siege. Most people survived on *ambaz*, a byproduct of peanut oil production normally used as animal feed, but by October 2025 even this was running out.

The famine in El Fasher had a devastating and disproportionate impact on children, who are at much higher risk from even short-term nutritional deficits than adults. An inter-agency assessment conducted in El Fasher in March and April 2025 found levels of acute malnutrition well above emergency thresholds. A malnutrition expert said that given these findings, the risk of death could be as high as one in two children. After the takeover of El Fasher, data collected by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) revealed that among children under five who reached Tawila between 27 October and 3 November, more than 70% of those screened were acutely malnourished, including 35% suffering from severe acute malnutrition.

Mothers described giving birth amid severe deprivation and stress: in sweltering underground bomb shelters, in hospitals that were shelled while they were giving birth, or while fleeing violence. Unable to get adequate nutrition themselves, they often could not produce enough milk to feed their newborns. “I need to eat so there will be milk for him to nurse,” said *Shadia*, a Berti woman living in El Fasher in September 2025, who was breastfeeding her six-week-old son. “He is underweight... [I eat] one time per day... Just *ambaz*. There is nothing.”

Unable to breastfeed, many women watched their babies waste away. *Rashida*, a 39-year-old woman, lost her youngest child, a twin just over one year old, in August 2025 in El Fasher: “[My son] was getting very weak [and] not taking milk. He became very thin. There was a change in his skin... Most of his body was swollen, including his stomach.” With immune systems severely compromised, illnesses that would otherwise have been manageable became deadly.

The siege made stemming this wave of malnutrition almost impossible. The last functioning hospital in El Fasher, Saudi Hospital, was at first able to provide ready-to-use therapeutic food sachets for severely malnourished children, but once these ran out, there were few alternatives due to food shortages.

The RSF’s sustained obstruction of humanitarian aid during the siege of El Fasher violated international humanitarian law and amounts to the war crimes of starvation and cruel treatment, and the crime against humanity of extermination.

Civilians living in El Fasher during the siege were not just starved: they were bombed on a near-daily basis. Life ground to a halt, as markets and shops closed and families packed into underground shelters or dirt trenches, waiting out the attacks. Children, long out of school, moved from one displacement site to another with their parents or caregivers, unable to find a safe place to stay. Due to attacks, the injured struggled to reach Saudi Hospital. At night, El Fasher was plunged into near-total darkness: with electricity cut off, even a single light could draw the attention of drones overhead.

Between April 2023 and May 2025, medical facilities in El Fasher recorded over 13,000 conflict-related injuries, including about 1,900 fatalities. The true number of injuries and deaths is likely much higher. The vast majority of reported injuries (over 83%) were caused by explosive weapons. Nearly one in five of those injured by explosive weapons were children; of these, 300 died of their injuries.

This report documents in detail five strikes that took place between July and September 2025 that resulted in the deaths or injuries of children, as well as repeated strikes on health facilities. These strikes most likely violated international humanitarian law. One person said, summarizing the situation:

“El Fasher city is... in chaos... You will find a... person who has [been] killed by a drone, lying on the ground. Nobody is there to... [remove the body]... People are starving... This is a nonsense war.”

SEIZURE OF EL FASHER

On 26 October 2025, the RSF waged its final offensive on El Fasher. Shelling was so intense that civilians were forced out of any remaining hiding place. Survivors saw loved ones and strangers alike being killed in wave after wave of attack. SAF forces withdrew and the RSF took full control of the city.

Many civilians attempted to flee towards Tawila, but the RSF made this almost impossible. By October 2025, El Fasher was encircled by a 57km network of berms, earthen walls up to 3m high constructed for defence purposes or to restrict movement. RSF fighters often patrolled the tops of these berms and swooped down to intercept people who were fleeing.

What followed was a massacre. Amnesty International interviewed 70 survivors who fled El Fasher on or after 26 October, almost all of whom had witnessed summary executions, rape, torture or hostage-taking. RSF members filmed and publicly shared videos of mass executions. Amnesty International collected and verified 19 videos documenting a large massacre near the berm, about 12km north-west of El Fasher.

A 58-year-old Berti woman, who reached a part of the berm directly north of El Fasher on 27 October, said she saw more than 1,000 dead bodies there. “The people who were shot were thrown inside the berm... [The RSF] said they would fill in the berm with the bodies.”

Many children were among those massacred at the berm. *Taiseer*, a 68-year-old Zaghawa woman fleeing with her five grandchildren, saw the RSF shoot and kill the 12-year-old neighbour boy who was accompanying them. “I stopped but other people kept running,” she said. “I saw him opening and closing his mouth again and again. At some point he closed his mouth and didn’t open it... Then I ran too.”

Large groups of people attempting to flee were wiped out. One man was escaping with a group of seven friends, aged 17 to 19, all of whom were shot and killed. Those who survived often did so by pure luck or by feigning dead. *Khalil*, who fled with a group of 20 men, narrowly escaped:

“[They] asked us to lie on the ground. They encircled us with their vehicles. Two RSF fighters opened fire on us while we were lying on the ground... They killed 17 of the 20 men I was fleeing with... One of the RSF fighters shot me in my right shoulder. I was bleeding so I pretended to be dead.”

Men and older boys were particularly targeted, as the RSF usually characterized them, often without evidence, of affiliation with the SAF or allied groups, and executed them on the spot. *Hamdi*, a 15-year-old Berti boy, watched the RSF shoot his father in the head after accusing him of being part of the military:

“One of them said, ‘This young boy is also from the military.’ And he was about to shoot me, but another [RSF fighter] grabbed the gun and the shot came to my shoulder... [They] think that everyone who is still in El Fasher, even if they are children, are from the military.”

During these attacks, the RSF targeted people on the basis of their ethnicity. The RSF routinely used ethnically charged terms like *falangay* to describe civilians fleeing the city. In one particularly revealing case, *Zubeida*, a 15-year-old girl, survived a massacre of approximately 25 people at the berm only because she identified herself as half Arab and falsely claimed that her father was in the RSF. She witnessed the execution of men and boys, the killing of women who resisted rape, and the shooting of young children. “I was watching everything,” she said. “I am the only survivor.”

As the chaos unfolded in and around El Fasher, thousands of children were separated from their parents and caregivers, leaving many alone or in the care of extended family members or other civilians fleeing violence. With communication networks disrupted and limited systems in place to trace the missing, many continued to endure difficult months wondering about the fate of family members. *Noora*, a Zaghawa girl who was 13 or 14, told Amnesty International, “I am always praying and asking God for [my parents] to come back.”

Those who stayed in El Fasher also witnessed horrific violations. Amnesty International interviewed 18 people who were present at Saudi Hospital when the city was captured, including staff, patients and relatives of patients, and who saw the RSF kill scores of people there. *Huwaida*, a 35-year-old Fur woman, witnessed the RSF killing 32 people, including her 38-year-old cousin and his 15-year-old son, in the ward in which she was staying with her three young children. “[The RSF] were saying ‘*falangayat*, are you *falangayat*?’... They [asked] my cousin, ‘Are you from the Joint Forces?’ [My cousin’s son] said... ‘This is my dad, please don’t kill him.’ They did not respond to him directly, they just shot him [and his father].” *Huwaida* said she and her children were the only ones spared in that ward.

Amnesty International interviewed seven people who stayed in El Fasher for several weeks after the RSF takeover, in some cases because the RSF forced them to stay in the city. They described executions, beatings, rape and dire humanitarian conditions. In December 2025, Denise Brown, the UN humanitarian coordinator for Sudan, conducted the organization’s first visit to El Fasher since the RSF takeover. She called the city a “crime scene.” After being allowed into El Fasher for just a few hours in January 2026, MSF described the city as “a ghost town.”

The RSF’s actions against civilians inside and on exit routes from El Fasher on or after 26 October 2025 amount to the war crimes of attacks directed at civilians, murder and forcible displacement. Attacking Saudi Hospital, which is a protected object under international law, is also a war crime. Additionally, the RSF’s conduct amounts to the crimes against humanity of forcible transfer, persecution and extermination.

1.2 PATTERNS OF ABUSE

In its takeover of El Fasher and surrounding areas, the RSF engaged in systematic abuses of the civilian population, with children both deliberately targeted and caught in the violence. The RSF repeatedly subjected women and girls to rape and other forms of sexual violence. They took thousands of civilians, including children, hostage for ransom, detaining them in facilities with horrific conditions where they were subjected to torture and other ill-treatment. They recruited and used children as fighters, which is prohibited by international law. In addition, Amnesty International documented abuses against specific at-risk groups, such as children and adults with disabilities, and older people. The RSF also targeted people because of their ethnicity, using humiliating ethnic slurs as they perpetrated other forms of abuse.

SEXUAL SLAVERY, RAPE AND OTHER SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The RSF raped and committed other forms of sexual violence on a massive scale in villages and IDP camps, and along the roads civilians used to flee. The conflict-related sexual violence documented in this report builds on previous RSF abuses of women and girls recorded by Amnesty International in Khartoum, Gezira, and North and South Darfur in 2023-2024.

Amnesty International interviewed 26 survivors of sexual violence, including 20 female survivors of rape, among them three girls under the age of 18 and one young woman raped when she was 17. A further three women and three children survived other forms of sexual violence. The youngest survivor of rape was 13 years old.

Survivors described being subjected to humiliating treatment and abuse that left lasting physical and psychological harm. Some incidents of rape carried an ethnic dimension, with non-Arab women and girls often referred to as *falangayat* or the wives and relatives of the *falangayat*.

One woman, one girl and one young woman abducted when she was a girl were held captive as sex slaves for periods ranging from several days to several weeks. All three were raped by multiple perpetrators at the same time; two were raped repeatedly.

Tasneem, a 13-year-old Zaghawa girl, was abducted in early April 2025 when RSF fighters attacked her village west of El Fasher. *Tasneem* was herding the family's livestock with her father when RSF fighters approached, shot her father dead and took her to El Daein, an RSF-controlled city about 350km away. She was blindfolded, leaving her completely disoriented:

"[The first time I was raped] it was three people. I was blindfolded... They held me down... they raped me... They said this is happening to you because your boys fought us, boys of the falangayat."

Ghalia, a Zaghawa girl who was 17 at the time of her assault, was abducted from her village near Abu Zerega in early 2025 with nine other women and girls. She was taken to a farm, where she was separated from the others. For weeks, or possibly months, she was tied to a tree; she was never untied, even to use the toilet, bathe or change her clothes. "At night they raped me," she said of the RSF fighters, who she said called her *falangay*:

"It was always... at least two or three people at a time, at the same place [the tree]... First when they started, I refused, I tried to fight back. They shot a bullet next to me. After that I got scared and didn't do anything."

Ghalia was raped by so many RSF fighters that she could not count or distinguish among them. She noted that one of the men said he was from Colombia.

Other women and girls were abducted during RSF attacks on villages, raped – often by multiple fighters – and then released or abandoned. Women and girls who were fleeing areas under attack were regularly raped or abused on the road.

The mass exodus of civilians during the attack on Zamzam IDP camp in April 2025, and again during the seizure of El Fasher city in late October 2025, led to widespread abuse. *Amal*, 14, described how after fleeing Zamzam with her mother in April 2025, they encountered six RSF vehicles on the road. “They told me, you are the women of the *falangayat*,” before raping her.

Women and girls were often subjected to sexual violence during aggressive searches conducted by RSF fighters. *Zakia*, a 16-year-old Zaghawa girl displaced from Zamzam IDP camp, said: “[The RSF] asked me to reach my hands up... initially they say they are going to search you... It was not a search; they touched every part of our bodies.”

The acts perpetrated by RSF members against women and girls amount to the war crimes of rape, cruel treatment, torture and sexual slavery and other sexual violence. When carried out as part of the widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population, they also amount to the crimes against humanity of rape, torture, imprisonment, sexual slavery and other sexual violence. The gender-based targeting of women and girls for sexual violence further constitutes the crime against humanity of persecution.

For many survivors, the sexual assault was compounded by stigma, shame and rejection from family and community members. When survivors reached areas of relative safety, many were too afraid to report the abuse or seek medical care. While some found informal support from trusted individuals, none of the 12 survivors who reported rape to health professionals had accessed psycho-social support through medical facilities. Services in Tawila, where several international NGOs were operating, as well as in refugee camps in Chad visited by Amnesty International, were extremely limited.

Many survivors had lost all their possessions and lived in extreme destitution, unable to meet basic needs of food and shelter. They often could not even afford basic menstrual supplies, which compounded feelings of shame. *Ghalia*, 17, who managed to escape captivity and sexual slavery, was virtually homeless when she reached Tawila, and resorted to begging for food. She was pregnant as a result of her multiple rapes. “I don’t know what I am going to say to [the baby] when he asks who his father is,” she said.

UNLAWFUL DETENTION AND HOSTAGE-TAKING

The RSF captured civilians, holding many of them hostage for ransom in horrific conditions. Amnesty International interviewed 45 people who were unlawfully detained between July 2024 and January 2026, at least 36 of whom were held hostage for ransom, including five children. Amnesty International also interviewed 20 people who witnessed the RSF unlawfully detaining others, including family members. The vast majority of those captured were men and older boys.

Alhadi, 17, was in Zamzam IDP camp when the RSF attacked it in April 2025. As he was seeking shelter from bombardments, RSF fighters dragged *Alhadi* onto their truck. “They punched me [in the mouth]... They were

beating me with sticks, they were calling us *falangayat*. Then they blindfolded me.” *Alhadi* was taken to a detention centre in Nyala, in South Darfur.

Detention conditions were abusive and degrading. Interviewees, including boys as young as 13, said they were beaten and verbally abused using ethnic slurs by RSF soldiers while in captivity. They were fed extremely little, kept in sweltering, overcrowded rooms, and often not allowed out to use the toilet. Many detainees witnessed people dying from what they believed was dehydration or disease. People who were ill were rarely given access to treatment or medication. At the Specialized Children’s Hospital of El Fasher, which was converted into a mass detention centre following the RSF’s takeover of the city in October 2025, witnesses said that a cholera outbreak killed upwards of 200 people.

Conditions in some detention centres were particularly horrific. Amnesty International interviewed nine men who had been held in Mina al-Bari detention centre, on the eastern outskirts of El Fasher, for up to five months between mid-2024 and early 2026. They said they were kept in shipping containers, which were dark and kept closed most of the time; stifling heat and minimal air circulation made it difficult to breathe. One man who was held there said: “Some [people] they passed [away] inside. We used to sit with our knees to our chest the whole time – sometimes [I] found somebody sitting like that [after] they had passed away.”

Detainees were sometimes taken out of containers to be tortured or beaten. They were denied adequate food, water and medical attention. One man who was held at Mina al-Bari for five months became so weak that the RSF put him in what they called “The Dead People’s Container” with three other men who were sick or injured; two of them died within days. Another survivor of Mina al-Bari detention centre said:

“Food [became] a secondary thing, we were just concerned with water. My body was [drying out] completely, [we] lost consciousness. [The RSF] thought we had died so they just threw us out of the container. After a while they realized we were still alive. They tortured us again and took us [back] inside the container.”

In most cases documented in this report, people were released from detention only after their relatives paid the RSF exorbitant sums for ransom – typically SDG 5-20 million (about USD 1,470-5,880). In only a few instances were people released without paying ransom, while a small number managed to escape.

Alsir, a 28-year-old man from the Manasir tribe (an ethnic Arab group), was taken hostage for ransom while fleeing El Fasher in October 2025. He said that after stopping the group he was travelling with, which was a mix of civilians and military personnel, the RSF immediately executed five military personnel before turning on the civilians: “They killed one of [the civilians], [but] one [of the RSF fighters] said, ‘Don’t kill the civilians, we can benefit from them.’” *Alsir* was held in a rural area with about 40 or 50 other men, most of them chained to burned vehicles; more men were held in a nearby cave. *Alsir* said he was beaten and tortured until his family agreed to pay a ransom of SDG 15 million (about USD 4,411) for his release.

The RSF often filmed abuses against detainees to coerce family members into paying. In several cases, people witnessed the execution of people whose family were unable to pay. *Ehsaan*, a 19-year-old woman who was taken hostage after the capture of El Fasher, witnessed RSF fighters executing her two brothers, aged 15 and 18, who were civilians. “First [the RSF] asked them, ‘What is your occupation?’ [My brothers said], ‘We are not working and we have no money and no one to provide us with money,’” she said. The RSF then accused them of being SAF soldiers, and shot both of them in the head.

These acts amount to the war crimes of hostage-taking, torture and cruel treatment. When carried out in the context of the widespread and systematic attack, they also amount to the crimes against humanity of imprisonment and torture.

RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILDREN

Amnesty International documented the RSF's widespread recruitment and use of children. The children were primarily boys, either recruited from RSF-aligned Arab groups, or abducted from non-Arab groups during attacks on villages and displacement camps. The children performed different roles for the group, including fighting, gathering intelligence and herding livestock.

Amnesty International interviewed six boys between the ages of 15 and 17 who had been recruited or used by the RSF, and one young woman who, while held as a sex slave at age 17 by the RSF, cooked and cleaned for RSF members. Amnesty International also interviewed four men from RSF-aligned Arab groups who described how recruitment in their communities often followed tribal lines, with extended family networks mobilized in support of the RSF. Local leaders played a critical role in securing recruits, including boys under the age of 18.

One RSF member told Amnesty International that approximately 40% of his unit consisted of boys and young men between the ages of 14 and 20 who were recruited from ethnic Arab communities. "We don't ask or discuss anything, we take [who] we want... We already have permissions from the highest leaders in the tribe," he said.

Boys, typically from non-Arab groups, were often abducted during attacks on villages and displacement camps and forced to fight for the RSF. *Abdelraouf*, approximately 15 years old, was taken by the RSF from Zamzam IDP camp during the attack in April 2025. After being beaten and held for four days, he was given a uniform and a gun: "They asked me to shoot... I shot... I went back to the car and hid... I was so scared," he told Amnesty International.

In other instances, the RSF forced abducted boys to do agricultural or domestic labour, or provide intelligence from local communities. These boys also suffered significant abuse. *Rashid*, who was about 17 at the time, was abducted by the RSF from his village around July 2024. For nearly nine months, he was kept in a rural area and forced to herd goats. He was guarded by three armed boys, themselves RSF recruits, who humiliated and beat him and other detainees, and deprived him of food and water. "They would watch me, and if I tried to rest they would open fire on me," he said. "They beat me all over my body."

For children who were abducted from non-Arab communities, the primary pathways to release were escape or ransom payment. Children and young men associated with the RSF, including those who later left the group, faced an ongoing risk of detention by the SAF or Joint Forces.

The RSF violated international human rights law by recruiting and using children between the ages of 14 and 17. Where children under 15 were recruited or used, those responsible should be investigated for committing the war crime of conscripting, enlisting or using children in armed conflict. When these acts and related treatment were committed in the context of the widespread and systematic attack directed against the civilian population, they amount, in some cases, to the crimes against humanity of enslavement and torture.

IMPACT ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE

People with disabilities and older people faced heightened risks. Amnesty International interviewed eight people with disabilities, including four children, and 12 parents or caretakers of children or adults with disabilities. These cases included people with physical, psycho-social and intellectual disabilities. Amnesty International also interviewed 24 people over the age of 55, several of whom had chronic health conditions.

Amnesty International documented several cases in which the RSF deliberately targeted people with disabilities, including children. In particular, the RSF often suspected men and older boys whose disabilities were the result of war-related injuries of having fought for the SAF or Joint Forces. Amnesty International also documented the RSF's execution of other people with disabilities, including three older men and a man with an intellectual disability.

Even when they were not deliberately targeted, people with disabilities and older people faced enormous difficulties fleeing attacks. The RSF routinely stole donkeys or carts from civilians, making fleeing on foot the only option for most. Almost none of the people with disabilities interviewed for this report had wheelchairs or other assistive devices that could have helped them flee. Most were forced to rely on others to carry them out of danger. They moved slowly as a result, exposing them to greater risks on the road.

Makawi, a 15-year-old boy who has a speech impairment and limited mobility, was forced to flee his village after an RSF attack in early 2025. His grandmother, who is almost the same size as him, carried him for four hours as they fled: "I would get tired and hold him on the front. Then I would fall again. Then I would keep running and falling, over and over again."

Wartime conditions compounded existing health problems for people with disabilities and older people. With limited supplies of even the most basic medications, such as diabetes and blood pressure pills, many suffered. When people were fleeing violence, the RSF often stole any food or water they had, exposing those with vulnerable health to particularly difficult journeys, and sometimes death.

Mukhtar, a 60-year-old man, lost consciousness from dehydration when fleeing Zamzam camp with a group of men in April 2025. "We ran out of food and water. I was getting weaker but I decided to keep walking. I kept walking until I fell down. Five days we were without water." Some people rescued *Mukhtar*, but he permanently lost his eyesight after the incident.

The humanitarian situation in Sudan is one of the most severe in the world, and both Sudan and neighbouring countries like Chad have struggled to meet the needs of displaced families, particularly amidst severe funding cuts. For people with disabilities and older people, the limited humanitarian response has compounded existing discrimination, making it even harder to exercise their fundamental rights.

For older adults in particular, displacement marked a severe economic blow as most older people in Sudan do not receive pensions or any other form of social protection. Their wealth was largely accumulated in livestock or land that they lost when they were forced to flee, rendering them highly economically vulnerable in displacement. Many had also lost relatives who had supported them before the conflict, or were supporting others, such as grandchildren whose parents had been killed.

ETHNIC TARGETING

Throughout its takeover of North Darfur, the RSF engaged in a pattern of violence marked by ethnic discrimination, both specifically targeting Zaghawa civilians and more broadly targeting non-Arab communities. The term “non-Arab” is commonly used for groups that identify or are perceived as having African rather than Arab lineage, and that may maintain distinct languages, cultural practices or livelihood traditions. These categories are fluid and often overlap in practice but became politically hardened during the Darfur conflict.

In the RSF’s interactions with civilians, they appeared to characterize Zaghawa individuals as affiliated, either directly or through relatives, with the Joint Forces, many of whose fighters are Zaghawa. The RSF also repeatedly used derogatory and dehumanizing language to refer more broadly to anyone of non-Arab ethnicity in Darfur.

Such language accompanied many of the RSF’s violations against non-Arab individuals, such as during the attack on Saudi Hospital, during sexual violence against women and girls, and in the detention of men and older boys.

1.3 ACTION REQUIRED

The war in Sudan is a war on civilians, including children. Rather than protecting them from the effects of hostilities, the parties to the conflict have repeatedly exposed them to irreparable harm.

The international community must move beyond statements of concern and take concrete steps to protect civilians, breaking the cycle of impunity for perpetrators of mass atrocities in Darfur. This includes using all available measures to pressure the SAF and RSF to agree to and implement a nationwide ceasefire, accompanied by a sustainable framework for longer-term security and stability, human rights protection, justice and accountability. It also requires deploying an international, independent and adequately resourced protection force to Sudan. Accountability must also be strengthened by ensuring sufficient support for all existing accountability mechanisms for Sudan, including the International Criminal Court as well as the UN and African Union-backed fact-finding missions. States should also exercise jurisdiction over crimes committed under international law in Sudan, in line with the principles of universal and extraterritorial jurisdiction. Commanders identified in this report should be investigated and, where relevant, prosecuted.

Child protection must be supported at every level of the response, including through adequately funding child-focused services. Parties to the conflict, particularly the RSF, should urgently sign an action plan with the UN to end and prevent grave violations against children.

Sudan has been reeling from the impact of humanitarian funding cuts, worsening health risks. At a conference on Sudan held in Berlin in April 2026, states made new funding pledges. However, at the time of this report’s publication, Sudan’s 2026 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan was still only 27% funded. Camps hosting civilians in neighbouring countries also remain under-resourced. The cuts have compounded the crisis for communities that have already lost everything, having been displaced, starved, besieged and subjected to horrific violence. All international partners to Sudan must ensure that adequate aid reaches refugees and displaced persons.

Finally, the current scale and intensity of the armed conflict in Sudan is possible only due to outside parties who fuel it, including with a largely unimpeded flow of weapons and equipment. Despite a UN Security Council arms embargo on the Darfur region that has been in place for nearly two decades, recently foreign-manufactured weapons and military equipment have been imported into Sudan, including Darfur, in large quantities.

All countries must immediately stop providing arms and ammunition to all parties of the Sudan conflict, and in particular must stop providing the UAE – the RSF’s chief backer – with any arms until it can be brought into compliance with the UN embargo. The UN Security Council must also expand the existing arms embargo that covers only Darfur to the rest of the country.



2. METHODOLOGY

This report details serious violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law that took place in El Fasher and surrounding areas in North Darfur between December 2024 and December 2025. It is based primarily on in-person and remote interviews conducted between August 2025 and April 2026, analysis of non-public documentary and videographic material, as well as open-source analysis. Amnesty International conducted a three-week research trip to eastern Chad, where delegates interviewed Sudanese refugees who had fled El Fasher and surrounding areas and were residing in the Iridimi and Ouré Cassoni refugee camps and in the town of Tiné, near the border with Sudan. Amnesty International also carried out telephone interviews via secure communication platforms with individuals in El Fasher, as well as with people in nearby Tawila, located approximately 60km west of El Fasher, and in Tiné, Chad.

Amnesty International interviewed 247 people for this report, including 208 survivors (169 adults and 39 children) of the conflict in El Fasher and the surrounding areas. Among the children interviewed, 16 were girls between the ages of 13 and 17, and 23 were boys between the ages of about 11¹ and 17. Amnesty International also interviewed one 18-year-old woman who described being raped when she was 17. Of the adults interviewed, 76 were men and 93 were women, many of whom were also parents, grandparents or other guardians of children affected by the conflict. Some were also community leaders, activists and human rights defenders.

Among the 208 survivors interviewed, the vast majority identified as belonging to non-Arab ethnic groups. These included 105 Zaghawa, 17 Fur, nine Berti, four Borgo, four Tunjur, three Dajo, three Gimir, two Nuba, and one each from the Bornu, Masalit, Mima and Tama communities. Two people reporting being of mixed Arab and non-Arab origin. In 46 cases, the ethnicity of the interviewee was not recorded. In some cases, the ethnicity of the individual interviewed is not identified in the report for security reasons.

Amnesty International also interviewed a small number of individuals from Arab communities, including two Habbaniya, two Hawara, two Shuweihat, and one each from the Manasir, Shattiya and Eteifat communities.

1. The youngest boy interviewed by Amnesty International was unsure about his exact age but together it was estimated that he was between 11 and 13 years old.

The Shattiya and Eteifat are sub-groups of the Abballa Rizeigat. Separately, four Arab men – two Habbaniya, one Misseriya, and one of mixed Habbaniya and Rizeigat origin – were interviewed regarding broader recruitment practices by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) within their communities.

In addition to civilians affected by the conflict, Amnesty International interviewed 18 representatives of local and international organizations, including UN and international agencies operating in North Darfur. Researchers also spoke with various administrative officials, including from the North Darfur Ministry of Health and the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), in addition to four humanitarian coordinators with the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army-Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW). Amnesty International also interviewed two members of the RSF, one member of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and three members of the Joint Forces. Two malnutrition experts were consulted.

Most interviews were conducted with interpretation from Sudanese Arabic into English; a few were conducted in Zaghawa and translated into English. The remaining interviews were conducted in English without interpretation. All interpreters were identified and engaged by Amnesty International.

Amnesty International informed all interviewees about the nature and purpose of the research and about how the information would be used. Researchers obtained oral consent from each person prior to the interview. Interviewees were told they could end the interview or decline to answer any question at any time. No incentives were provided to interviewees in exchange for speaking to Amnesty International.

Nearly all interviewees requested anonymity due to security concerns; accordingly, their names have been replaced in this report with pseudonyms (in *italics*) and all other information that could identify them has been removed.

In addition, Amnesty International has not included in the report the names of people killed that were provided during interviews, in order to protect the safety of witnesses – often family members – who shared this information. At their request, the names of all staff members of national and international NGOs have been withheld to protect their security and ability to continue working in North Darfur.

In this report, “child” and “children” are used to refer to anyone under the age of 18, consistent with international law. Several interviewees did not know their exact age; researchers classified individuals as children only when this was indicated by the interviewees and supported by the researchers’ assessment, based on factors such as the ages of siblings, year of school enrolment and grade level at school when recent hostilities began. The referenced age of interviewees is from the time of the interview.

Amnesty International conducted most interviews with children in person for safeguarding reasons, enabling researchers to ensure privacy and confidentiality, assess interviewees’ safety and well-being in real time and provide appropriate support or referrals where necessary. No children under the age of 11 were interviewed. Interviews with children were held in private and secure settings, and children were encouraged to guide the discussion. Researchers monitored interviewees for signs of discomfort or distress, shifted to less sensitive topics where necessary, and concluded interviews by focusing on the child’s current circumstances and more positive subjects. Children were reminded throughout that they could pause or stop the interview at any time. In some cases, parental consent was obtained to interview children. At times, family members were present during the interview at the request of the child or parent, after ensuring the informed consent of both.

Amnesty International ensured the inclusion of people with disabilities in the research by interviewing eight people with disabilities, including four children, as well as 11 parents or caretakers of children or adults with disabilities.

For interviews with survivors of rape and other forms of sexual violence, researchers relied on the Global Code of Conduct for Gathering and Using Information about Systematic and Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (the “Murad Code”).

Amnesty International’s Evidence Lab, the organization’s digital investigations team, collected and analysed 89 videos published on social media platforms. In addition, it verified and analysed dozens of photos and videos provided directly to researchers. Each video underwent a rigorous verification process. When possible, the team geolocated the footage by cross-referencing visible landmarks, terrain and architectural features with satellite imagery and publicly available ground-level photographs. Content analysis was conducted to identify actors, weapons, uniforms, insignia, vehicles, and spoken language or dialects. RSF fighters were identified through visible uniforms and insignia; in some cases, fighters identified themselves as members of the RSF in the footage. Witnesses also identified RSF members based on uniforms, branded vehicles used during assaults, dialect and other distinguishing characteristics.

When evaluating digital content related to the recruitment and use of children, Amnesty International only included a video or photograph in its analysis where there were reasonable grounds to believe that the individual was under the age of 18, based on visual indicators of physical development, including age-appropriate characteristics such as height, build and facial features.

Researchers also examined relevant social media content, credible media reporting and publications by civil society organizations and UN bodies.

Satellite imagery from December 2024 to January 2026 was analysed to document changes in El Fasher city and across the district. Within El Fasher city an archive library of over 100 high resolution images was used to review shifts related to the fighting in and siege of the city and to corroborate witness testimony. Across El Fasher locality, Normalized Burn Ratio (NBR) threshold-based change detection workflows, masked over a built-up area, were applied to 10m resolution imagery to determine time frames and patterns of burning across the district from 1 December 2024 to 30 April 2025. Where feasible, high-resolution imagery was also used to better analyse key areas with heavy burning outside of El Fasher city.

On 10 June 2026, Amnesty International communicated the key findings detailed in this report in letters to the RSF. At the time of publication, no response had been received.

Amnesty International thanks the survivors of human rights violations who shared their experiences for this report, as well as the organizations and individuals working to support them.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 DARFUR CONFLICT OVERVIEW

Darfur is a region of the Republic of Sudan. It is approximately 500,000km². Darfur now comprises Sudan's five westernmost states – Central Darfur, East Darfur, North Darfur, South Darfur and West Darfur. Prior to the restart of major violence in Darfur in April 2023, the UN estimated the region's population at 11.8 million.²

Darfur is home to dozens of different ethnic groups³, which Darfurians, and Sudanese in general, refer to as “tribes” (*gabila* (singular), *gabaa'il* (plural)). These include non-Arab groups (sometimes referred to as “African”), of which the largest are the Fur, the Masalit and the Zaghawa.⁴ Other non-Arab groups include the Berti, Birgid, Dajo, Erenga, Gimir, Meidob, Misseriya Jebel, Tama, Tunjur and others.⁵ There are also many Arab groups in Darfur, the largest of which are the Rizeigat, Habbaniya, Bani Halba, and Ta'aisha, known collectively as Baggara Arabs.⁶ Other Arab groups include various clans and sub-clans of the northern Rizeigat (often referred to as Abbala), as well as the Salamat, Tarjam, Huttia, Zayadia, Awlad Zeid, Awlad Tako, Bani Hussein and many others.⁷

2. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), “West Darfur State Profile (updated September 2022)”, 25 September 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/ocha-sudan-west-darfur-state-profile-updated-september-2022>; OCHA, “East Darfur State Profile (29 March 2023)”, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/ocha-sudan-east-darfur-state-profile-march-2023>; OCHA, “North Darfur State Profile (29 March 2023)”, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/sudan/ocha-sudan-north-darfur-state-profile-march-2023>; OCHA, “Central Darfur State Profile (29 March 2023)”, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/ocha-sudan-central-darfur-state-profile-march>; OCHA, “South Darfur State Profile (29 March 2023)”, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/sudan/ocha-sudan-south-darfur-state-profile-march-2023>

3. Julie Flint and Alex De Waal, *Darfur: A New History of a Long War (revised and updated)*, 2008, p. 6.

4. Conversation with Darfur expert, 19 June 2026.

5. Flint and De Waal (previously cited), p. 7.

6. Flint and De Waal (previously cited), p. 8. Conversation with Darfur expert, 19 June 2026.

7. Conversation with Darfur expert, 19 June 2026. See also Flint and De Waal (previously cited), p. 8.

NORTH DARFUR STATE

North Darfur makes up more than half of Darfur's landmass. The state has 18 localities, including El Fasher, El Malha, Mellit, Saraf Omra, El Sireif Beni Hussein, Kabkabiya, Kutum, El Kuma, Um Kaddada, Kalimando, El Tawaisha, El Lait, El Waha, Um Baru, Kornoi, El Tina, Dar el Salam and Tawila. Its capital is El Fasher. In March 2023, the state's population was estimated at 2.8 million, including 1.3 million children.⁸

HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT IN DARFUR

Conflict has plagued Darfur since 2003.⁹ The conflict has been characterized by an extraordinarily high level of violence directed against civilians.

2003 TO 2019

The conflict's root causes are manifold and include underdevelopment, marginalization, resource scarcity and the repercussions of previous conflicts.¹⁰ The proximate cause of the violence against civilians between 2003 and 2019 is well documented: in response to attacks by armed opposition groups, or to the presence of armed opposition groups, Sudanese government forces targeted not only those groups but also the populations of certain ethnic groups – particularly Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa – whom the government accused of supporting the insurgents. This counterinsurgency strategy produced horrific levels of death, destruction and displacement. Hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed by violence or by conflict-induced starvation, dehydration and disease.¹¹ Myriad villages were destroyed and countless livelihoods were ruined.¹² Rape and other sexual violence against women and girls were widespread.¹³

The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) were created in 2013 by the Sudanese government specifically to fight against armed opposition groups throughout Sudan. Many RSF members were drawn from ethnic Arab militias in Darfur that were allied to the government in the earlier war, commonly referred to as the "Janjaweed."

8. UNICEF, "State Profile North Darfur" (previously cited), p. 2.

9. For a history of the first half decade of the conflict in Darfur, see Flint and De Waal (previously cited).

10. For information about the root cause of the Darfur conflict, see: V. Tanner, "Rule of Lawlessness: Roots and Repercussions of the Darfur Crisis", Interagency Paper, January 2005; A.G.M. Ahmed and L. Manger, "Understanding the crisis in Darfur: Listening to Sudanese voices," BRIC, 2007; and Alex De Waal, editor, "War in Darfur and the Search for Peace", Global Equity Initiative, 2007.

11. BBC, "Darfur deaths 'could be 300,000'," 23 April 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7361979.stm>; O. Degomme and D. Goha-Sappir, "Patterns of Mortality in Darfur Conflict," The Lancet, vol. 375, 23 January 2010; E. Depoortere, and others, "Violence and Mortality in West Darfur, Sudan (2003-4): Epidemiological Evidence from Fur Surveys," The Lancet, vol. 364, 9 October 2004; D. Nabarro, "Mortality Projects for Darfur," presentation by David Nabarro, World Health Organization, 15 October 2004.

12. Amnesty International, *Sudan, Darfur: Too many people killed for no reason* (Index: AFR 54/008/2004), 3 February 2004, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/af54/008/2004/en/>; Human Rights Watch, *Darfur in Flames: Atrocities in Western Sudan*, 2004, <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2004/sudan0404/sudan0404.pdf>; Human Rights Watch, *Darfur Destroyed: Ethnic Cleansing by Government and Militia Forces in Western Sudan*, April 2004, <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2004/sudan0404/sudan0404.pdf>; Human Rights Watch, *Darfur 2007: Chaos by Design*, 19 September 2007, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2007/09/20/darfur-2007-chaos-design/peacekeeping-challenges-amis-and-unamid>; Human Rights Watch, *Men with No Mercy*, September 2015, www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/sudan0915_4up.pdf; M. Buchanan-Smith and S. Jaspers, "Conflict, Camps, and Coercion: The Ongoing Livelihoods Crisis in Darfur", Disasters, 31 March 2007.

13. Human Rights Watch, *Mass Rape in Darfur: Sudanese Army Attacks Civilians in Tabit*, 11 February 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/02/11/mass-rape-north-darfur/sudanese-army-attacks-against-civilians-tabit>; Amnesty International, *Sudan, Darfur, Rape as a Weapon of War: Sexual Violence and its consequences* (Index: AFR 54/076/2004), 18 July 2004, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/af54/076/2004/en/>; Human Rights Watch, *Five Years On: No Justice for Sexual Violence in Darfur*, 6 April 2008, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2008/04/06/five-years-no-justice-sexual-violence-darfur>; T. Gingerich and J. Leaning, "The Use of Rape as a Weapon of War in the Conflict in Darfur, Sudan," U.S. Agency for International Development/OTI, October 2004, https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR_Reports/darfur-rape-as-a-weapon-2004.pdf



© ↑ Young displaced people near Kutum, Sudan, after RSF attacks on their villages in North Darfur in 2025. January 2026.
© Private

2019 TO 2023

On 19 December 2018, a popular uprising began across Sudan. On 11 April 2019, then President Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir was arrested by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the RSF. In the aftermath of this coup, a Transitional Military Council (TMC) was formed with SAF commander Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan as leader and RSF commander Mohammed Hamdam Dagalo (“Hemedti”) as his deputy.¹⁴ Largely peaceful protests and acts of civil disobedience continued in opposition to the formation of the TMC.¹⁵ On 3 June 2019, forces from the TMC – largely RSF – attacked protesters in what became known as the “Khartoum massacre”.¹⁶ RSF and other soldiers killed over a hundred civilian protesters, injured hundreds of others, and raped over 70 women.¹⁷

14. International Crisis Group, “Stopping Sudan’s descent into full-blown civil war”, 20 April 2023, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/stm/africa/sudan/stopping-sudan-descent-full-blown-civil-war>

15. PBS News, “Sudan protesters call for civil disobedience to push army”, 8 June 2019, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/amp/world/sudan-protesters-call-for-civil-disobedience-to-push-army>; Al Jazeera, “Sudan’s military blames protesters for deadly crackdown”, 10 June 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/6/10/sudans-military-blames-protesters-for-deadly-crackdown>

16. Amnesty International, “*They descended on us like rain*”: Justice for victims of protest crackdown in Sudan (Index: AFR 54/1893/2020), 10 March 2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/1893/2020/en/>, pp. 26-28; Human Rights Watch, “*They Were Shouting ‘Kill Them’*”: Sudan’s Violent Crackdown on Protesters in Khartoum, 17 November 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2019/11/18/they-were-shouting-kill-them/sudans-violent-crackdown-protesters-khartoum>; Physicians for Human Rights, “*Chaos and Fire*”: An Analysis of Sudan’s June 3, 2019 Massacre, March 2020, <https://phr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/PHR-Report-Sudan-Chaos-and-Fire-March-2020-ENG.pdf>

17. France 24, “Sudanese activists seek justice for mass rapes after militia ‘breaks the girls’”, 20 June 2019, <https://www.france24.com/en/20190619-sudan-rape-reports-militia-protest-justice>; Amnesty International, “*They descended on us like rain*” (previously cited), pp. 27-28; Human Rights Watch, “*They Were Shouting ‘Kill Them’*”: Sudan’s Violent Crackdown on Protesters in Khartoum (previously cited), p. 24.

On 21 August 2019, the TMC was transformed into the Transitional Sovereignty Council (TSC), based on a 17 August power-sharing agreement between the TMC and the Forces for Freedom and Change, which was a coalition of political parties, civil society groups and armed opposition movements.¹⁸ The TSC appointed Abdalla Hamdok, an economist and former UN bureaucrat, as prime minister.¹⁹ On 3 October 2020, the Juba Peace Agreement was signed between the government and various armed opposition groups.²⁰ Despite the establishment of the TSC and signing of the peace agreement, fighting continued in Darfur, especially in West Darfur where the RSF and allied militias carried out massacres in 2019 and 2020.²¹

On 25 October 2021, the RSF and SAF carried out another coup, ending Hamdok's short-lived civilian government.²² On 5 December 2022, a framework agreement was signed, establishing another civilian government and stipulating the integration of the RSF and SAF into a unified, professional and non-partisan national army.²³ During this time, the SAF and RSF each began to rearm and recruit fighters.²⁴

2023 TO PRESENT

On 15 April 2023, the SAF and RSF began fighting each other in Khartoum and Merowe.²⁵ By late April, the violence had spread to West Darfur.²⁶ After the RSF killed West Darfur governor (and former member of an armed opposition group) Khamis Abakar, thousands of Masalit were killed and hundreds of thousands were displaced to Chad.²⁷ The conflict quickly engulfed huge swathes of Sudan, displacing millions of people.²⁸

Since April 2023, tens of thousands of people have been killed in Darfur (and many more in other parts of Sudan) by violence and conflict-induced starvation, dehydration and disease. The SAF and RSF have also deliberately targeted civilians.²⁹ Women and girls have been subjected to rape, gang rape, sexual slavery and

18. UN, "Security Council Press Statement on Sudan", 21 August 2019, <https://sudan.un.org/en/20028-security-council-press-statement-sudan>; International Crisis Group, "Nurturing Sudan's fledgling power-sharing Accord", 20 August 2019, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/stm/africa/sudan/nurturing-sudans-fledgling-power-sharing-accord>. For more on the Forces for Freedom and Change, see International Idea, Global State of Democracy Initiative, "Case Study: Sudan", <https://www.idea.int/gsod/2023/chapters/africa/case/sudan/> (accessed 20 May 2026).

19. Al Jazeera, "Abdalla Hamdok: Who is Sudan's new prime minister?", 21 August 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/8/21/abdalla-hamdok-who-is-sudans-new-prime-minister>; The New Arab, "'Saviour of Sudan's economy': Abdalla Hamdok is now the country's new prime minister", 22 August 2019, <https://www.newarab.com/news/economy-saviour-who-sudans-new-prime-minister>

20. Al Jazeera, "Sudan's government, rebel groups sign landmark deal", 3 October 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/3/sudans-government-rebels-set-to-sign-landmak-deal>; New York Times, "Sudan signs peace deal with rebel alliance", 31 August 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/31/world/africa/sudan-peace-agreement-darfur.html>

21. Amnesty International, "Horrific attacks on displacement camps show UN peacekeepers still needed in Darfur", 1 March 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2021/03/sudan-horrific-attacks-on-displacement-camps-show-in-darfur/>; UN, "Sudan: Intercommunal clashes displace tens of thousands in volatile Darfur region", 7 January 2020, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/01/1054911>; Human Rights Watch, "Violence in West Darfur, Human Rights Watch February 2023 Submission to the UK Parliament", 26 November 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/11/26/violence-west-darfur>

22. CNN, "Sudan's military dissolves transitional government in coup", 26 October 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/25/africa/sudan-military-prime-minister-intl-hnk>; France 24, "As it happened: Sudan military dissolves civilian govt as anti-coup protests turn deadly", 25 October 2021, <https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20211025-live-sudan-s-armed-forces-detain-pm-hamdok-for-refusing-to-join-coup>

23. International Crisis Group, "Stopping Sudan's descent into full-blown civil war" (previously cited); New Lines Magazine, "In Sudan, a deadly reckoning for rival forces", 17 April 2023, <https://newlinesmag.com/reportage/in-sudan-a-deadly-reckoning-for-rival-forces/>; Agreement available here: <https://pilpg-trainings.squarespace.com/sudan-peace-negotiation-key-documents>

24. Sudan in the News, "How the framework agreement has ignited a power struggle between Sudan's military rulers", 26 March 2023, <https://www.sudaninthenews.com/framework-agreement>; International Crisis Group, "Stopping Sudan's descent into full-blown civil war" (previously cited); UN, *Final report of the Panel of Experts submitted in accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution 2676 (2023)*, 15 January 2024, UN Doc. S/2024/65

25. Al Jazeera, "Analysis: Fighting erupts in Sudan after months of tension", 15 April 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/15/fighting-erupts-in-sudan-following-months-of-simmering-tensions>; CNN, "Fighting between Sudan military rivals enters a second day, with dozens dead", 17 April 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/04/15/africa/sudan-presidential-palace-intl/index.html>

26. Amnesty International, "Civilians at grave risk amid escalating violence in West Darfur", 19 June 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/06/sudan-civilians-at-grave-risk-amid-escalating-violence-in-west-darfur/>; Human Rights Watch, "The Massalit Will Not Come Home": *Ethnic Cleansing and Crimes Against Humanity in El Geneina, West Darfur*, Sudan, 9 May 2024, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2024/05/09/massalit-will-not-come-home/ethnic-cleansing-and-crimes-against-humanity-el>, pp. 49-54.

27. UN Security Council, "Letter dated 15 January 2024 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council", 15 January 2024, UN Doc. S/2024/65, para. 54; Human Rights Watch, "The Massalit Will Not Come Home" (previously cited).

28. International Organization for Migration (IOM), "Sudan Internal Displacement Set to Top 10 Million as Famine Looms – IOM", 6 June 2024, <https://www.iom.int/news/sudan-internal-displacement-set-top-10-million-famine-looms-iom>; OCHA, "Sudan: One Year of Conflict – Key Facts and Figures (15 April 2024)", 15 April 2024, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/sudan/sudan-one-year-conflict-key-facts-and-figures-15-april-2024>

29. Amnesty International, "Death Came to Our Home": *War Crimes and Civilian Suffering in Sudan* (Index: AFR 54/7037/2023), 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>; Amnesty International, *New Weapons Fuelling the Sudan Conflict* (previously cited).

other forms of conflict-related sexual violence.³⁰ At the time of publication, millions remain displaced, acute malnutrition is rampant, and active violence continues to plague the region and the country, with no end in sight.

This report builds on Amnesty International's past work documenting serious violations and abuses, and crimes under international law, in the context of the non-international armed conflict that broke out in Sudan on 15 April 2023 as well as work on the armed conflict in Darfur that has been ongoing since 2003.³¹

3.2 PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT IN DARFUR

PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT FROM 2003 TO 2013

GOVERNMENT FORCES

From 2003 to 2013, the parties to the conflict in Darfur were the Sudanese government forces; militias allied to the government, commonly referred to as the “Janjaweed”; and armed groups opposed to the government, commonly referred to as rebels.

Regular forces in the Sudanese military are called the SAF. Throughout the conflict, the government of Sudan has utilized the SAF in concert with paramilitary forces, including the Popular Defence Forces, the Central Reserve Police, and the Border Guards. Both the SAF and the various paramilitary groups have often fought alongside the Janjaweed militias.

The origins of the Janjaweed are complex, both in terms of their relationship with the government and with certain ethnic groups, notably the largely nomadic Arab tribes from which the majority of their members are drawn. Janjaweed fighting with the SAF and other government forces have perpetrated serious crimes against the civilian population throughout the conflict.³²

30. Amnesty International, “*They raped all of us*”: Sexual violence against women and girls in Sudan (Index: AFR 54/9201/2025), 10 April 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/9201/2025/en/>; Amnesty International, “Civilians at grave risk amid escalating violence in West Darfur” (previously cited).

31. Amnesty International, “*A Refuge Destroyed*”: RSF Violations in Darfur’s Zamzam Camp for Internally Displaced Persons (Index: AFR 54/0509/2025), 2 December 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/0509/2025/en/>; Amnesty International, “Sudan: El Fasher survivors tell of deliberate RSF killings and sexual violence – new testimony”, 25 November 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/11/sudan-el-fasher-survivors-tell-of-deliberate-rsf-killings-and-sexual-violence-new-testimony/>; Amnesty International, “*Death came to our home*” (previously cited); Amnesty International, “*They raped all of us*”: Sexual violence against women and girls in Sudan (previously cited); Amnesty International, “Sudan: New conflict escalation exacerbates 20 years of suffering for civilians in Darfur”, 24 April 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/04/sudan-new-conflict-escalation-exacerbates-20-years-of-suffering-for-civilians-in-darfur/>; Amnesty International, “Sudan: Fresh evidence of government-sponsored crimes in Darfur shows drawdown of peacekeepers premature and reckless”, 11 June 2019, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/06/sudan-fresh-evidence-of-government-sponsored-crimes-in-darfur-shows-drawdown-of-peacekeepers-premature-and-reckless/>; Amnesty International, *Scorched Earth, Poisoned Air: Sudanese Government Forces Ravage Jebel Marra, Darfur* (Index: AFR 54/4877/2016), 29 September 2016, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/4877/2016/en/>; Amnesty International, *Sudan: Civilians still under threat in Darfur* (Index: AFR 54/131/2004), 12 October 2004, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/131/2004/en/>; Amnesty International, *Sudan: At the mercy of killers – destruction of villages in Darfur* (Index: AFR 54/072/2004), 1 July 2004, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AFR54/072/2004/en/>; Amnesty International, *Sudan: Darfur: “Too many people killed for no reason”* (Index: AFR 54/008/2004), 3 February 2004, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/008/2004/en/>; Amnesty International, “Sudan: Humanitarian crisis in Darfur caused by Sudan Government’s failures”, 27 November 2003, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AFR54/101/2003/en/>

32. For information about the Janjaweed, see J. Flint, *Beyond Janjaweed: Understanding the Militias of Darfur*, Small Arms Survey, 2009, www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/working-papers/HSBA-WP-17-Beyond-Janjaweed.pdf; J. Flint, *The Other War: Inter-Arab Conflict in Darfur*, Small Arms Survey, 2010, www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/working-papers/HSBAWP-22-The-Other-War-Inter-Arab-Conflict-in-Darfur.pdf; J. Loeb, *Talking to the ‘Other Side’: Humanitarian Negotiations With Armed Non State Actors in Darfur, Sudan, 2003- 2012*, Overseas Development Institute, August 2013, <https://odi.org/en/publications/talking-to-the-other-side-humanitarian-engagement-with-armed-non-state-actors-in-darfur-sudan-2003-2012/>, pp. 21-24.



© ↑ A fighter from the Joint Forces visits a 'no man's land' in North Darfur where various non-Arab factions refrain from attacking one another. January 2026. © Private

ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

Throughout the conflict there have been numerous armed opposition groups and coalitions. However, the three largest armed opposition factions have largely stayed the same: the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) now led by Gibril Ibrahim; the Sudan Liberation Army faction led by Minni Arku Minawi (SLA/MM); and the SLA faction led by Abdul Wahid Mohammed Ahmed el-Nur (SLA/AW). Two ethnic groups, the Zaghawa and Fur, and to a large extent sub-sections of these groups related to the groups' leaders, have controlled most of the senior positions in these armed opposition groups. However, members from many other tribes, including Arab tribes, have also been represented. In 2005 and 2006, the main armed opposition factions started splintering, often along ethnic lines.³³ The groups splintered into dozens of factions over the following two decades, and formed numerous coalitions, including, at times, with the government or government-aligned militias.³⁴ Many of these splinter factions have achieved no tangible political or military accomplishments. The size of the areas controlled by armed opposition groups, and the degree of control, has varied significantly throughout the conflict.³⁵

33. V. Tanner and J. Tubiana, *Divided They Fall: The Fragmentation of Darfur's Rebel Groups*, Small Arms Survey, 2007, <https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/HSBA-WP-06-Darfur-rebels.pdf>

34. A. McCutchen, *The Sudan Revolutionary Front: Its Formation and Development*, Small Arms Survey, 2005, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/fileadmin/docs/working-papers/HSBA-WP33-SRF.pdf

35. Unclassified UN-restricted document; Amnesty International interviews with SLA/AW Commanders, May and June 2016.

The government of Sudan has accused armed opposition groups, including the SLA/AW, of utilizing tactics commonly associated with asymmetric warfare, including hiding amongst the civilian population in villages and inside internally displaced persons (IDP) camps.³⁶

PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT FROM 2013 TO 2025

RAPID SUPPORT FORCES (RSF)

In 2013, the government of Sudan created the RSF to fight against armed opposition groups throughout Sudan. The RSF quickly became better equipped than other government forces. In 2014, 2015 and 2016, the RSF carried out counterinsurgency campaigns in Darfur, including in North Darfur, during which the forces attacked villages, burned and looted homes, raped and beat villagers, extrajudicially executed civilians, and caused massive displacement of the civilian population. Many RSF, including most of the top commanders, were Janjaweed.³⁷ Since its inception, Mohammed Hamdam Dagalo (“Hemedti”) has been the overall leader of the RSF.

The RSF was initially a Sudanese government force under the command of the National Intelligence and Security Services. In January 2017, the government of Sudan passed the Rapid Support Forces Act, establishing the RSF as a government force, which reported directly to President al-Bashir and was, in practice, independent of the military and intelligence services.³⁸

As described above, in the years that followed, the RSF grew into a rival military force: it helped oust President Bashir in April 2019, seized power alongside the SAF in the October 2021 coup, and ultimately turned on the SAF on 15 April 2023, when war erupted between the two forces in Khartoum.³⁹

JOINT FORCES

On 27 April 2023, several armed opposition groups that had signed the Juba Peace Agreement, including the SLA/MM, the JEM, the Sudanese Alliance, and the Gathering of Sudan Liberation Forces (GSLF), came together to form a larger coalition referred to as the Joint Forces.⁴⁰ It initially declared itself neutral in the conflict between the SAF and RSF.⁴¹ In November 2023, however, leaders of SLA/MM and the JEM renounced their neutrality and aligned with the SAF.⁴² This created tensions within the coalition, prompting the Sudan

36. Sudan Tribune, “North Darfur urges UNAMID to drive rebels out of Sortoni Camp,” 7 July 2016, <https://sudantribune.com/article/57828>; for analysis of the alleged militarization of Darfur’s displaced person camps, see C. Kahn, *Conflict, Arms, and Militarization: The Dynamics of Darfur’s IDP Camps*, Small Arms Survey, 2008, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/fileadmin/docs/working-papers/HSBA-WP-15-Conflict-Arms-Militarization.pdf

37. For information about the RSF and their campaign in 2013 and 2014, see A. Kumar and O. Ismail, *The Janjaweed Reincarnate: Sudan’s New Army of War Criminals*, The Enough Project, June 2014, www.enoughproject.org/files/JanjaweedReincarnate_June2014.pdf; Human Rights Watch, “Men with No Mercy” (previously cited); UN Security Council (UNSC), “Letter dated 16 January 2015 from the Vice-Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council”, 19 January 2015, www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2015/31; Amnesty International, *Scorched Earth, Poisoned Air* (previously cited).

38. Sudan Tribune, “Sudanese parliament passes RSF Act integrating militiamen in the army”, 16 January 2017, <https://sudantribune.com/article/59634>; International Crisis Group, *Safeguarding Sudan’s Revolution*, 21 October 2019, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/rpt/africa/sudan/281-safeguarding-sudans-revolution>, p. 14; Rapid Support Forces, ‘About Us’, <https://rapidsupportforce.com/en/page/about> (accessed 27 May 2026).

39. Al Jazeera, “Who are Sudan’s RSF and their commander Hemedti?”, 6 June 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/6/6/who-are-sudans-rsf-and-their-commander-hemeti>; Council on Foreign Relations, Global Conflict Tracker, “Civil war in Sudan”, <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/power-struggle-sudan> (accessed 11 June 2026); BBC, A simple guide to what is happening in Sudan”, 13 November 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cjel2nn22z9o>

40. Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED), “Two years of war in Sudan: How the SAF is gaining the upper hand”, 15 April 2025, <https://acleddata.com/report/two-years-war-sudan-how-saf-gaining-upper-hand>; Sudan Tribune, “Peace groups deploy combatants to protect civilians in North Darfur”, 28 April 2023, <https://sudantribune.com/article/273443>

41. ACLED, “May 2024 | Sudan: The RSF sets its eyes on North Darfur”, 17 May 2024, <https://acleddata.com/update/may-2024-sudan-rsf-sets-its-eyes-north-darfur>

42. Radio Dabanga, “Darfur armed movements renounce neutrality in Sudan war”, 17 November 2023, <https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/armed-movements-renounce-neutrality-in-sudan-war>

Liberation Movement–Transitional Council (SLM-TC) and the GSLF to withdraw.⁴³ Their departure paved the way for the remaining members of the Joint Forces to formally side with the SAF in April 2024.⁴⁴ Joint Forces fighters were active in the fighting in North Darfur.⁴⁵ Many of its fighters are from the Zaghawa ethnic group.⁴⁶

3.3 EL FASHER: A SYMBOLIC AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

By the end of November 2023, the RSF had taken control of four out of five state capitals in Darfur.⁴⁷ El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, was the lone holdout and the final symbol of central government authority in a region comprising roughly a fifth of Sudan's landmass.⁴⁸

For over two decades, El Fasher has served as a refuge for survivors of mass displacement. It is surrounded by three major IDP camps – Zamzam, Abu Shouk and Al Salam – established to shelter communities displaced by widespread violence over the years.⁴⁹ Even before the outbreak of fighting in April 2023, the population was highly vulnerable and heavily dependent on humanitarian assistance.⁵⁰

When violence erupted in April 2023, local leaders negotiated a fragile truce under which the RSF was largely confined to eastern parts of the city.⁵¹ For a period, El Fasher became the primary humanitarian hub for Darfur, absorbing hundreds of thousands of people displaced by violence.⁵² In late October 2023, however, after months of intermittent clashes, the RSF launched a large-scale attack on SAF positions inside El Fasher, triggering a new wave of displacement within the city.⁵³

El Fasher appears to have been a central objective for the RSF for several reasons. It represented the final major foothold of central state authority in the region. Its capture eliminated a key defensive position, removed a potential base for coordinated resistance by the SAF and allied armed movements, and strengthened the RSF's broader political positioning in western Sudan. In 2025, on the two-year anniversary of the renewed violence, RSF leadership announced a "government of peace and unity" aimed at administering Darfur and

43. Sudan War Monitor, "Darfur Joint Force declares war on Rapid Support Forces", 12 April 2024, <https://sudanwarmonitor.com/p/darfur-joint-force-declares-war-on>

44. Sudan War Monitor, "Darfur Joint Force declares war on Rapid Support Forces" (previously cited).

45. European Union Agency for Asylum, "2.2. The Sudanese authorities, the Sudanese Armed Forces [SAF] and main allies", <https://www.euaa.europa.eu/country-guidance-sudan/22-sudanese-authorities-sudanese-armed-forces-saf-and-main-allies> (accessed 20 May 2026).

46. European Union Agency for Asylum, "2.2. The Sudanese authorities, the Sudanese Armed Forces [SAF] and main allies" (previously cited) (explaining that two of the groups in the Joint Forces, the SLA/MM and the JEM, are made up of largely Zaghawa members); The Sudan Times, "Guide to Sudanese Civil War: The who, what, where and why", 14 November 2025, <https://thesudanimes.com/sudan/guide-to-sudanese-civil-war-the-who-what-where-and-why/>; Reuters, "Sudan's RSF says seizes back control of key Darfur base from army allies", 22 December 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/sudans-rsf-says-seizes-back-control-key-darfur-base-army-allies-2024-12-22/>

47. ACLED, "Sudan Situation Update: December 2023, Unraveling the Conflict Dynamics in Darfur", 1 December 2023, <https://acleddata.com/update/sudan-situation-update-december-2023-unraveling-conflict-dynamics-darfur>

48. Al Jazeera Centre for Studies, "El-Fasher's Turning Point: Sudan Between the Risk of Fragmentation and Escalation", 24 November 2025, <https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/policy-briefs/el-fasher%E2%80%99s-turning-point-sudan-between-risk-fragmentation-and-escalation>

49. Chr. Michelsen Institute, *From a Temporary Emergency Shelter to an Urbanized Neighborhood: The Abu Shoaik IDP Camp in North Darfur*, 2016, <https://www.cmi.no/publications/5928-the-abu-shoak-idp-camp-in-north-darfur>; IOM, "North Darfur – Al Salam IDP Camp Profile", 19 September 2016, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-north-darfur-al-salam-idp-camp-profile-2015>; BBC, "Child in my arms, luggage on my head, I fled Sudan camp for safety", 18 April 2025, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn80v2d7elzo>; AP, "The Janjaweed are coming": Sudanese recount atrocities in RSF attack on a Darfur camp", 3 May 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/sudan-darfur-military-rsf-war-zamzamb6c60fe0883327aa0d64cd39d3a8e260>

50. See Chapter 5 for more information on the population's food insecurity before the siege.

51. The Arab Weekly, "Truce crumbles in last holdout of Sudanese army in Darfur", 23 April 2024, <https://the arabweekly.com/truce-crumbles-last-holdout-sudanese-army-darfur>

52. DW, "Sudan siege bears hallmarks of brutal Darfur war", 19 June 2024, <https://www.dw.com/en/sudan-siege-bears-hallmarks-of-brutal-darfur-war/a-69400339>; ABC News, "Inside Sudan's El Fasher, a city under siege amid a civil war", 6 October 2024, <https://abcnews.com/International/inside-sudans-el-fasher-city-siege-amid-civil-war/story?id=114176497>

53. Sudan Tribune, "Rapid Support Forces launch fresh attack on El Fasher, sparking displacement", 1 November 2023, <https://sudantribune.com/article/278904>. See also, IOM, "DTM Sudan - Monthly Displacement Overview (03)", November 2023, <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/dtm-sudan-monthly-displacement-overview-03?close=true>

Kordofan outside Khartoum's authority.⁵⁴ Holding El Fasher would reinforce the territorial foundation and credibility of any parallel governing structure.

The city's geography adds to its significance. El Fasher sits at a gateway linking Darfur to Libya and Chad along trans-Saharan trade and smuggling routes.⁵⁵ North Darfur contains roughly 20% of Sudan's gold reserves, and El Fasher functions as an administrative and logistical hub for access to these resources.⁵⁶ Control over these corridors and commodities would likely enhance financial autonomy and the capacity to sustain prolonged military operations.⁵⁷

This report documents violations and abuses committed in the RSF's lead-up to, and takeover of, El Fasher between December 2024 and October 2025 (see Chapters 4-6).

Since the seizure of El Fasher in late October 2025, the RSF has controlled most of Darfur, except for parts of northern North Darfur (east of Tina) and areas held by the SLA/AW in and around Jebel Marra in Central, South and North Darfur.

3.4 INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE CONFLICT

The international community, led by the African Union and the UN, responded to the conflict beginning in Darfur in 2003 with a variety of interventions, including investigation mechanisms, referrals to international criminal justice, humanitarian assistance, authorization of peacekeeping forces, an arms embargo, targeted sanctions, and political negotiations.

INVESTIGATION MECHANISMS

From 2003 to 2026, numerous UN and NGO reports have continued to document serious violations of international law, including war crimes and crimes against humanity.⁵⁸ In 2005, a commission of inquiry established by the UN Security Council concluded that:

- Sudanese government forces were responsible for violations of international law including, "indiscriminate attacks, including killing of civilians, torture, enforced disappearances, destruction of villages, rape and other forms of sexual violence, pillaging and forced displacement";
- these violations amounted to war crimes and crimes against humanity; and
- these crimes "may be no less serious or heinous than genocide".⁵⁹

In 2025 and 2026, the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission (UN IFFM) and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' (ACHPR's) Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights

54. Al Jazeera Centre for Studies, "El-Fasher's Turning Point: Sudan Between the Risk of Fragmentation and Escalation", 24 November 2025, <https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/policy-briefs/el-fasher-turning-point-sudan-between-risk-fragmentation-and-escalation>; Al Jazeera, "Sudan paramilitary declares rival government two years into civil war", 15 April 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/4/15/sudan-paramilitary-declares-rival-government-two-years-into-civil-war>

55. The Cradle, "Sudan's new frontier: How RSF control of El-Fasher reshapes the state", 6 November 2025, <https://thecradle.co/articles/sudans-new-frontier-how-rsf-control-of-el-fasher-reshapes-the-state>

56. Al Jazeera Centre for Studies, "El-Fasher's Turning Point: Sudan Between the Risk of Fragmentation and Escalation" (previously cited).

57. The Cradle, "Sudan's new frontier: How RSF control of El-Fasher reshapes the state" (previously cited).

58. See, for example, UN, *Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur to the United Nations Secretary-General*, 25 January 2005, https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/NR/rdonlyres/F87E244D-B27C-4A0A-BE1B-D27CECB5649E/278008/Report_to_UN_on_Darfur.pdf

59. UN, *Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur to the United Nations Secretary-General* (previously cited), pp. 3-4, 63-107.

Situation in the Republic of the Sudan both reported serious and massive human rights violations against civilians and underscored the urgent need for swift international action to protect civilians.⁶⁰

ARMS EMBARGO

In July 2004, the UN Security Council imposed an arms embargo on “all non-governmental entities and individuals, including the Janjaweed” operating in Darfur.⁶¹ In March 2005, the UN Security Council expanded the embargo to include the government of Sudan.⁶² Notably, the embargo applies only to the Darfur region of Sudan and places no restrictions on arms sales to entities or individuals, including the government of Sudan, for use in other parts of the country.

The embargo has been ineffective.⁶³ Indeed, the conflict continues to be fuelled by a largely unimpeded flow of weapons from states and corporate actors around the world to the parties involved.⁶⁴ Recently manufactured weapons and military equipment from Russia, China, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and other countries have been imported into Sudan in significant quantities, including into Darfur.⁶⁵

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL ACCOUNTABILITY

In March 2005, the UN Security Council referred the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC).⁶⁶ In March 2009 and July 2010, the Court issued arrest warrants for Sudanese president al-Bashir.⁶⁷ The warrants of arrest are for five counts of crimes against humanity, two counts of war crimes, and three counts of genocide. Between 2007 and 2014, the Court also issued three arrest warrants: for two other government officials, including Janjaweed leader Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman (“Ali Kushayb”), and for one member of an armed opposition group.⁶⁸ Two other armed opposition group members were summoned to appear before the court.⁶⁹

On 9 June 2020, Ali Kushayb surrendered voluntarily to the ICC.⁷⁰ On 6 October 2025, the Court found him guilty of 27 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity and sentenced him to 20 years’ imprisonment.⁷¹

60. See, for example, UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan (UN FFM), *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El-Fasher*, 17 February 2026, UN Doc. A/HRC/61/77; African Commission on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR), *Report of the Virtual Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights Situation in the Sudan*, 16 July 2025, <https://achpr.au.int/en/documents/2025-10-21/fact-finding-mission-human-rights-situation-sudan>

61. UNSC, Resolution 1556 (2004), adopted 30 July 2004, UN Doc. S/RES/1556, paras. 7-8.

62. UNSC, Resolution 1591 (2005), adopted on 29 March 2005, UN Doc. S/RES/1591, para. 7.

63. Small Arms Survey, *Broken promises: The arms embargo on Darfur since 2012*, July 2016, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/fileadmin/docs/issue-briefs/HSBA-IB24-Darfur-Embargo.pdf; Small Arms Survey, *Business as usual: Arms flows to Darfur 2009-12*, September 2012, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/fileadmin/docs/issue-briefs/HSBA-IB-20-Armsflows-to-Darfur-2009-12.pdf; UNSC, Letter dated 15 January 2024 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council, 15 January 2024, UN Doc. S/2024/65, paras 31-52; Chatham House, “The flow of arms and money feeding the war in Sudan can be cut. What is missing is the will”, 20 May 2026, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2026/05/flow-arms-and-money-feeding-war-sudan-can-be-cut-what-missing-will>

64. Amnesty International, *New Weapons Fuelling the Sudan Conflict: Expanding existing arms embargo across Sudan to protect civilians*, (Index: AFR 54/8252/2024), 25 July 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2024/07/new-weapons-fuelling-the-sudan-conflict/>

65. Amnesty International, *New Weapons Fuelling the Sudan Conflict* (previously cited).

66. UNSC, Resolution 1593 (2005), adopted on 31 March 2005, UN Doc S/RES/1593.

67. International Criminal Court (ICC), “Warrant of Arrest for Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir”, March 4, 2009, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/court-record/icc-02/05-01/09-1>; ICC, “Second Warrant of Arrest for Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir”, 12 July 2010”, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/court-record/icc-02/05-01/09-95>

68. ICC, “Warrant of Arrest for Ali Kushayb”, 27 April 2007, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/court-record/icc-02/05-01/07-3-corr>; ICC, “Warrant of Arrest for Abdel Raheem Mohammad Hussein”, 1 March, 2012, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/court-record/icc-02/05-01/12-2>; ICC, “Warrant of arrest for Abdallah Banda Abakaer Nourain”, 11 September 11 2014, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/court-record/icc-02/05-03/09-606>

69. ICC, “Summons to Appear for Bahr Idriss Abu Garda”, 7 May 2009, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/court-record/icc-02/05-02/09-2>; ICC, “Summons to Appear for Saleh Mohammed Jerbo Jamus”, 27 August 2009, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/court-record/icc-02/05-03/09-2-rsc>

70. ICC, “Abd-Al-Rahman Case”, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/darfur/abd-al-rahman> (accessed 20 May 2026).

71. ICC, “Abd-Al-Rahman Case” (previously cited).

Sudan has never cooperated with the Court. The ICC has been unable to enforce the arrest warrants for President al-Bashir or any of the other government officials other than Ali Kushayb. Shortly after the resumption of major violence in Darfur in 2023, the ICC announced that it was investigating the situation in West Darfur.⁷² In November 2025, the Court stated that it was “taking immediate steps regarding the alleged crimes in El Fasher to preserve and collect evidence for its use in future prosecutions.”⁷³ The Court has issued no arrest warrants related to the violence since 2023.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

At the time of writing this report, the humanitarian crisis in Sudan is the world's most severe.⁷⁴ As of June 2026, 8.8 million people in the country were internally displaced, including 1.49 million in North Darfur.⁷⁵ As of February 2026, 4.5 million people from Sudan had fled to neighbouring countries.⁷⁶ Both in Sudan and in neighbouring countries, access to food, healthcare and other necessities remains extremely limited, both due to the ongoing conflict and to severe aid cuts.

As of April 2026, the World Food Programme (WFP) warned that 19 million people were facing hunger in Sudan.⁷⁷ The agency said that the conflict between the United States and Iran had accelerated inflation pressures, driving the cost of fuel in Sudan up by 24%; WFP food assistance in the country had dropped 14% since January due to lack of resources amidst significant funding cuts.⁷⁸ Together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WFP warned that levels of food insecurity and famine in Sudan, already among the world's worst, would continue to intensify in late 2026 amidst cuts to humanitarian funding.⁷⁹ According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), cash and voucher assistance across Eastern Africa, including in Sudan, had declined 50% in the first quarter of 2026 compared to the same period in 2025, also due to funding cuts.⁸⁰

Despite the efforts of Sudanese mutual aid groups, which have helped fund local community kitchens (described more in Chapter 5), Islamic Relief found in an April 2026 report that 42% of 844 kitchens in locations it had observed had been forced to close in the previous six months, as diaspora communities that supported them struggled to continue doing so in the third year of the conflict.⁸¹ In North Darfur, 57% of community kitchens were closed in that period.⁸²

72. ICC, “Statement of ICC Prosecutor, Karim A. A. Khan KC, to the United Nations Security Council on the situation in Darfur, pursuant to Resolution 1593 (2005)”, 13 July 2023, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/statement-icc-prosecutor-karim-khan-kc-united-nations-security-council-situation-darfur-0>

73. ICC, “Statement of the ICC Office of the Prosecutor on the situation in El-Fasher, North Darfur”, 3 November 2025, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/statement-icc-office-prosecutor-situation-el-fasher-north-darfur>

74. OCHA, “Sudan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2026 – Summary”, 30 March 2026, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-2026-summary>

75. International Organization for Migration (IOM), *DTM Sudan Displacement and Return Snapshot (6)*, 15 June 2026, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/dtm-sudan-displacement-and-return-snapshot-6>

76. IOM, *DTM Sudan Displacement and Return Snapshot (6)* (previously cited).

77. WFP, “Three years of war: Sudan's people abandoned and hungry”, 14 April 2026, <https://www.wfp.org/news/three-years-war-sudans-people-abandoned-and-hungry>

78. WFP, “Three years of war: Sudan's people abandoned and hungry” (previously cited).

79. WFP/FAO, *Hunger Hotspots: FAO–WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity: June to November 2026 outlook*, 17 June 2026, <https://www.fightfoodcrises.net/sites/default/files/resource/file/CE0155EN.pdf>

80. UN OCHA, *Eastern Africa: Regional Cash and Voucher Assistance Overview (January - March 2026)*, 12 June 2026, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/eastern-africa-regional-cash-and-voucher-assistance-overview-january-march-2026>

81. Islamic Relief, *2026 Update: Takaaya: Sudan's Community Kitchens Running on Fumes*, 14 April 2026, https://islamic-relief.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Sudan-Takaaya-report_update_final.pdf

82. Islamic Relief, *2026 Update: Takaaya: Sudan's Community Kitchens Running on Fumes* (previously cited).

With food insecurity still high, child malnutrition has surged.⁸³ The healthcare system, which has been devastated by the conflict, is under extreme strain as communicable diseases have spread throughout much of Sudan. As of January 2026, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported outbreaks of cholera in all 18 states of Sudan, outbreaks of dengue in 14 states, and outbreaks of malaria in 16 states.⁸⁴ It stated that access to preventive and curative care, including for chronic conditions and severe malnutrition, remained limited.⁸⁵

While researchers were unable to visit Sudan for safety reasons, previous reporting by Amnesty International found that NGOs were reporting severe shortages and struggling to meet needs.⁸⁶ NGO workers described lacking basic medicines, such as painkillers and antibiotics, and not enough ready-to-use therapeutic food to help treat child malnutrition.⁸⁷

In a conference in Berlin in April 2026, several states pledged over EUR 812 million in aid to address the crisis.⁸⁸ However, at the time of this report's publication, Sudan's 2026 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan was still only 27% funded.⁸⁹ Among the areas least funded were key areas for children, including education (13.8% funded), water, sanitation and hygiene (16.9% funded) and nutrition (17% funded).⁹⁰

Many who fled North Darfur sought refuge in eastern Chad.⁹¹ The country now hosts about 1.3 million Sudanese refugees, over 900,000 of whom arrived since the start of the war in April 2023.⁹² Yet, as of June 2026, the Sudan Refugee Response Plan for Chad was only 14% funded.⁹³ In April 2026, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and WFP warned that only four in 10 refugees in Chad were receiving assistance and that 243,000 people in eastern border areas were sleeping in the open, unable to relocate inland.⁹⁴ They further warned that, without USD 428 million in funding, more than one million Sudanese refugees could face cuts to essential services, including food, water, shelter and healthcare.⁹⁵ Refugees International has similarly warned that "people who survived Darfur are being left without the minimum support needed to recover, and families are being pushed toward dangerous onward movement because the camps do not feel survivable."⁹⁶

During its research trip to eastern Chad, Amnesty International found serious gaps in access to land, water, sanitation and, in some cases, food for newly arriving refugees. One humanitarian worker said that one host community, already severely resource-constrained, was now hosting a displaced population more than

83. UN, "Child malnutrition hits catastrophic levels in parts of Sudan", <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/02/1166898>

84. WHO, "Sudan: 1000 days of war deepen the world's worst health and humanitarian crisis", 9 January 2026, <https://www.who.int/news/item/09-01-2026-sudan-1000-days-of-war-deepen-the-world-s-worst-health-and-humanitarian-crisis>

85. WHO, "Sudan: 1000 days of war deepen the world's worst health and humanitarian crisis" (previously cited).

86. Amnesty International, "Sudan: High-income countries must use Berlin meeting to save lives as conflict hits three-year mark", 10 April 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/04/sudan-high-income-countries-must-use-berlin-meeting-to-save-lives-as-conflict-hits-three-year-mark/>

87. Amnesty International, "Sudan: High-income countries must use Berlin meeting to save lives as conflict hits three-year mark" (previously cited).

88. European Commission, "EU and member states pledge over €812 million in response to crisis in Sudan", 15 April 2026, https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/news-stories/news/eu-and-member-states-pledge-over-eu812-million-response-crisis-sudan-2026-04-15_en

89. OCHA, "Humanitarian Action Analysing Needs and Response", <https://humanitarianaction.info/plan/1514?bs=eyJibG9jay1iODZiYWVkcOC1iNTQwLTRhZWItODQ4Yy0zYjcxYjRkOWEYyTU0iOnsidGFyZ2V0IjoxfX0%3D> (accessed 19 June 2026).

90. OCHA, "Humanitarian Action Analysing Needs and Response" (previously cited).

91. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Sudan Situation", April 2026, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/122891>, p. 3 (diagram).

92. UNHCR, "Funding shortfalls put lifelines at risk for Sudanese refugees in Chad", 9 April 2026, <https://www.unhcr.org/africa/news/press-releases/funding-shortfalls-put-lifelines-risk-sudanese-refugees-chad>

93. UNHCR, "Operational Data Portal, Sudan situation", <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/sudansituation> (accessed 19 June 2026).

94. UNHCR, "Funding shortfalls put lifelines at risk for Sudanese refugees in Chad" (previously cited).

95. UNHCR, "Funding shortfalls put lifelines at risk for Sudanese refugees in Chad" (previously cited).

96. Refugees International, "Aid and Accountability for Sudanese Refugees in Chad", 13 February 2026, <https://www.refugeesinternational.org/reports-briefs/aid-and-accountability-for-sudanese-refugees-in-chad/>

10 times its size.⁹⁷ He described the difficulties in establishing adequate shelter and sanitation, noting that in one area there were only 1,000 latrines for 50,000 people.⁹⁸ “I have never seen anything like this,” he said.⁹⁹

Water scarcity has also contributed to tensions between local communities and newly arrived refugees. Another humanitarian worker told Amnesty International: “There is not enough water. It’s really tough... People are only getting six litres per person per day. The minimum required is 15 litres.”¹⁰⁰ Many of the refugees interviewed by Amnesty International, particularly those at the border in Tiné who had yet to be resettled, described struggling to survive day to day, after arriving with almost nothing.¹⁰¹

PEACEKEEPERS AND PROTECTION EFFORTS

In July 2004, several hundred African Union ceasefire monitors arrived in Darfur. In July 2007, the UN Security Council authorized the hybrid African Union/United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).¹⁰² UNAMID’s primary mandate included the protection of civilians through the use of force if necessary, and it was empowered to investigate and publicly report on serious abuses of human rights.¹⁰³

Although UNAMID consistently failed to protect the civilian population during attacks or report on serious human rights abuses, the mission provided protection for civilians who were displaced by violence. This protection – while inadequate – was indispensable for the survival of much of the population.¹⁰⁴

Despite persistent warning by Amnesty International and other human rights and humanitarian organizations about the need for continued civilian protection, the UN Security Council terminated UNAMID’s mandate on 31 December 2020.¹⁰⁵ In June 2020, a special political mission – the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) – was created to support Sudan’s democratic transition and to protect and promote human rights.¹⁰⁶ On 1 December 2023, the UN Security Council terminated the mission.¹⁰⁷

When violence engulfed Sudan in 2023, there were no peacekeepers in Darfur; many of the cities and IDP camps where UNAMID had a presence became the sites of some of the war’s most horrific attacks on civilians.

97. Interview with humanitarian worker, 27 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

98. Interview with humanitarian worker, 27 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

99. Interview with humanitarian worker, 27 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

100. Interview with humanitarian worker, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

101. Interviews October – November 2025, Chad.

102. UNSC, Resolution 1769, adopted on 31 July 2007, UN Doc. S/RES/1769.

103. UNSC, Resolution 2296, adopted on 29 June 2016, UN Doc S/RES/2296.

104. Amnesty International Ireland, “Time to get serious about civilian protection for Darfur”, 20 December 2016, <https://www.amnesty.ie/time-get-serious-civilian-protection-darfur/>

105. Security Council Report, “AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID): Briefing on the Drawdown*”, 26 July 2021, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2021/07/au-un-hybrid-operation-in-darfur-unamid-briefing-on-the-drawdown.php>; UNSC, Resolution 2559 (2020), adopted on 22 December 2020, UN Doc. S/RES/2559.

106. UNSC, Resolution 2524 (2020), adopted on 3 June 2020, UN Doc. S/RES/2524.

107. UN News, “Security Council agrees to terminate UN mission in Sudan”, 1 December 2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/12/1144257>

POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS

In 2003, peace negotiations between armed opposition groups and the government of Sudan began in Chad.¹⁰⁸ A peace process has technically been ongoing ever since. UNAMID and UNITAMS were mandated to support the peace process.¹⁰⁹ Peace agreements endorsed by the UN and the African Union were signed by the government and different armed opposition groups in 2006 and 2011.¹¹⁰ Many smaller agreements have been signed between the government of Sudan and armed opposition movements throughout the conflict. None of these agreements improved the security situation in Darfur.

On 3 October 2020, the Juba Agreement for Peace in Sudan Between the Transitional Government of Sudan and the Parties to the Peace Process (Juba Agreement) was signed.¹¹¹ Its main provisions were never implemented.¹¹² Efforts to negotiate a political resolution to the ongoing violence between the SAF and RSF have been unsuccessful.¹¹³

CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT IN SUDAN

Both the UN and African Union have developed mechanisms to monitor, prevent and respond to grave violations against children. These frameworks provide important tools for promoting compliance and strengthening accountability for violations documented in this report.

Over the past three decades, the UN has developed an architecture to address the impact of armed conflict on children.¹¹⁴ In 1999, the UN Security Council adopted its first resolution on children and armed conflict, identifying six grave violations:

- recruitment and use of children;
- killing and maiming;
- sexual violence;
- abduction;
- attacks on schools and hospitals; and
- denial of humanitarian access.¹¹⁵

In 2005, the Security Council established the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) and its Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict.¹¹⁶ The MRM collects data on grave violations, which

108. "Humanitarian Cease Fire Agreement on the Conflict in Darfur", 8 April 2004, <https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/default/files/document/files/2024/05/sd040408humanitarian20ceasefire20agreement20on20the20conflict20in20darfur.pdf>

109. UNSC, Resolution 1769 (2007), adopted on 31 July 2007, UN Doc. S/RES/1769, UNSC, Resolution 2524 (2020) (previously cited).

110. Darfur Peace Agreement of 2006 (DPA; Abuja Agreement), May 2006, <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/dpa-2006.pdf>; 2011 Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD; Doha Agreement), May 2011, https://unamid.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/ddpd_english.pdf

111. "Juba peace agreement", 3 October 2020, <https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/default/files/document/files/2024/05/juba20agreement20for20peace20in20sudan.pdf>

112. Radio Dabanga, "Darfur displaced: 'Not even 1% of the Juba Peace Agreement has been implemented'", 6 October 2021, https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/darfur-displaced-not-even-1-of-the-juba-peace-agreement-has-been-implemented#google_vignette

113. Arab Center Washington DC, "The Failure of the Jeddah and IGAD Mediation Efforts for Sudan", 19 August 2024, <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/the-failure-of-the-jeddah-and-igad-mediation-efforts-for-sudan/>

114. Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children Affected by Armed Conflict (SRSG-CAAC), "25 Years for Children: Study on the Evolution of Children and Armed Conflict Mandate 1996-2021", January 2022, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/2022/01/25-years-for-children-understanding-the-past-to-inspire-the-future/>, p. 9.

115. UNSC, Resolution 1261 (1999), adopted on 30 August 1999, UN Doc. S/RES/1261; Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, *The Six Grave Violations*, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/six-grave-violations/> (accessed 18 February 2026).

116. UNSC, Resolution 1612 (2005), adopted on 26 July 2005, UN Doc. S/RES/1612.

informs the UN Secretary-General's annual reports and the listing of parties responsible for such violations.¹¹⁷ Listed parties are then engaged by the UN to develop and implement action plans to end and prevent violations against children.¹¹⁸

Sudan has been included in this framework since 2001.¹¹⁹ In recent reports, both the SAF and RSF, as well as affiliated armed groups, have been listed for multiple grave violations against children.¹²⁰ In 2026, the UN reported engagement with the SAF on an action plan and expressions of interest from the RSF to do the same.¹²¹ Groups must sign and fully implement an action plan to be delisted.

The UN has also strengthened its response to conflict-related sexual violence. Since 2008, the Security Council has recognized such violence as a threat to international peace and security and established mechanisms, including the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict and monitoring arrangements.¹²² Annual reports continue to list the SAF and RSF for patterns of sexual violence.¹²³

At the regional level, the African Union has developed complementary mechanisms addressing children affected by armed conflict.¹²⁴ Since 2014, the African Union Peace and Security Council has held annual sessions on children in conflict. It has also established dedicated initiatives such as the Africa Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflict, which promotes advocacy and coordination among stakeholders, and a recently appointed Special Envoy for Children Affected by Armed Conflict.¹²⁵ In addition, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) promotes the protection of children's rights and supports the implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child by states parties.¹²⁶

117. See resources available at Department of Peacekeeping Operations, UNICEF, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (OSRSG)-CAAC, "Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Grave Violations against Children in Situations of Armed Conflict", <https://www.mrmttools.org/index.html> (accessed 25 March 2026).

118. See resources available at Department of Peacekeeping Operations, UNICEF, OSRSG-CAAC, "Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Grave Violations against Children in Situations of Armed Conflict" (previously cited).

119. Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, "Sudan", <https://watchlist.org/countries/sudan/> (accessed 18 February 2026).

120. UN Secretary-General (UNSG), *Children and Armed Conflict*, 17 June 2026, UN Doc. A/80/723-S/2026/357, Annex I; UNSG, *Children and Armed Conflict*, 17 June 2025, UN Doc. A/79/878-S/2025/247, Annex I; UNSG, *Children and Armed Conflict*, 3 June 2024, UN Doc. A/78/842-S/2024/384, Annex I.

121. OSRSG-CAAC, "Statement on Sudan by Under-Secretary-General Vanessa Frazier, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict", 16 February 2026, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/2026/02/statement-on-sudan-by-under-secretary-general-vanessa-frazier-special-representative-of-the-secretary-general-for-children-and-armed-conflict/>

122. UNSC, Resolution 1820 (2008), adopted on 19 June 2008, UN Doc. S/RES/1820; UNSC, Resolution 1888 (2009), adopted on 30 September 2009, UN Doc. S/RES/1888; UNSC, Resolution 1960 (2010), adopted on 16 December 2010, UN Doc. S/RES/1960.

123. See Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, "Secretary-General Annual Reports", <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/digital-library/reports/sg-reports/> (accessed 18 February 2026).

124. African Union (AU) Executive Council, "Decision on the Report of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC)", 9-13 July 2012, EX.CL/Dec.712(XI), para. 7; AU, "The Africa Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts undertook a Lessons-learning mission to Sierra Leone on the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Children affected by Armed Conflicts", 13 September 2023, <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20230913/africa-platform-children-affected-armed-conflicts-undertook-lessons-learning>. See also AU and Save the Children, "Africa Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts", <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/concept-note-forafrica-platform-on-caac-launch.pdf>

125. AU, "The Africa Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts undertook a Lessons-learning mission to Sierra Leone on the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Children affected by Armed Conflicts" <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20230913/africa-platform-children-affected-armed-conflicts-undertook-lessons-learning> (previously cited); see also AU and Save the Children, "Africa Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts" <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/concept-note-forafrica-platform-on-caac-launch.pdf> (previously cited); AU, "African Union commission chairperson appoints special envoy for children affected by armed conflict (CAAC)", 1 February 2026, <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20260201/chairperson-appoints-special-envoy-children-affected-armed-conflict-caac>

126. African Union, "ACERWC Mandate", <https://www.acerwc.africa/en/page/acerwc-mandate> (accessed on 9 April 2026).

3.5 LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND OBLIGATIONS

Non-international armed conflicts have existed in parts of Sudan, notably the Darfur region, from 2003 to the present. The fighting in Sudan since 15 April 2023 – in Khartoum and across the country – between the SAF and the RSF constitutes a non-international armed conflict.¹²⁷

Both the SAF and RSF are allied with militias and other armed groups, which operate under varying levels of control and influence of the parties. Amnesty International considers the Joint Forces to comprise a number of armed groups aligned with the SAF.¹²⁸

IHL governing non-international armed conflicts applies to the conflict in Sudan. This includes Common Article 3 to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, which sets out minimum protections for persons not taking active part in hostilities – namely civilians, members of armed forces who have laid down their arms and fighters who are sick, wounded or detained. It also includes Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions, which Sudan ratified in 2006 and which further regulates the conduct of parties in non-international armed conflicts.¹²⁹

In addition, many rules governing the conduct of hostilities – codified in Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions – are widely accepted as reflecting customary international humanitarian law and are therefore applicable in non-international armed conflicts. Most of these rules are identified in the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) study on customary international humanitarian law.¹³⁰ Children affected by armed conflict are entitled to special protection.¹³¹

Although Sudan is not a state party to the Rome Statute of the ICC, the Court has jurisdiction over crimes committed in Darfur pursuant to a referral by the UN Security Council.¹³² Many provisions of the Rome Statute also reflect codifications of crimes under customary international law.

Serious violations of IHL constitute war crimes. According to the Rome Statute, crimes against humanity are offences committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population

127. Based on the relevant international treaties (Article 3 Common to the Four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions) and jurisprudence of international tribunals, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) defines non-international armed conflict as: “protracted armed confrontations occurring between governmental armed forces and the forces of one or more armed groups, or between such groups arising on the territory of a State [party to the Geneva Conventions]. The armed confrontation must reach a minimum level of intensity and the parties involved in the conflict must show a minimum of organization.” ICRC, “How is the term ‘Armed Conflict’ defined in international humanitarian law?”, March 2008, <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/opinionpaper-armed-conflict.pdf> <http://icrc.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/opinion-paper-armed-conflict.pdf>

128. Additional Protocol II to the 1949 Geneva Conventions defines non-state armed groups as “dissident armed forces or other organized armed groups which, under responsible command, exercise such control over a part of its territory as to enable them to carry out sustained and concerted military operations and to implement [Protocol II]”. Protocol II, Article 1.1. The Joint Forces meet the minimum organization threshold required under international humanitarian law. They demonstrate an ability to carry out sustained military operations, as well as the capacity to recruit, deploy and coordinate fighters. Although they do not operate under a single unified commander, the Joint Forces comprise a coalition of Darfur armed movements, most notably the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Army faction led by Minni Arku Minawi (SLA/MM). Just Security, “Understanding Sudan’s Conflict by Focusing on Darfur”, 21 February 2025 (previously cited). As attacks by the RSF intensified in Darfur in mid-2023, these groups began fighting against the RSF and coordinating tactically with units of the SAF. Radio Dabanga, “Darfur armed movements renounce neutrality in Sudan war”, 17 November 2023 (previously cited).

129. Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II), adopted 8 June 1977; see ICRC, “International Humanitarian Law Database, Geneva Conventions of 1949, Additional Protocols and their Commentaries,” <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/geneva-conventions-1949additional-protocols-and-their-commentaries>; ICRC, “States Party to the Following International Humanitarian Law and Other Related Treaties as of 07-May-2026”, https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/public/refdocs/IHL_and_other_related_Treaties.pdf, p. 6.

130. Jean-Marie Henckaerts and Louise Doswald-Beck, Customary International Humanitarian Law, Volume I: Rules, 2009, <https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/external/doc/en/assets/files/other/customary-international-humanitarian-law-i-icrc-eng.pdf>; Jean-Marie Henckaerts and Louise Doswald-Beck, Customary International Humanitarian Law, Volume II: Practice, 2005, <https://www.onlinelibrary.ihl.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Cust-Intl-Hum-Law-Vol-II-Practice.pdf>

131. International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Customary IHL, Rule 135.

132. ICC, “Darfur, Sudan”, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/darfur> (accessed 10 March 2026).

pursuant to, or in furtherance of, a state or organizational policy.¹³³ Crimes against humanity are among the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. They are prohibited during war and peace.

Sudan has ratified, among others, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention Against Torture (CAT), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC).¹³⁴ Under the CRC and ACERWC, Sudan has a responsibility to take all feasible measures to ensure the protection and care of children affected by armed conflict, including to promote their psychological recovery and social reintegration.¹³⁵ In addition, under the CRPD, Sudan must take all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in armed conflict.¹³⁶

A cardinal principle of IHL is the principle of distinction, which requires parties to an armed conflict to distinguish at all times between military objectives on the one hand, and civilians and civilian objects on the other, and to direct attacks only against the former.¹³⁷ Intentionally directing attacks against civilians not directly participating in hostilities is prohibited under IHL and constitutes a war crime.¹³⁸ Harm to civilians is lawful only where required by military necessity and the expected military gain of attack is proportionate to the harm caused.¹³⁹ The war crime of murder, as defined in the ICC Elements of Crimes, requires that the RSF killed one or more people who were civilians or hors de combat (those not participating in the fighting because they have surrendered or are injured).¹⁴⁰

IHL further prohibits the displacement of civilians except where required for the civilians' own security or for imperative military reasons.¹⁴¹ Under the ICC Elements of Crimes, the perpetrator must have ordered the displacement of a civilian population.¹⁴² When displacement is ordered for the security of the civilians or for imperative military reasons, IHL requires that all possible measures be taken to ensure adequate shelter, hygiene, health, safety, nutrition and family unity for displaced civilians.¹⁴³

133. Rome Statute, Article 7.

134. UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies, "Ratification Status for Sudan", https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=165&Lang=EN (accessed 10 February 2026); ACHPR, "State Parties to the African Charter", <https://achpr.au.int/en/states> (accessed 10 February 2026); African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, "Ratifications Table", <https://www.acerwc.africa/en/member-states/ratifications> (accessed 10 February 2026). Regrettably, Sudan has not yet ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

135. Convention on the Rights of the Child, Articles 38 and 39; African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Article 22(3).

136. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Article 11.

137. Protocol II, Article 13(2); ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 1.

138. Protocol II, Article 13(2); ICRC, Customary IHL, Rules 1 and 6; Rome Statute, Articles 8(2)(e)(i).

139. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rules 7 and 14.

140. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(c)(i)-1.

141. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(viii); ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 129.

142. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(e)(viii).

143. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 131.

3.6 ETHNICALLY-MOTIVATED ATTACKS AND DEROGATORY LANGUAGE

Many of the RSF attacks documented in this report appeared ethnically motivated. RSF soldiers routinely used language meant to denigrate the non-Arab tribes of the region, often using words that contained some connotation of slavery or servitude. The most ubiquitous was *falangay* or *falangayat*. Sources said that this term originated from precolonial times, and was used to refer to the servant of a tribal chief.¹⁴⁴ During the current conflict, the term has been used to mock or degrade people, linking their status to that of a domestic slave or a person who is extremely loyal but expects no reward.¹⁴⁵ The RSF primarily uses the term to describe non-Arab people, often of Darfuran ethnic origin, apparently reflecting a view that these communities lack agency in their fealty to the SAF.¹⁴⁶

Sometimes, derogatory language used by the RSF contained reference to the military, suggesting that the perpetrators characterized civilians as being affiliated with the SAF. For example, while the term *abulday* means a lower-ranking SAF soldier, an expert told Amnesty International it is derogatory and contains an ethnic dimension, given that it refers to a lower-ranking soldier who is a servant or a slave to his superiors.¹⁴⁷

Below are the terms most commonly used by RSF fighters during the attacks documented in this report. Most carry some connotation of slavery or servitude, and are primarily used to refer to people of non-Arab tribal origin.

English	Arabic	Meaning
Falangay (singular) Falangayat (plural)	فلنقاي فلنقايات	A term used in precolonial Darfur for servants or slaves tasked with menial jobs, and now used by the RSF to denigrate non-Arabs, including those it accuses of supporting the army
Abulday (singular) Abulda (plural)	ابلداي أبلدا	A term used to refer to SAF troops or soldiers, but carrying connotations of servitude or slavery. Used by the RSF to denigrate non-Arabs in the military
Zurga	زرقة	“Black”; the term is used by the RSF to refer to non-Arab tribes in a derogatory way
Ambay (singular) Ambayat (plural)	امباي امبايات	Slave, black person
Abid (singular) Abeed (plural)	عبد عبيد	Slave

144. Interview with a human rights defender, 9 February 2026; Jérôme Tubiana, “Siege of El Fasher”, 23 October 2025, London Review of Books, Volume 47, Number 19, <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v47/n19/jerome-tubiana/diary>

145. Interview with a human rights defender, 9 February 2026.

146. Interview with a human rights defender, 9 February 2026; See also Jérôme Tubiana, “Siege of El Fasher” (previously cited); Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), ‘They were shooting us like animals’: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (24-30 October 2025), 13 February 2026, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/sudan/2026-02-13-rsf-offensive-fasher-capture-1-en.pdf>, para. 48.

147. Interview with a human rights defender, 9 February 2026.



4. RAPID SUPPORT FORCES' ATTACKS OUTSIDE EL FASHER

“They said you must stay here and watch your village burn.”

*Malik, a 16-year-old boy who was displaced from his village in North Darfur*¹⁴⁸

As the RSF advanced on El Fasher, it began tightening its grip on areas around the city. It captured towns and razed villages, forcibly displacing thousands of civilians. In April 2024, the RSF attacked and burned 16 villages west of El Fasher, populated predominantly by Zaghawa.¹⁴⁹ The same month, the RSF captured Mellit, a town about 50km north of El Fasher and a key government-designated humanitarian aid corridor and trade gateway to Libya.¹⁵⁰ The group continued attacks on villages north-west of the city from March to June 2024.¹⁵¹ In October 2024, the RSF reportedly burned more than 33 villages near Kutum, a town in North Darfur about 100km north-west of El Fasher.¹⁵²

This chapter documents two waves of RSF attacks south of El Fasher, in Dar el Salam locality, around Abu Zerega town. In December 2024, the RSF attacked Abu Zerega and nearby villages primarily west of the town. In March 2025, it attacked Grawit Basham, Dar el Naim and other nearby villages located to the east of Abu Zerega town.

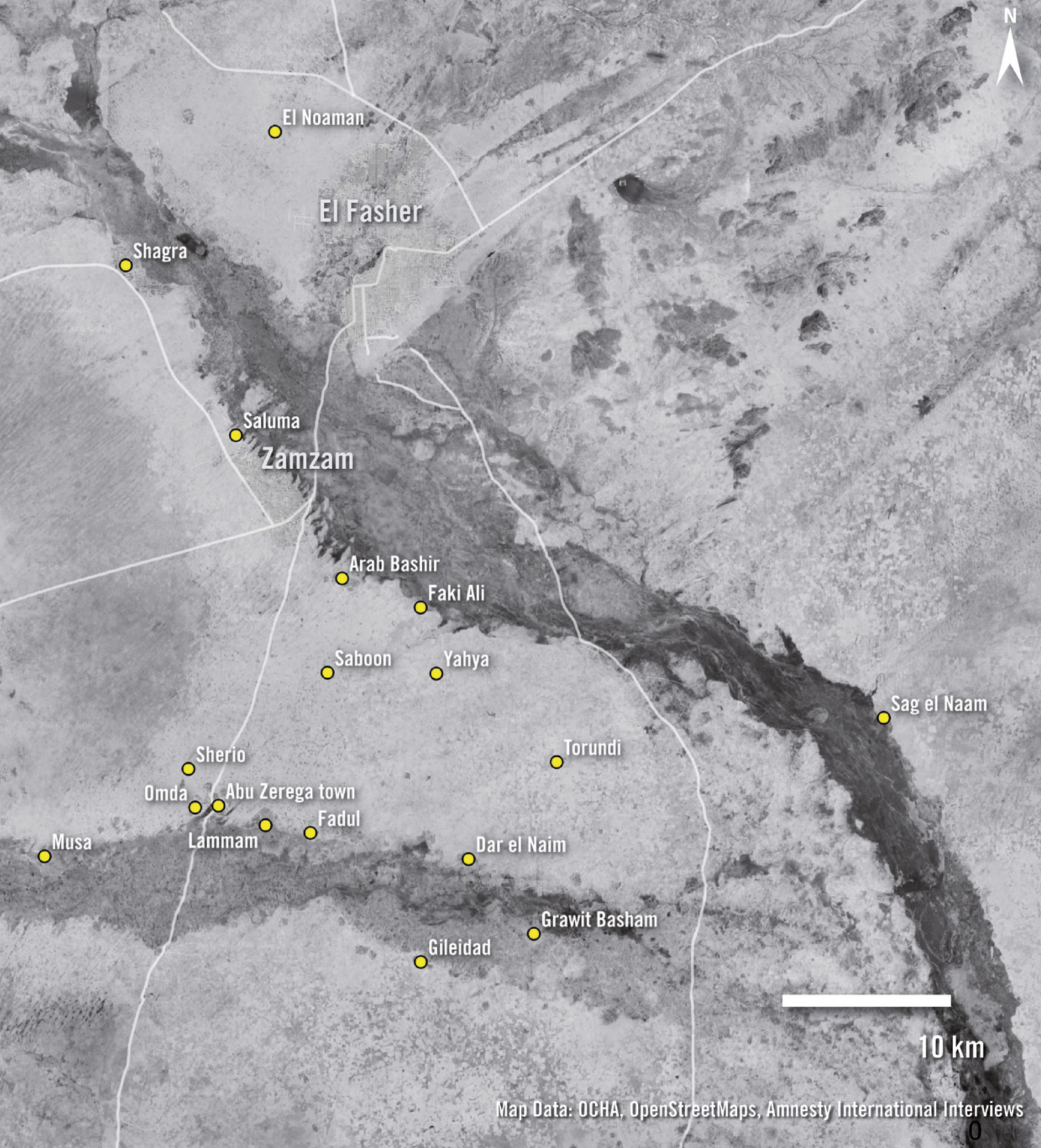
148. Interview in person with *Malik*, 30 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

149. Sudan Tribune, “Renewed RSF attacks devastate Darfur villages, displace civilians”, 14 April 2024, <https://sudantribune.com/article/284442>; see also UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan (UN IFFM), *Sudan: A War of Atrocities*, 22 September 2025, UN Doc. A/HRC/60/22, para. 78, stating that between 31 March and 15 April 2024, the RSF and their allies subjected Berka and eight other villages west of El Fasher to arson and destruction. It is not clear whether these nine villages overlapped with the 16 villages that the Sudan Tribune reported were attacked.

150. Sudan Tribune, “RSF seizes control of strategic North Darfur town, Mellit”, 15 April 2024, <https://sudantribune.com/article/284468>

151. Yale School of Public Health’s Humanitarian Research Lab (Yale HRL), *The Impact of Systematic Razing of Agricultural Communities Around El Fasher: A Remote Sensing Study*, 10 March 2026, <https://files-profile.medicine.yale.edu/documents/0667d53f-af67-415c-99ce-bd9b2f32bc0e>

152. Sudan Tribune, “Tens of thousands flee RSF attacks in North Darfur”, 18 October 2024, <https://sudantribune.com/article/292230>



Ⓢ↑ This map shows the villages outside of El Fasher where Amnesty International documented RSF attacks. Four of the 22 villages where attacks were documented could not be located. This chapter focuses primarily on attacks in 12 towns and villages.

Amnesty International's findings are based on interviews with 38 people, including nine children, from Abu Zerega town, Grawit Basham, Dar el Naim and nine surrounding villages. All interviewees were Zaghawa.¹⁵³ Amnesty International used satellite imagery to confirm burning in ten of these 12 towns and villages during and after the attacks.

The fighters who carried out the attacks were easily identifiable as RSF members. They wore RSF uniforms and had RSF insignia on their vehicles and often identified themselves as belonging to the RSF.

The affected area was predominantly Zaghawa, but also included other non-Arab ethnic groups, including Berti, Gimir and Tunjur people, and a small number of ethnically Arab residents.¹⁵⁴ During the attacks, RSF fighters used ethnic slurs like *falangay*¹⁵⁵ and accused civilians of affiliation with the SAF or other allied groups.

None of the interviewees saw SAF or Joint Forces in the villages or towns at the time of the attacks.¹⁵⁶ SAF and Joint Forces representatives told Amnesty International that their forces were not present in the area during this period.¹⁵⁷ A colonel from SAF's 6th Infantry Division told Amnesty International that in August 2023, the SAF withdrew from areas surrounding El Fasher to concentrate on defending the city, and that communication outages in the Abu Zerega area prevented any response to attacks.¹⁵⁸ Two Joint Forces members said they had no bases in the area.¹⁵⁹

Some communities organized small civilian defence groups to protect their farms and villages.¹⁶⁰ Similar arrangements existed during earlier periods of the conflict in Darfur.¹⁶¹ These groups were loosely organized, with each village contributing a small number of men who worked in shifts and remained on standby in case of an attack.¹⁶² Weapons, typically AK-pattern rifles, were purchased collectively.¹⁶³ In Abu Zerega town, civilian defence groups resisted some RSF attacks but were quickly overpowered. In Grawit Basham, Dar el Naim and other villages documented in this chapter, witnesses said no such groups were present.

All of the individuals interviewed for this chapter told Amnesty International that they were not directly participating in hostilities at the time of the incidents. Witnesses consistently described those attacked or killed as civilians fleeing violence, who were not carrying or using weapons against the RSF.

153. Four people were not asked about their ethnicity. For more on the history of the Zaghawa in this area, see the textbox "Historical Patterns of Targeting in Abu Zerega and Surrounding Areas" in Chapter 4. The nine other villages are Hillet el Omda, Hille Sherio, Hille Lammam, Hille Musa, Hille Gileidad, Hille Torundi, Hille Fadul, Hille Saboon and Hille Yahya. Amnesty International also interviewed 18 other people who witnessed RSF attacks in 10 other villages and towns in other areas of Dar el Salam and El Fasher locality which are not described in depth in this chapter. These attacks took place in Shagra, Hillet el Noaman, Hille Faki Ali, Hillet Arab Bashir, Hille Sag el Naam and Saluma as well as in four villages it could not locate: Hillet om Hashab, Hille Hashaba, Hillet Uzbani and Hille Reda.

154. Interviews, January-April 2026.

155. As explained in the background chapter, the terms *falangay* were used in precolonial Darfur for servants or slaves. They are now used by the RSF to denigrate non-Arabs from Darfur accused of supporting the army.

156. One resident, abducted during the 18 December attack on Abu Zerega town, said that four Joint Forces cars arrived later in the attack. He said some of the Joint Forces members fled on arrival while others were detained by the RSF. Interview by voice call with *Maher*, 5 March 2026. None of the other 12 people interviewed about the attacks in Abu Zerega town reported seeing any Joint Forces present during the attacks.

157. Interview by voice call with two representatives from the Joint Forces and a colonel from the SAF 6th Infantry Division, 7 April 2026; text correspondence with member of the Joint Forces, 19 March 2026.

158. Interview by voice call with two representatives from the Joint Forces and a colonel from the SAF 6th Infantry Division, 7 April 2026. A former resident of Abu Zerega also stated that there was a communication outage in Abu Zerega town and surrounding areas during the war. Interview by voice call with *Maher*, 5 March 2026.

159. Interview by voice call with two representatives of the Joint Forces and a colonel from the SAF 6th Infantry Division, 7 April 2026; text correspondence with a member of the Joint Forces, 19 March 2026.

160. Interview by voice call with *Jibril*, 12 March 2026; interview by voice call with *Maher*, 5 March 2026; interview by voice call with local leader, 6 April 2026.

161. Interview by voice call with *Jibril*, 12 March 2026; interview by voice call with *Maher*, 5 March 2026.

162. Interview by voice call with *Jibril*, 12 March 2026; interview by voice call with *Maher*, 5 March 2026; interview by voice call with local leader, 6 April 2026.

163. Two interviewees said that the weapons were sourced by community members only; another said that the Joint Forces had provided them with some guns. See interview by voice call with *Jibril*, 12 March 2026; interview by voice call with *Maher*, 5 March 2026; interview by voice call with local leader, 6 April 2026.



© ↑ Children fleeing an RSF drone attack in rural North Darfur, Sudan. October 2025. © Private

During these attacks, the RSF killed large numbers of civilians; injured, unlawfully detained and abused others; burned homes and other civilian infrastructure; and carried out widespread looting. These acts amount to the war crimes of attacking a civilian population, murder, pillage, destroying an adversary's property, forcible displacement and cruel treatment. These acts also amount to the crime against humanity of forcible transfer (see Chapter 11).

The displacement of predominantly Zaghawa residents from the area around Abu Zerega town reinforced a longer history of ethnically motivated violence in the area (see textbox below).¹⁶⁴ The RSF's continued control of these areas, together with the burning of villages and towns, preventing displaced people from returning, is consistent with a broader pattern of ethnic cleansing (see Chapter 11).

People displaced by these attacks were forced to flee repeatedly. Many initially sought refuge in Zamzam, an IDP camp on the outskirts of El Fasher, established in 2004.¹⁶⁵ Due to mass displacement since the violence reignited in 2023, including from the areas documented in this chapter,¹⁶⁶ the population of the

164. See also ACHPR, *Report of the Virtual Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights Situation in the Sudan* (previously cited), para. 149, finding that during the conflict the RSF had targeted the Zaghawa in Abu Zerega.

165. BBC, "Child in my arms, luggage on my head, I fled Sudan camp for safety", 18 April 2025, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn80v2d7elzo>; AP, "The Janjaweed are coming: Sudanese recount atrocities in RSF attack on a Darfur camp", 3 May 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/sudan-darfur-military-rsf-war-zamzamb6c60fe0883327aa0d64cd39d3a8e260>

166. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), "MSF forced to halt activities as violence engulfs Zamzam camp in North Darfur", 24 February 2025, <https://www.msf.org/sudan-msf-forced-halt-our-activities-violence-engulfs-zamzam-camp-north-darfur>

camp swelled significantly, reaching an estimated 500,000 to 1,000,000 by April 2025.¹⁶⁷ From 11 to 13 April 2025, the RSF attacked Zamzam, unlawfully killing civilians, taking hostages, pillaging and destroying civilian infrastructure and forcibly displacing a huge portion of the camp population.¹⁶⁸ The final subsection of this chapter documents RSF attacks on civilians as they fled Zamzam IDP camp.

HISTORICAL PATTERNS OF TARGETING IN ABU ZEREKA AND SURROUNDING

Dar Zaghawa is the historic homeland of the Zaghawa people, encompassing significant parts of northern Darfur and north-eastern Chad.¹⁶⁹ From the most recent colonial period (1899–1956), recurrent droughts in this ecologically fragile region prompted many Zaghawa to migrate southwards into other areas of what is now North Darfur, including to areas around El Fasher, including the Abu Zerega area.¹⁷⁰ A local leader who moved to what is now Abu Zerega town as a boy explained that, when he arrived in the early 1970s, the area was largely forested and contained only one Zaghawa village.¹⁷¹ Members of the Zaghawa community continued to settle there over time, followed later by smaller numbers from other ethnic groups.¹⁷²

The concentration of Zaghawa communities around Abu Zerega town later shaped how the area was perceived during the conflict. During the first major phase of the Darfur conflict (2003–2005), government-sponsored militias known as the “Janjaweed”, which were fighting with the SAF, carried out systematic attacks on non-Arab communities accused of backing the rebellion, including in areas around Abu Zerega where the SLA/MM had relocated to rely on significant Zaghawa support.¹⁷³ By 2004, armed opposition groups had taken control of rural areas in what is now North Darfur on the strength of these Zaghawa communities, placing towns such as Abu Zerega within a broader Zaghawa-inhabited war zone.¹⁷⁴

Within this context, the SLA/MM took control of Abu Zerega town and its surroundings.¹⁷⁵ Although the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement formally integrated the SLA/MM into the government, in practice the area remained under the control of SLA/MM.¹⁷⁶ As a result, the Sudanese government continued to view the local population as sympathetic to the rebellion. When SLA/MM leader Minni Minawi withdrew from the Sudanese government in late 2010, the government resumed military operations against SLA/MM-held territory and continued to fight other armed opposition groups.¹⁷⁷ By early 2011, Abu Zerega had become a refuge for displaced Zaghawa civilians fleeing violence from further south and a target of state forces.¹⁷⁸

167. MSF, *Besieged, Attacked, Starved: Mass atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam, Sudan*, 3 July 2025, <https://www.msf.org/besieged-attacked-starved-mass-atrocities-el-fasher>, p. 17; Global Protection Cluster, “Protection Alert: El Fasher and Zamzam IDP Camp, North Darfur, Sudan”, 20 December 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/protection-alert-el-fasher-and-zamzam-idp-camp-north-darfur-sudan-20-december-2024>; Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), *Famine in Sudan: IPC Famine Review Committee Confirms Famine in parts of North Darfur*, July 2024, <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/countries-in-focus-archive/issue-107/en/>

168. Amnesty International, “A Refuge Destroyed” (previously cited).

169. Jérôme Tubiana, “Land and Power: the Case of the Zaghawa”, 28 May 2008, African Arguments, <https://africanarguments.org/2008/05/land-and-power-the-case-of-the-zaghawa/>. “Dar” means homeland.

170. Jérôme Tubiana, “Land and Power: the Case of the Zaghawa” (previously cited).

171. Interview by voice call with local leader, 6 April 2026.

172. Interview by voice call with local leader, 6 April 2026.

173. Claudio Gramizzi and Jérôme Tubiana, *Forgotten Darfur: Old Tactics and New Players*, Small Arms Survey, July 2012, <http://files.ethz.ch/isn/147786/HSBA-SWP-28-Forgotten-Darfur.pdf>, pp. 17–18. The article states that Zaghawa migrants settled in eastern Darfur. This includes the area “situated north of Dar Rizeigat and the railway between Nyala and El Obeid, and south of El Fasher”. Claudio Gramizzi and Jérôme Tubiana, *Forgotten Darfur: Old Tactics and New Players* (previously cited), p. 16. This area includes Abu Zerega town and the surrounding areas.

174. Claudio Gramizzi and Jérôme Tubiana, “*Forgotten Darfur: Old Tactics and New Players*” (previously cited), p. 18.

175. Amnesty International, *Sudan: No End to Violence in Darfur, Arms Supplies Continue Despite Ongoing Human Rights Violations* (Index: AFR 54/007/2012), 9 February 2012, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/007/2012/en/>, p. 10.

176. Amnesty International, *Sudan: No End to Violence in Darfur, Arms Supplies Continue Despite Ongoing Human Rights Violations* (previously cited), p. 10.

177. Amnesty International, *Sudan: No End to Violence in Darfur, Arms Supplies Continue Despite Ongoing Human Rights Violations* (previously cited), p. 10; Human Rights Watch, *Darfur in the Shadows: The Sudanese Government’s Ongoing Attacks on Civilians and Human Rights*, 5 June 2011, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2011/06/05/darfur-shadows/sudanese-governments-ongoing-attacks-civilians-and-human-rights>, pp. 11–17.

178. Amnesty International, *Sudan: No End to Violence in Darfur, Arms Supplies Continue Despite Ongoing Human Rights Violations* (previously cited), pp. 10, 13.

The growing concentration of Zaghawa civilians caused by the displacement, combined with the SLA/MM's roots in Zaghawa communities, led government forces and allied militias – who conflated ethnic identity with affiliation with armed opposition groups – to target Zaghawa in and around Abu Zerega as part of the insurgency. A 2011 report by Amnesty International showed that local officials and traditional leaders publicly called for the expulsion of Zaghawa residents from an area that included Abu Zerega, and supported the formation of Popular Defence Force militias to oppose them.¹⁷⁹ These actors did not distinguish between Zaghawa fighters and civilians.¹⁸⁰

This history reveals a pattern: Abu Zerega's Zaghawa identity has repeatedly been treated as grounds for collective targeting. As one local leader from the area told Amnesty International, reflecting on the December 2024 attack on Abu Zerega town: "I think [the RSF targets] us because most of the [Joint Forces] fighters are from African tribes – Zaghawa, Berti... They think we are not with them, that we are with the Joint Forces."¹⁸¹

4.1 ATTACKS ON ABU ZEREGA TOWN AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES: DECEMBER 2024

The RSF attacked Abu Zerega town and surrounding villages twice, on 3 and 18 December 2024. The 18 December attack was more severe and forced most residents to flee. Abu Zerega town, which had about 60,000 residents, was the administrative centre of the surrounding area, which included over 80 villages.¹⁸²

Amnesty International interviewed 12 people who were present during the attacks in Abu Zerega town, nine of whom were present during both offensives. Amnesty International also interviewed six people from four nearby villages – Hillet el Omda, Hille Sherio, Hille Lammam and Hille Musa – which were also attacked on 18 December.¹⁸³

A resident of Abu Zerega town provided Amnesty International with the names of 122 people killed during attacks in the area between late November and late December 2024, with most deaths occurring on 3 and 18 December.¹⁸⁴ The list includes four women, 110 men and eight children. Nine of the adults were over the age of 60. The resident said that 65 people on the list were killed in Abu Zerega town, while the remainder were killed in nearby villages.¹⁸⁵ Through interviews with witnesses, Amnesty International corroborated 13 names on the list, and received the names of an additional 15 people killed, five of whom were children.¹⁸⁶

179. Amnesty International, *Sudan: No End to Violence in Darfur, Arms Supplies Continue Despite Ongoing Human Rights Violations* (previously cited), pp. 10-11.

180. Amnesty International, *Sudan: No End to Violence in Darfur, Arms Supplies Continue Despite Ongoing Human Rights Violations* (previously cited), p. 11.

181. Interview by voice call with local leader, 6 April 2026.

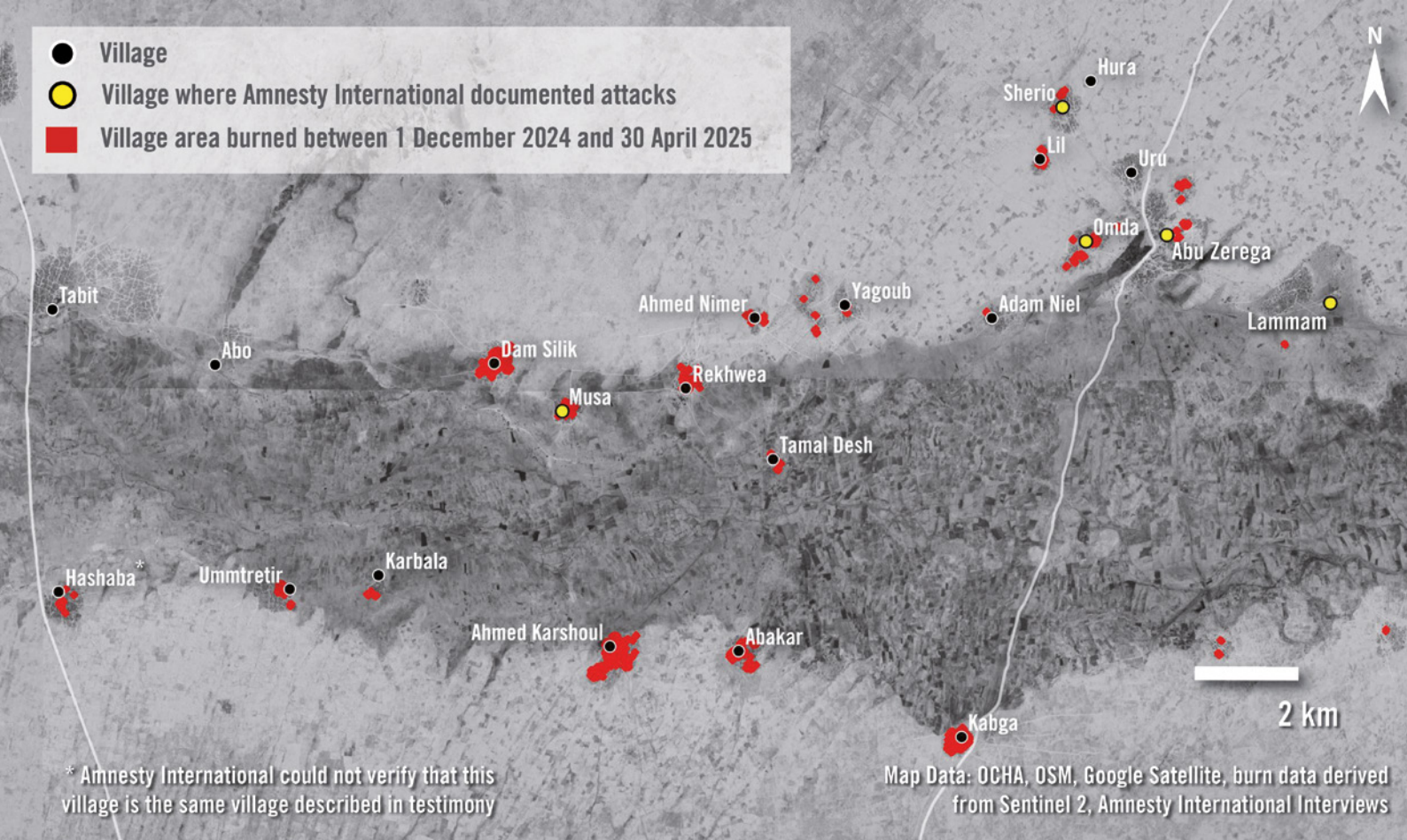
182. Interview by voice call with *Jibril*, 18 February 2026.

183. An additional two people were interviewed from Hille Saboon and Hille Yahya, both villages near Abu Zerega. However, the timeline of these attacks was not fully clear, making it difficult to say with certainty whether these attacks occurred at the same time as the Abu Zerega attacks in December 2024 or later.

184. See Annex I for the list of reported deaths; interview by voice call with *Jibril*, 12 March 2026. According to a resident of Abu Zerega town, who was involved in compiling the data, the list was based on records from the health centre, information provided by relatives who brought victims' bodies there, and information from village administrators. Interview by voice call with *Jibril*, 12 March 2026.

185. Interview by voice call with *Jibril*, 12 March 2026.

186. Amnesty International considered a name to be a match if at least two of the names provided corresponded to those of deceased individuals on the list. Of the 15 people not included on the list, two were reported dead by more than one witness. Amnesty International is not including the names in this report for security reasons.



↑ The map above shows Abu Zerega town and the villages to its west. Villages marked with yellow dots are locations where Amnesty International has documented attacks. Burning was detected in 17 of the 21 villages by the change detection algorithm. After reviewing higher resolution imagery, three more villages were found to have been burned between 1 December 2024 and 1 March 2025 that were not detected by the burn algorithm. Hille Lamman, east of Abu Zerega, was burned in April 2025.¹⁸⁷

ATTACKS IN ABU ZEREGA TOWN

Ola, a woman who sold goods at the Abu Zerega market, on the western outskirts of the town, was there during the RSF attack on 3 December. She witnessed the RSF shooting at civilians and looting stores.¹⁸⁸ When she returned to the market after the attack, she saw the corpses of at least 10 people, whose names she provided to Amnesty International, most of whom were her adult male relatives.¹⁸⁹

Jibril, a health professional, said that the staff at the health centre recorded 18 deaths after the 3 December attack, including of four members of the civilian defence force and three or four children.¹⁹⁰ He said the civilian defence tried to respond during the attack with their limited arms, but were overpowered by the RSF.

On 18 December 2024, the RSF launched a much larger assault, attacking the town from all sides as well as nearby villages.¹⁹¹ Again, the civilian defence in Abu Zerega town was quickly overpowered.¹⁹² One resident

187. Amnesty International conducted an interview by voice call on 6 March 2026 with two individuals from the Abu Zerega area to determine the names of the villages identified in this section.

188. Interviews in person with *Maha*, 23 October 2025, Iriba Chad; and with *Fawzia*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

189. Interview in person with *Ola*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

190. Interview by voice call with *Jibril*, 18 February 2026.

191. Interview by voice call with *Jibril*, 18 February 2026; interview by voice call with *Mansour*, 10 March 2026.

192. Interview by voice call with *Jibril*, 18 February 2026.

said he saw four Joint Forces vehicles arrive several hours into the attack, but they were unable to repel the RSF; according to his account, some fighters fled while others were detained.¹⁹³

During the attack, a nine-year-old boy and his grandmother tried to flee as RSF fighters approached from the market. He was hit by a stray bullet. His grandmother told Amnesty International:

“My grandson was hit on his back. He was not able to walk. He was bleeding a lot... we ran towards Lammam [a village about 2.5km south-east of Abu Zerega town]... I carried him on my shoulder... He was just asking for water and lost consciousness. On our way to Zamzam he passed away. We didn't find any medication to give him. He was suffering until he died.”¹⁹⁴

On 18 December, the RSF again targeted the market and nearby areas in Abu Zerega town. *Mansour*, a farmer, was at the market when he saw the RSF shoot and kill three men he knew by name, who were trying to flee. After the men were shot, *Mansour* fled and hid nearby and later went to the medical centre to check on his brother, who worked there as a vaccine officer. He said he saw 13 dead bodies there covered with sheets, and several injured people, including a man he knew by name.¹⁹⁵

Also on 18 December, *Jibril*, the health professional, said he witnessed RSF fighters shoot three men, who were trying to run away, at the entrance of the health centre.¹⁹⁶ *Jibril* then fled. When he returned to the health centre later that night, he saw 47 dead bodies collected there, as well as injured people.



Image of *Yagoub*'s leg showing a scar from his bullet wound. © Amnesty International

ATTACKS IN VILLAGES NEAR ABU ZEREGA TOWN

The RSF attacked other villages near Abu Zerega town on 18 December. Amnesty International interviewed six people from these villages. All said the RSF killed and injured civilians, targeting men and older boys in particular, and looted property.

Yagoub, 17, lived in Hillet el Omda, a village on the south-west outskirts of Abu Zerega town, when RSF fighters approached in cars and riding motorbikes and camels. He and his family tried to flee but were caught.¹⁹⁷ Together with about 100 people, they were forced back to the village at gunpoint. He said:

“They started firing randomly . It seemed like they wanted to finish us all because they were just shooting at us... They tied me up and beat me with sticks and the back of an AK-47. Then one of them approached on a camel and said, ‘This is the child of a falangay’... And he just shot me in the leg.”¹⁹⁸

At the time Amnesty International interviewed him, *Yagoub* had large wounds from a bullet on his lower leg. *Yagoub* said that eight of his cousins, including four boys between the ages of 11 and 17, were killed in the same attack.

193. Interview by voice call with *Maher*, 5 March 2026.

194. Interview by voice call with grandmother of the boy, 13 March 2026.

195. Interview by voice call with *Mansour*, 10 March 2026.

196. According to *Hadeel*, her cousin was killed during the first attack. Interview in person with *Hadeel*, 24 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

197. Interview in person with *Yagoub*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

198. Interview in person with *Yagoub*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

Sadiya, a 32-year-old woman from Hille Sherio, north-west of Abu Zerega town, said that the attack forced her to flee on foot to Zamzam while nine months pregnant and carrying another child on her back. She said that the RSF shot her husband in both legs during the attack; she did not witness this because he was farming outside the village at the time, but was reunited with him after he was hospitalized.¹⁹⁹

Asmahan, a woman aged over 60, said that during the attack in her village of Hille Musa, about 10km west of Abu Zerega, the RSF shot and killed two of her daughters' husbands.²⁰⁰

Fadila, from Hille Lammam, saw the RSF shoot and kill two of her male neighbours, who were about 50 and 20 years old. *Fadila* had given birth six days before the attack: "My relatives took me outside of the village... to the farm," she said. "All the men of the village ran out and... hid between the trees for some days."²⁰¹

A local leader and resident of Abu Zerega town explained to Amnesty International that residents were afraid to return to the town: "No one can go back to Abu Zerega. These Arab groups [referring to the RSF] – we can't trust them. They will just kill us... we can't go back until there is liberation," he said.²⁰²

BURNING DURING ATTACKS ON ABU ZEREGA TOWN AND NEARBY VILLAGES

Witnesses told Amnesty International that during the 18 December attack on Abu Zerega town and nearby villages, some houses were burned. *Maha*, a 30-year-old Zaghawa woman whose husband ran a small shop out of their home, saw the RSF burning her home during the attack. "I was in the house with my children... [One of the RSF soldiers] said, 'She is the wife of a slave, you should burn her house.'"²⁰³ Using satellite imagery, Amnesty International confirmed that a cluster of homes in Abu Zerega town, east of the market, was burned between when imagery was captured on 18 and 19 December 2024. Amnesty International also used satellite imagery to confirm burning in nine villages west of Abu Zerega in December 2024.²⁰⁴

Satellite imagery reveals that a significant amount of burning in and around Abu Zerega town took place after the December attacks, when most residents were already displaced and – according to witness testimony – the RSF had established effective control of the area.²⁰⁵

Other villages close to Abu Zerega town where Amnesty International documented RSF attacks in December 2024 were also burned after the RSF controlled the area.²⁰⁶ Satellite imagery reveals localized burning, sometimes in discontinuous areas of a village, which is consistent with fires started on the ground.

199. Interview by voice call with *Sadiya*, 3 November 2025.

200. Interview in person with *Asmahan*, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

201. Interview by voice call with *Fadila*, 12 March 2026.

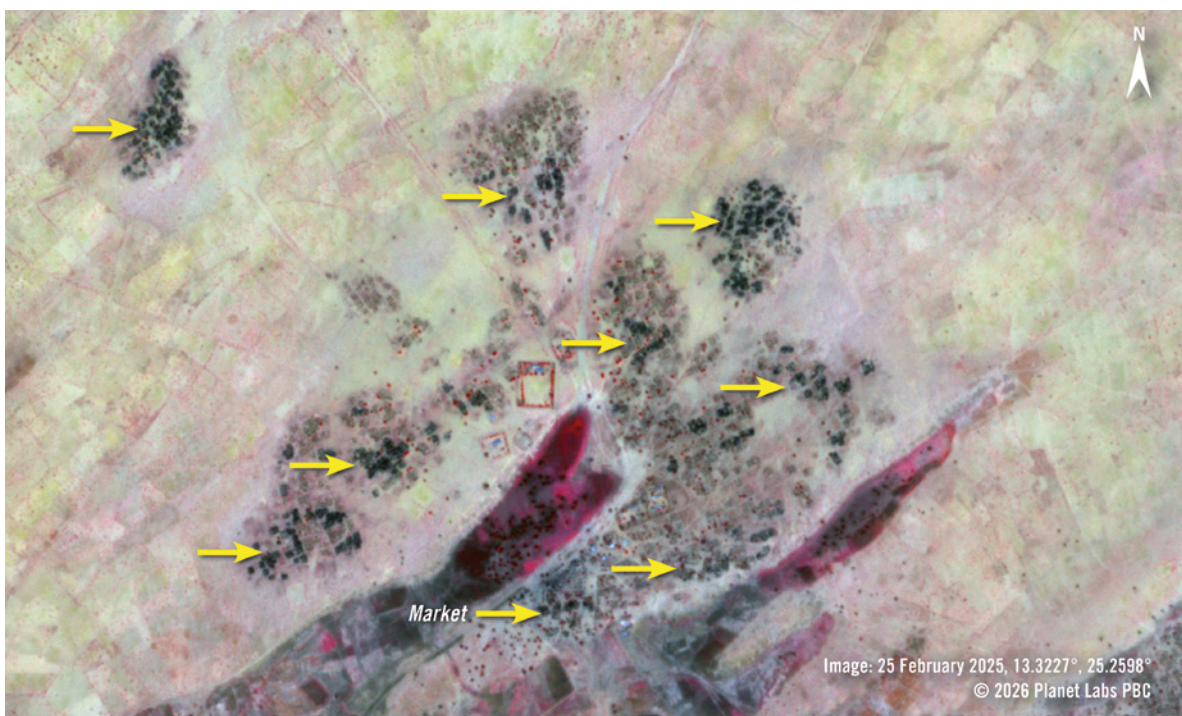
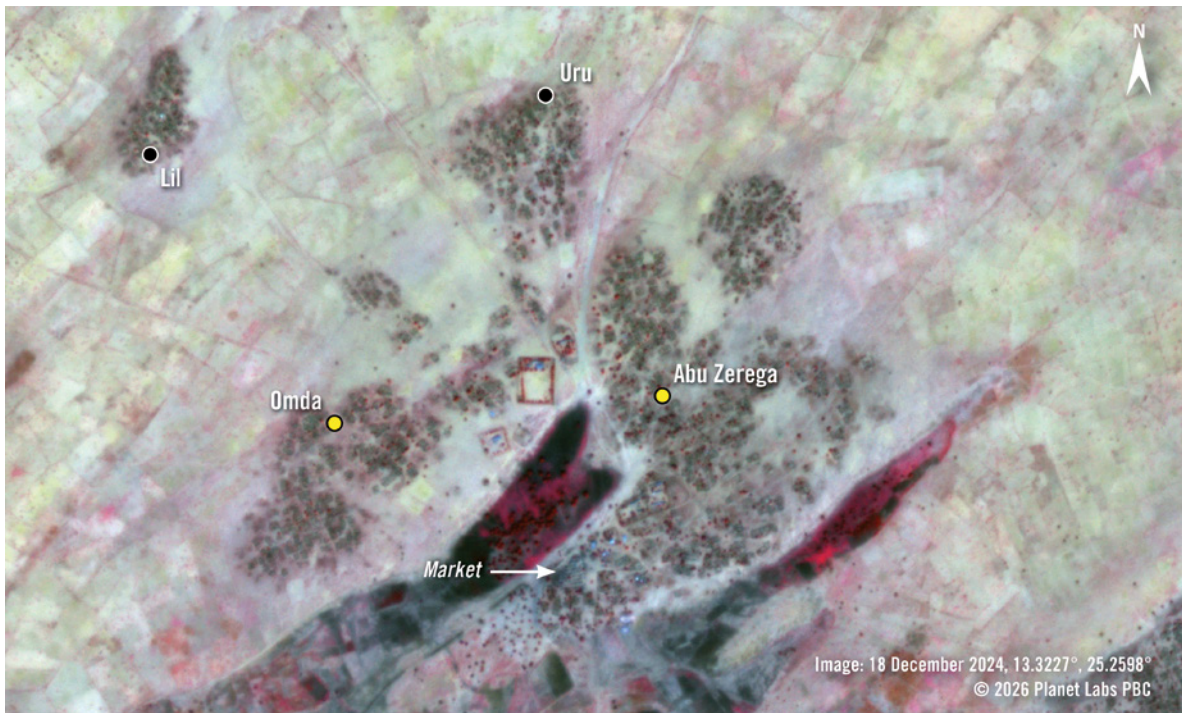
202. Interview by voice call with local leader, 6 April 2026.

203. Interview in person with *Maha*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

204. The nine villages burned are Hille Dam Silik, Hille Musa, Hille Rekhwea, Hillet Ahmed Karshoul, Hillet Abakar, Hillet Ahmed Nimer, Hille Yagoub, Hille Tamal Desh and Hille Hashaba. All except Hille Hashaba and Hille Tamal Desh were heavily burned.

205. Between when the imagery was captured on 4 and 5 February 2024, burning occurred in the market area of Abu Zerega town. Burning had occurred again by 22 February, with burned structures visible in other parts of the town. By 30 April, satellite imagery shows almost half of the town had been burned.

206. These villages are Hillet el Omda (active fires were visible on 6 February 2025 and more signs of burning were visible between 19 and 21 February 2025); Hille Musa (burned between 18 and 22 December, again between 31 December 2024 and 1 January 2025, and again between 13 and 14 January 2025); Hille Lammam (burned between 2 and 3 April and again between 13 and 21 April 2025); and Hille Sherio (burned between 4 and 5 February and again between 15 and 16 February 2025). The extent of burning varied across villages, with Hille Musa the most affected with approximately 80% of the village area razed. Satellite imagery reveals additional burning in 12 villages west of Abu Zerega town after December 2024 where Amnesty International did not document attacks. The villages are Hille Dam Silik, Hille Rekhwea, Hillet Ahmed Karshoul, Hillet Abakar, Hille Yagoub, Hille Kabga, Hille Tamal Desh, Hillet Ummtretir, Hille Karbala, Hille Lil, Hillet Adam Niel and Hille Hashaba. Of this group, Hille Dam Silik, Hille Rekhwea, Hillet Ahmed Karshoul, Hillet Abakar, Hille Yagoub, Hille Hashaba and Hille Tamal Desh had been burned previously in December 2024. In eight of the villages, 80% or more of their areas had been razed by February 2025. While Amnesty International did not conduct interviews in any of these areas, their proximity to Abu Zerega town and the other villages where Amnesty International documented attacks suggest that they were most likely under RSF control at the time.



© ↑ False-colour, near infrared satellite imagery from 18 December 2024 and 25 February 2025 shows Abu Zerega town and nearby villages. With near infrared imagery, healthy vegetation appears in red shades, while recently burned areas stand out as darker, black shades. Many areas – highlighted with yellow arrows – were burned since 18 December 2024 and appear black in imagery from 25 February 2026.

Cases where villages have been extensively burned after being largely depopulated are consistent with a deliberate strategy by the RSF, or allied forces, to further prevent displaced civilians, most of them Zaghawa, from returning.

UNLAWFUL DESTRUCTION AND PILLAGE

Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions prohibits pillage in non-international armed conflicts.²⁰⁷ Under the Rome Statute, “pillaging a town or place, even when taken by assault”, constitutes a war crime.²⁰⁸ The ICC Elements of Crimes specify that pillage occurs where a perpetrator appropriates property without the owner’s consent with the intent to deprive the owner of it for private or personal use.²⁰⁹ The looting of homes in a number of the villages where Amnesty International documented targeted attacks, together with the theft of livestock and other property, amounts to pillage.

Under the Rome Statute, “destroying or seizing the property of an adversary unless such destruction or seizure be imperatively demanded by the necessities of the conflict” is a war crime.²¹⁰ The term “adversary” can include civilians or communities perceived or treated by the attacking party as belonging to, supporting, or being aligned with the opposing side.²¹¹ According to the ICC, “[d]estruction entails acts such as setting ablaze, demolishing, or otherwise damaging property” and severely damaged property may amount to partial destruction.²¹²

In this context, the RSF treated residents of the towns attacked as “adversaries”, or part of the opposing side. There are reasonable grounds to believe that burning villages during or after attacks, where there was no meaningful resistance and most residents had fled, was not required by military necessity and therefore amounts to a war crime.

In addition, such conduct may also be characterized as attacks on civilian objects, which are prohibited under customary international law (see Chapter 11).²¹³ Civilian objects are all objects that are not military objectives and may include homes, livestock, and village infrastructure.²¹⁴

Finally, the UN Committee Against Torture has found that burning and destruction of houses can constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.²¹⁵ Where such conduct occurs in armed conflict – particularly when, as in this case, it is deliberate and directed at civilians or their property to force them to leave – it also amounts to the war crime of cruel treatment under the Rome Statute.²¹⁶

207. Protocol II, Article 4(2)(g).

208. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(v).

209. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(e)(v).

210. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(xii); see also ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 50.

211. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Ongwen*, Trial Chamber IX, Judgment, 4 February 2021, para. 2776. See also ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Trial Chamber II, Judgment, 7 March 2014, para. 892; Zimmerman and Geiß, O. Triffterer and K. Ambos (eds.), *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. A Commentary*, 2016, p. 568, para. 969.

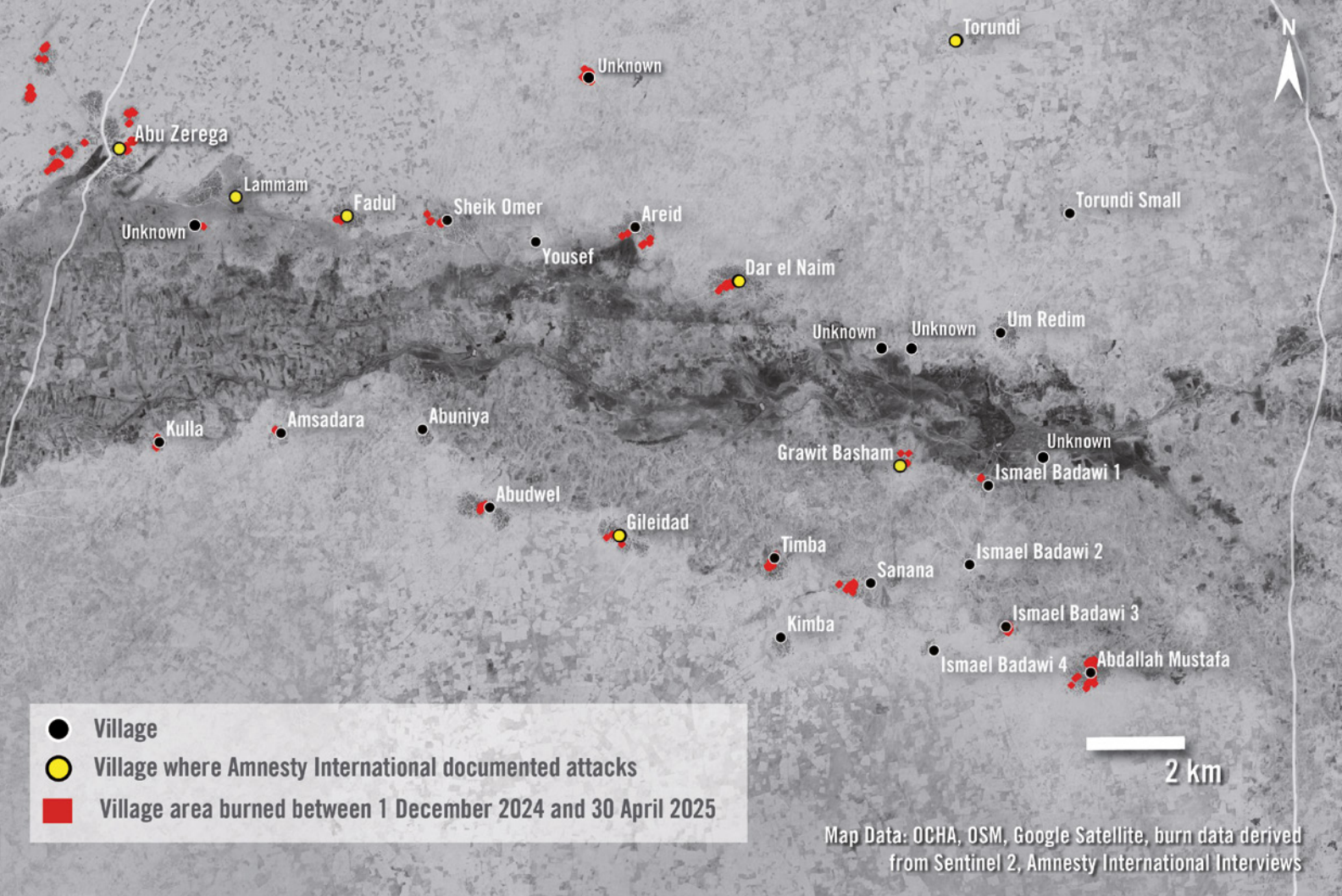
212. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Trial Chamber II, Judgment, 7 March 2014, para. 891.

213. Customary IHL, Rules 8 and 9.

214. Customary IHL, Rule 9.

215. UN Committee against Torture, *Hajrizi Dzemajl et al. v. Yugoslavia*, 2 December 2002, <https://www.refworld.org/jurisprudence/caselaw/cat/2002/en/93557>, para. 9.2.

216. Rome Statute, 8(2)(c)(i).



© ↑ The map above shows Abu Zerega town and the villages to its east. Burning was detected in 15 villages by the change detection algorithm. A more detailed review with higher resolution imagery shows smaller areas of burning, revealing a total of 23 of the 28 villages east of Abu Zerega were burned between 1 March and 30 April 2025.²¹⁷

4.2 ATTACKS ON GRAWIT BASHAM, DAR EL NAIM AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES: MARCH 2025

On Saturday, 1 March 2025, the RSF attacked villages east of Abu Zerega town. The attacks began in Grawit Basham, 20km south-east of Abu Zerega town.²¹⁸ Grawit Basham is the administrative centre of the surrounding villages and had the largest market in the area, which took place on Saturdays.²¹⁹ The RSF then moved through neighbouring areas, including Dar el Naim, a village 6km north-west of the market. The village is referred to by many former residents by its previous name, Kushang, and had a population of about 8,000 people, according to a local leader.²²⁰

217. Amnesty International conducted an interview by voice call on 6 March 2026 with two individuals from the Abu Zerega area to determine the names of the villages identified in this section.

218. Interviews by voice call with local leader, 23 September 2025; with *Arja*, 27 February 2026; with *Salah*, 4 March 2026; and with *Abdulmajeed*, 18 March 2026.

219. Interviews by voice call with *Arja*, 27 February 2026; and *Salah*, 4 March 2026.

220. Interview by voice call with local leader, 23 September 2025.

Amnesty International interviewed four people who witnessed the attack in Grawit Basham and 15 people who witnessed the attack in Dar el Naim. Amnesty International also interviewed three people from three other nearby villages that took place around the same time: Hille Gileidad, Hille Torundi and Hille Fadul. Some people, fleeing from the RSF from one location to another, witnessed events in more than one location. Interviewees provided Amnesty International with the names of 21 people killed in these attacks, including three teenage boys.²²¹

Unlike in Abu Zerega town, witnesses were not aware of any armed civilian resistance to the attack. All witnesses said that there were no SAF or Joint Forces physically present in the area during the 1 March attack. Three witnesses said that before 1 March, the Joint Forces occasionally passed through Grawit Basham in one or two vehicles; one said they were usually in civilian clothing.²²²

ATTACKS IN GRAWIT BASHAM AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES

The attack on Grawit Basham started in the early morning, as herders and traders were arriving at the market. The RSF attacked the market, killing and injuring civilians, stealing livestock, looting goods and burning property. *Arja*, a teacher from Gileidad, was on his way to the market when from a distance he saw an estimated 160 RSF cars and heard explosions.²²³ *Reham*, a 25-year-old woman, saw the RSF shoot a male relative of hers while they were on their way to the market: “The [RSF] didn’t say anything to him, they just shot him from their car,” she said.²²⁴ He was injured in his side and hip but survived.

At the market itself, the RSF rounded up civilians and forced them to assist with their stealing of livestock and produce. *Abdulmajeed*, a teacher at a school in Grawit Basham, was forced into an RSF vehicle and taken to the market. There, he witnessed the RSF shoot several men, including the local doctor, a taxi driver and two men with intellectual disabilities, one of whom visited the market regularly to beg. The RSF then forced *Abdulmajeed* and about 15 other men to load sugar, beans and oil stolen from the market onto RSF vehicles. They also forced the men to walk the stolen livestock between locations.²²⁵

After attacking the market, the RSF moved through neighbouring villages. Men and boys described spending much of the day attempting to evade the RSF, hiding in tall grass, homes and mosques.²²⁶ The RSF stole livestock and killed people who tried to intervene in this looting. *Salah*, who had seen the start of the attack at the market and fled back to Dar el Naim, described the killing of his male relative:

“The RSF came to us with 15 armoured vehicles... They took [my relative’s] cows. I told [him], ‘Please, my brother, don’t drag the cows, let them go.’ He refused and ran after his cows... [The RSF] opened fire and killed him immediately. I ran and hid myself behind some trees.”²²⁷

Older boys were targeted during the attack. *Abdulhalim*, 17, was also herding his animals near Dar el Naim with a large group of men when they were attacked. He saw RSF fighters shoot and kill three men, all of whom he knew by name, after they resisted the RSF stealing their camels.²²⁸ *Abdulhalim* tried running back to the village but was picked up by the RSF:

221. See Annex II for the list of reported deaths.

222. Interview by voice call with a local leader, 17 March 2026; interview by voice call with *Abdulmajeed*, 18 March 2026; interview in person with *Majid*, 5 November 2025, Iriba, Chad.

223. Interview by voice call with *Arja*, 27 February 2026.

224. Interview in person with *Reham*, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

225. Interview by voice call with *Abdulmajeed*, 18 March 2026.

226. Interviews by voice call with *Arja*, 27 February 2026; *Salah*, 4 March 2026; *Abdulmajeed*, 18 March 2026; and a local leader, 17 March 2026.

227. Interview by voice call with *Salah*, 4 March 2026. Interview in person with *Abdulhalim*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

228. Interview in person with *Abdulhalim*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.



© ↑ Photo showing large scar on Abdulhalim's right leg from being beaten by the RSF.
© Amnesty International

"The RSF took me in their car. They were driving around... They were pointing at homes, asking, 'Where do the toro boro [Joint Forces] live, who has Starlink in their homes?'... They kept beating me and beating me. My head was spinning from the beating. With the number of [RSF] cars I saw circling around, the only thought that crossed my mind was: Today I am a dead person."²²⁹

When the RSF stopped the car, *Abdulhalim* managed to escape. He still has a large scar on his right leg from the beatings. He found his brother, 20, who had been shot and wounded by the RSF, while driving his tractor.²³⁰ *Abdulhalim* hid in a neighbour's house. RSF fighters entered the house and beat people: "[They] came and they told us to leave. Then they set fire to the house."²³¹

The RSF also attacked women, girls and young children. *Mawahib*, who was 13 at the time, was at home with her mother on 1 March when the RSF entered the house: "They were shouting, 'Shoot them, shoot them.'... I was so scared. They shot me."²³² After being shot, *Mawahib* lost consciousness. Her mother, *Safia*, put her on her back and carried her to Zamzam, over 20km away:

"I picked up my daughter and started running. I wasn't thinking about anything, I didn't see anything. Whoever got shot, fell; whoever died there, died there... I carried her on my back. She was nearly naked when we took her from there, she was not fully dressed [and had] no proper clothes. This was because her clothes were [covered in] blood."²³³

At night, the RSF left the villages, which allowed people to bury their dead. *Salah* said he buried four men in Dar el Naim, including the relative who he saw being shot.²³⁴ In Grawit Basham, *Abdulmajeed*, the teacher, buried 22 men, including the four men he had seen being shot, as well as his brother, whose body he found later.²³⁵ *Arja*, who fled Grawit Basham during the attack on his native village of Hille Gileidad, 7km south-west of Grawit Basham, said he buried 12 men he knew by name.²³⁶

In Dar el Naim, most residents were terrified that the RSF would return and decided to leave on the evening of 1 March. *Majid*, a 16-year-old boy, described how a group of village elders encouraged people to leave: "They decided that all the youths and girls should go to Zamzam [camp]," he said. "They decided that old men and old women should remain to monitor the situation. If it got better, the others [could] come back."²³⁷

229. Interview in person with *Abdulhalim*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

230. Interview in person with *Abdulhalim*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

231. Interview in person with *Abdulhalim*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

232. Interview in person with *Safia* and *Mawahib*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

233. Interview in person with *Safia* and *Mawahib*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

234. Interview by voice call with *Salah*, 4 March 2026.

235. Interview by voice call with *Abdulmajeed*, 18 March 2026.

236. Interview by voice call with *Arja*, 27 February 2026.

237. Interview in person with *Majid*, 5 November 2025, Iriba, Chad.



📷 ↑ Photo showing scar caused by a bullet on Mawahib's hand, one of two injuries she sustained when she was shot by the RSF.
© Amnesty International

The small number of people who stayed in the village after 1 March said that the RSF returned multiple times, hounding and persecuting them until they too had no choice but to flee.²³⁸ Those who remained were mostly older people or people with disabilities who found it more difficult to flee on foot.

Reham (see above) could not flee Dar el Naim because she was the primary caretaker for her seven-year-old son and her 14-year-old brother, both of whom have disabilities and are unable to walk, as well as her mother, who is partially blind. After the attack began, *Reham* ran home. There, RSF soldiers ordered her and her family to leave. After she had taken the children and her mother outside, she saw the RSF use a mounted gun on their vehicle to set her home on fire.

Reham put her children and mother in a donkey cart and headed towards their farm. She told Amnesty International: “We spent the whole night in the farm because the village was burned. There was nowhere to go, we had to hide between trees because [the RSF] were tracking us.”²³⁹ The RSF found them three times; they beat *Reham* each time they found her.²⁴⁰ *Reham* had four donkeys, but the RSF killed one and stole the others:

“They were saying, ‘You are not allowed to be here, you should go.’ We were completely distressed... Some people ran. But I can’t run because I can’t leave behind my son or my mum.”²⁴¹

After four days, *Reham* found other civilians who helped carry her son, brother and mother to Zamzam.

238. Interview in person with *Reham*, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad; interviews in person with *Hawaya* and *Mabruka*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

239. Interview in person with *Reham*, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

240. Interview in person with *Reham*, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

241. Interview in person with *Reham*, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

Hawaya, who is 85 and has limited mobility, also stayed behind in Dar el Naim with her eldest daughter *Nazira*. They were waiting for her other daughter, *Mabruka*, to bring a donkey from Zamzam so they could leave.²⁴² But when *Mabruka* tried to reach the village, she was blocked by the RSF: “I tried two times, but they beat us on the road and stopped us from going [back] there. They put a knife to my neck.”²⁴³

Meanwhile, *Hawaya* said that over the following days the RSF repeatedly ransacked her house and stole her and her daughters’ possessions, including crops they had stored: “They took our blankets, our mats, even our perfume, everything,” she said. On approximately 10 March, the RSF entered *Hawaya*’s house and then burned it, killing her daughter *Nazira*, who was in the house at the time:

“They started shooting in the air with their guns. Nazira helped me jump over the wall but unfortunately she was not able to jump. They lit our home on fire and my daughter was burned [to death]. Everyone had fled from the village, so I was there alone for two or three days, I’m not sure how long. I was just waiting. I was guarding the dead body of my daughter.”²⁴⁴

Mabruka, travelling on foot, was finally able to reach her mother and buried her sister. *Hawaya*, who had almost nothing to eat or drink for three days, was extremely weak, and vomited frequently on the journey to Zamzam IDP camp.²⁴⁵ When they met RSF fighters while leaving the village, *Hawaya* said:

“I told them, ‘We will never go back. Either you kill us or you let us go to Zamzam.’”²⁴⁶

WAR CRIMES OF ATTACKS AGAINST A CIVILIAN POPULATION AND MURDER

International humanitarian law protects civilians against attack unless and for such time as they directly participate in hostilities.²⁴⁷ The war crime of intentionally directing an attack against a civilian population requires proof that the RSF directed an attack against civilians not taking part in hostilities and intended them to be the object of the attack.²⁴⁸ The war crime of murder requires that the RSF killed one or more persons who were civilians or hors de combat.²⁴⁹

In Abu Zerega town, witnesses told Amnesty International that neither the Joint Forces nor SAF were present during the first attack, and that only a small number of Joint Forces arrived hours after the second attack began. While some civilian defence members were armed and participated in defending the town, they would constitute lawful targets only for the duration of their direct participation in hostilities.²⁵⁰

Civilian defence groups differ from other armed groups in that they are not structured armed movements pursuing broader political or military objectives. Under IHL, a group is only considered a party to the conflict if it constitutes an organized armed group with a clear command structure and sustained participation in hostilities.

242. Interview in person with *Hawaya*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

243. Interview in person with *Mabruka*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

244. Interview in person with *Hawaya*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

245. Interview in person with *Mabruka*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

246. Interview in person with *Hawaya*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

247. Geneva Conventions, Common Article 3; Protocol II, Article 13(3); ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 6.

248. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(e)(i)(2)-(3).

249. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(c)(i)-1.

250. Protocol II, Article 13(3); ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 6; see also ICRC, Interpretive Guidance on the Notion of Direct Participation in Hostilities under International Humanitarian Law, 11 June 2020, <https://www.icrc.org/en/publication/0990-interpretive-guidance-notion-direct-participation-hostilities-under-international>, pp. 41-68.

Notwithstanding the limited presence of the armed actors who resisted or fought the RSF, the available information strongly indicates that the attacks targeted the broader civilian population. As stated above, none of the individuals interviewed for this chapter was directly participating in hostilities at the time of the attack and witnesses consistently described those attacked or killed as civilians fleeing violence. In addition, the scale and manner of the attacks support the conclusion that civilians were not merely incidentally harmed but were likely the object of attack. Accordingly, these acts likely amount to the war crime of directing attacks against a civilian population and, where victims were killed and were civilians or persons hors de combat, the war crime of murder.

In Grawit Basham, Dar el Naim and surrounding villages, where witnesses reported no presence of civilian defence groups or the SAF or Joint Forces, the available information even more strongly indicates that the attacks were directed against civilians. In this case, the conduct very likely amounts to the war crimes of attacking a civilian population and murder.

BURNING IN GRAWIT BASHAM AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES

During the 1 March attack, structures in Grawit Basham, Dar el Naim and surrounding villages were burned. Amnesty International analysed satellite imagery of the area before and after the attacks. Grawit Basham was heavily burned between when the satellite images were taken on 1 and 3 March 2025 with about 60-70% of the village area razed; this included the market and what appears to be possible agricultural harvest.²⁵¹

Amnesty International also used satellite imagery to confirm burning between when the imagery was captured on 28 February and 3 March in two surrounding villages where it documented attacks as well as three nearby villages along a seasonal riverbed (see map above).²⁵²

Satellite imagery confirms that Dar el Naim, which was partially burned during the 1 March attack, was more heavily burned between when the satellite images were taken on 11 and 14 March, razing approximately 15% of the village. *Hawaya*, who was present during the second of wave of burning, indicated the RSF was responsible (see above).²⁵³

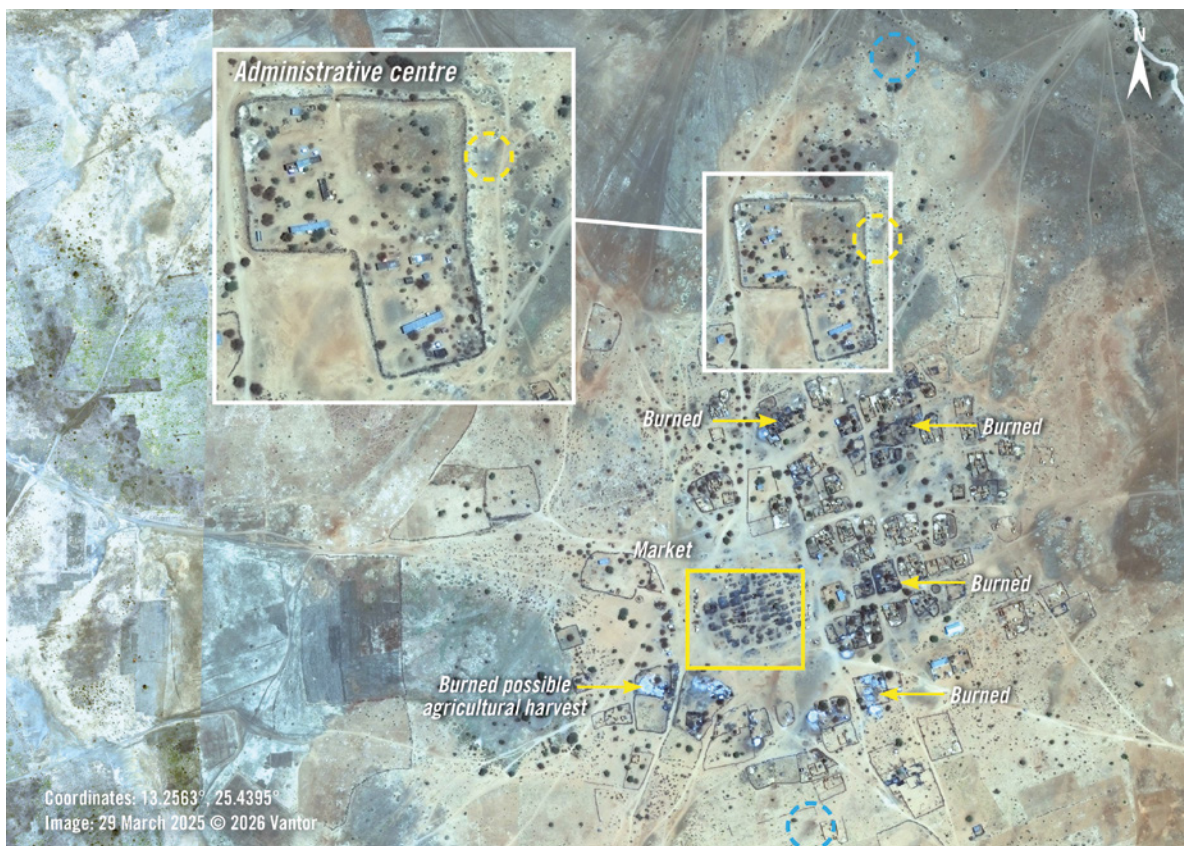
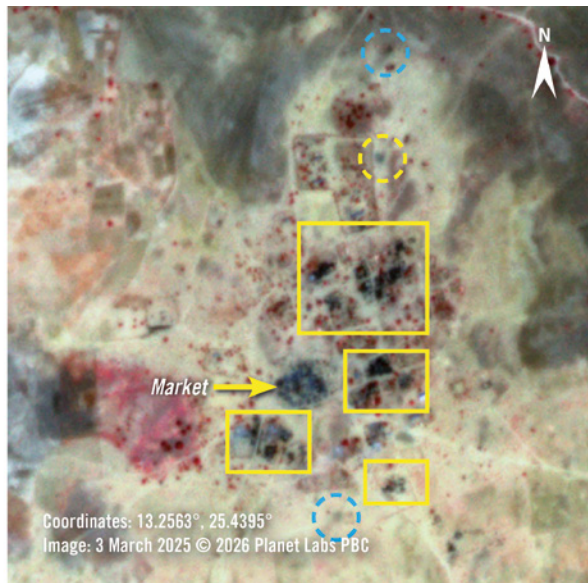
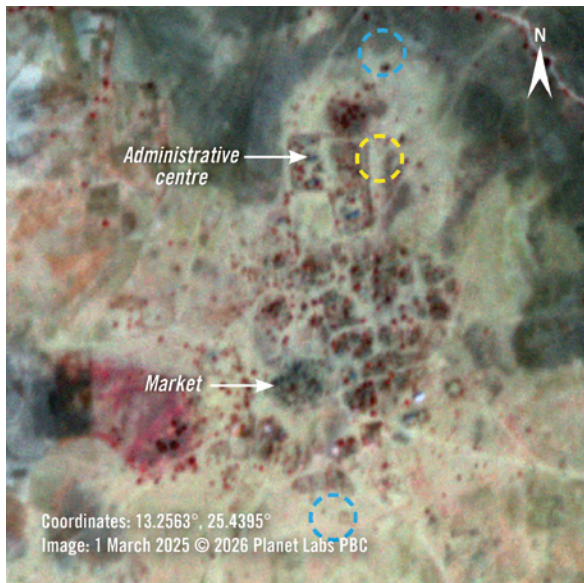
Similarly, other villages where Amnesty International documented RSF attacks at or around the beginning of Ramadan, which started on 1 March, were also burned after the RSF had control of the area and many residents had fled.²⁵⁴

251. Satellite imagery taken on 3 March 2025 also shows three burn marks around the village. High resolution imagery captured weeks later shows that the burn mark east of the administrative centre is a 3m crater surrounded by scorched soil, consistent with an explosive impact from the air, including a possible drone strike. The two other burn marks are probable craters visible north and south of the village. While this may suggest involvement by an actor with aerial capabilities, the available information is insufficient to confirm attribution.

252. The five villages included Hille Gileidad and Hille Torundi, where Amnesty International documented attacks at or around the beginning of Ramadan, as well as Hille Sanana, Hille Timba and Hille Ismael Badawi.

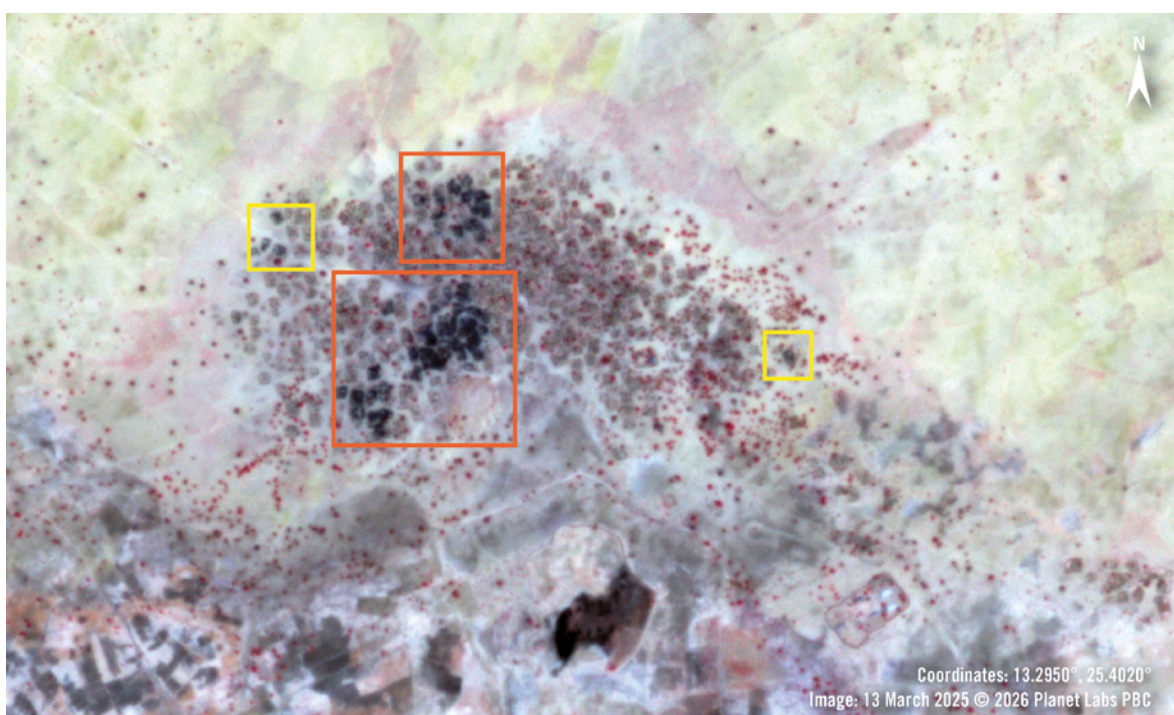
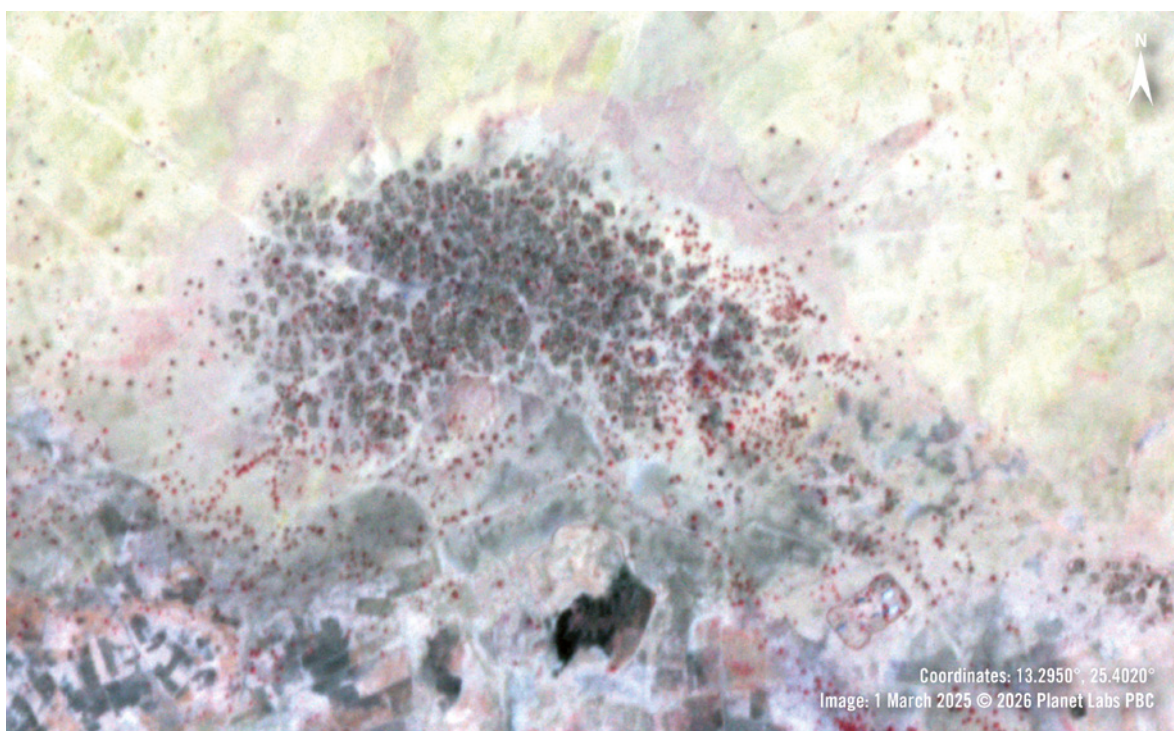
253. Interview in person with *Hawaya*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

254. These include Hille Gileidad (burned again between 15 and 16 March) and Hille Fadul (burned between 10 and 15 April).



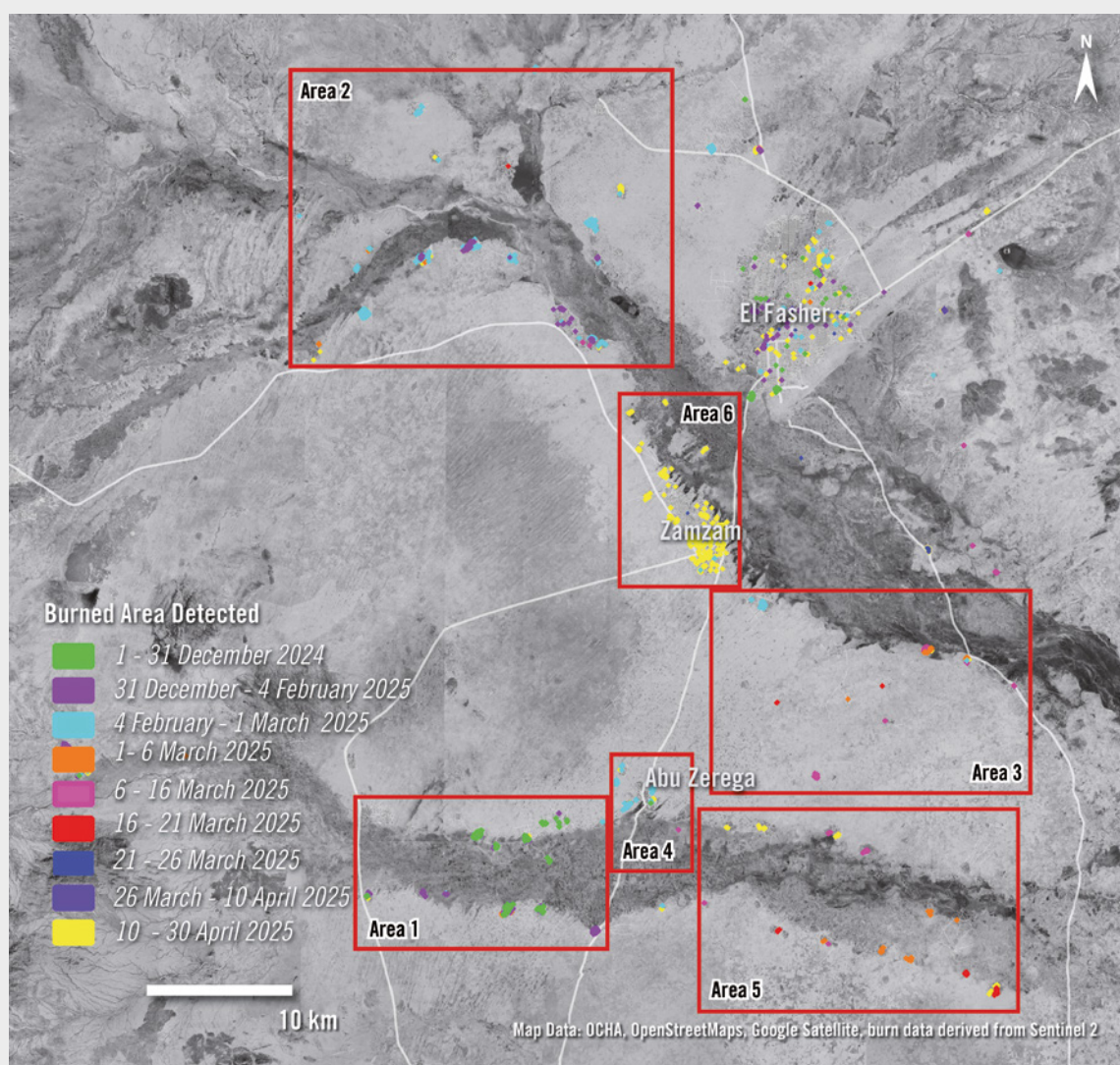
📡📡 False-colour, near infrared satellite imagery from 1 and 3 March 2025 shows Grawit Basham village. With near infrared imagery, healthy vegetation appears in red shades, while recently burned areas stand out as darker black shades. Areas of the village highlighted in yellow rectangles were heavily burned. Three new burn marks are visible – marked with circles.

📡📡 High resolution satellite imagery from 29 March 2025 confirms the market was burned along with possible agricultural harvest. A crater, circled in yellow that appeared as a burn mark in the lower resolution imagery shown above, is visible to the east of the administrative centre. Two other probable craters, circled in blue, are visible north and south of the village.



© ↑ False-colour, near infrared satellite imagery from 1 and 13 March 2025 shows Dar el Naim village. With near infrared imagery, healthy vegetation appears in red shades, while recently burned areas stand out as darker black shades. The areas burned between 1 and 3 March are highlighted in yellow and areas burned between 11 and 13 March are highlighted in orange.

BROADER PATTERNS OF BURNING



↑ The map above illustrates the results of applying a burn index detection algorithm to compare changes in ten dates across five months with Sentinel-2, 10-meter spatial resolution imagery.

The burning documented in Dar el Salam locality between December 2024 and March 2025 appears to form part of a broader pattern of displacement in North Darfur.²⁵⁵ Beyond the 12 villages described above, Amnesty International documented RSF attacks on civilians and the burning of homes in other villages, including Hillet Arab Bashir, Hillet el Noaman, Hille Faki Ali, Hille Sag el Naam, Saluma and Shagra.

255. See, for example, Yale HRL, *The Impact of Systematic Razing of Agricultural Communities Around El Fasher: A Remote Sensing Study* (previously cited), p. 1 (which reported that between 31 March and 12 June 2024, the RSF “intentionally razed at least 41 rural farming communities north and west of El Fasher”).

Amnesty International also used open-source satellite imagery to analyse broader patterns of burning around El Fasher.²⁵⁶ Between 1 December 2024 and 30 April 2025 – the period when Amnesty International documented most of the village attacks in this report and when the RSF attacked Zamzam IDP camp – more than 105 villages around El Fasher showed signs of burning. In some villages, impact craters suggest that some fires may have been caused by artillery or air strikes. In many other cases, however, the imagery shows localized burning, sometimes in discontinuous areas and without visible craters, consistent with fires started on the ground. Some of the burning also coincided with witness testimony indicating RSF attacks or control of the area at the time.²⁵⁷

4.3 RSF ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS FLEEING ZAMZAM IDP CAMP: APRIL 2025

Civilians who were forcibly displaced by RSF attacks in North Darfur often fled to Zamzam IDP camp, only to become trapped in a relentless cycle of attack and displacement as they searched for safety.²⁵⁸ In early 2025, the RSF frequently attacked the camp.²⁵⁹ Nonetheless, for many people, Zamzam represented a relative safe haven, a place where they believed that the presence of members of the Joint Forces, as well as some international humanitarian organizations, offered some protection.²⁶⁰

From 11 to 13 April 2025, the RSF launched a large-scale attack on Zamzam, capturing the territory. The attack displaced at least 400,000 people.²⁶¹ In December 2025, Amnesty International published a report documenting violations of international law in Zamzam during this attack, including the targeted killing of 47 civilians.²⁶² This section documents attacks against civilians, particularly children, after they fled Zamzam.

Amnesty International interviewed dozens of people who fled from Zamzam during or in the days immediately following the April 2025 attack. Most people displaced from Zamzam fled to Tawila, a town 45km to the west controlled by the SLA/AW, an armed opposition group that has largely remained outside the fighting between the SAF and the RSF.²⁶³ Others, particularly men and boys who feared that they would be targeted by the RSF on the road to Tawila, fled 15km north to El Fasher, which was still under SAF control.

256. Sentinel 2, 10m resolution satellite imagery was used to conduct change detections in locations with built characteristics in the areas surrounding El Fasher of North Darfur, Sudan over 10 dates between 1 December 2024 and 30 April 2025. The change detection measured the differences in the normalized burn ratio index (formula calculating the ratio between the near infrared (NIR) and shortwave infrared (SWIR) wavelengths) between the dates to pinpoint areas of burning throughout the surrounding localities. Images were chosen based on cloud cover at an almost monthly cadence except for March, which was analysed approximately weekly. The structure data used was the Global Human Settlement Layer from Copernicus derived from 2018 Sentinel 2 composite imagery. Therefore, in some cases, the villages no longer existed during our analysis time frame. Manual post-processing was conducted using higher resolution satellite imagery, eliminating false positives. As the resolution of the imagery is 10m, cases of false negatives are expected if only small areas or individual structures were burned. The method used for burn detection, together with the satellite imagery resolution used, is more effective in capturing broader spatial patterns of burning across built up areas, while smaller-scale or targeted burning of individual structures would be below the detection threshold. While the resolution of imagery did not allow for detection of small areas of burning or small, individual structures, burned clusters of homes were often detected and areas of greater interest were further verified using higher spatial and temporal resolutions from commercial imagery, when available.

257. This includes the villages in Areas 1, 4, 5, and 6.

258. Interviews October to November 2025.

259. MSF, "Sudan: MSF forced to halt activities as violence engulfs Zamzam camp in North Darfur", 24 February 2025, <https://www.msf.org/sudan-msf-forced-halt-our-activities-violence-engulfs-zamzam-camp-north-darfur>

260. Amnesty International, "A Refuge Destroyed" (previously cited).

261. IOM, "Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Sudan Focused Flash Alert: Al Fasher (Zamzam IDP camp), North Darfur (Update 008)", 28 April 2025, <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/dtm-sudan-focused-flash-alert-al-fasher-zamzam-idp-camp-north-darfur-update-008>

262. Amnesty International, "A Refuge Destroyed" (previously cited).

263. The New Humanitarian, "As RSF attacks escalate, a Darfur town struggles to shelter the displaced", 2 June 2025, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2025/06/02/rsf-attacks-escalate-darfur-town-struggles-shelter-displaced>. See also IOM, "DTM Sudan Displacement and Return Overview, Update 1", 17 December 2025, <https://dtm.iom.int/report-product-series/displacement-report-1>

Those fleeing to either Tawila or El Fasher usually passed through Saluma, a village on the north-western outskirts of the camp. The Joint Forces were present in Saluma until the RSF took over the area on 13 April.²⁶⁴

Witnesses said that the RSF fighters attacked civilians in Saluma, in some cases killing women and children at close range. *Asia*, a Zaghawa woman who had fled to Zamzam from her village of Faki Ali in early 2025 due to repeated RSF attacks, was with her 16-, 14- and eight-year-old sons when Zamzam was attacked on 11 April.²⁶⁵ *Asia* and her children fled to Saluma, but their progress was slow, as she had to support her 14-year-old, who had lost part of his leg in a drone attack in 2024.²⁶⁶ She told Amnesty International the RSF surrounded Saluma and prevented her family from fleeing:

"We were surrounded by the RSF. They separated boys and women to one side. They said that every boy should be killed. I begged them to leave [my sons]."²⁶⁷

Asia saw RSF soldiers summarily execute her two older sons. Her youngest son escaped with his grandmother; *Asia* reunited with them several weeks later. The RSF fighters detained *Asia* together with about 10 other women and brought them to a nearby open field. The fighters then raped *Asia* and the other women repeatedly until releasing them the next day (for more information on sexual violence among those fleeing Zamzam see Chapter 8).²⁶⁸

After the RSF gained control of the area, there was no safe route out of Saluma. Civilians tried to hide but were often discovered and faced horrific abuse. *Mawahib*, a 13-year-old Zaghawa girl who had already been shot by the RSF in Dar el Naim (see above), fled from Zamzam to Saluma and was hiding in a house with her mother, *Safia*, and other relatives. *Safia* told Amnesty International that the RSF entered the house and shot *Mawahib* and six other people, including a three-year-old boy. *Mawahib* was shot in the leg and soon lost consciousness. "She was screaming," *Safia* said. "I had to hold her down."²⁶⁹ All seven victims survived, though *Mawahib* has limited mobility and needs crutches to walk.

Many of those who escaped Saluma survived or witnessed other abuses on the road to Tawila, including killings, beatings, looting and sexual violence. The RSF did not spare children. *Sulafa*, a 28-year-old Zaghawa woman, who was fleeing with her eight-month-old baby, said:

"I met [the RSF] six times [on the road]. They took all we [had]. When we got to Tawila we had nothing. They whipped us. They whipped my kids too. They whipped [the baby] because she was on my back... [The baby] was so tired. She could not [even] cry or open her eyes."²⁷⁰

Older boys, whose affiliation with the military was often treated as a given, were targeted. Families went to incredible lengths to try and protect their boys. *Nima*, a 36-year-old Zaghawa woman, was so afraid that her 16-year-old son would be targeted by the RSF that she dressed him in girls' clothing for the journey.²⁷¹ When they encountered the RSF on the road, *Nima's* son panicked and tried to run away:

"One [of the RSF fighters]... chased after him with a knife. I ran after [the RSF fighter], behind him. We started to fight. [He] stabbed [me] in the leg and in the left arm... If the RSF finds a man or a boy, they shoot him."²⁷²

264. Amnesty International, "A Refuge Destroyed" (previously cited).

265. *Asia's* 16-year-old son was not her biological son; he was a relative who she raised as an adopted son.

266. Interview in person with *Asia*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

267. Interview in person with *Asia*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

268. Interview in person with *Asia*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

269. Interview in person with *Safia* and *Mawahib*, 24 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

270. Interview in person with *Sulafa*, 3 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

271. Interview in person with *Nima*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

272. Interview in person with *Nima*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

Amnesty International researchers observed a scar on *Nima's* arm from where she had been stabbed.²⁷³ At the time of the interview, in October 2025, her son was still missing.

The RSF often questioned girls about their fathers or male relatives. *Ikram*, a 14-year-old Zaghawa girl, said: “[The RSF] asked us, ‘Where is your father?’ and they hit us... They hit [my 16-year-old brother] and they broke his arm. They hit my mother... I was very scared.”²⁷⁴

The RSF often characterized injured men and older boys as fighters, expressing opinions that these injuries were sustained in combat. *Buthaina*, a 37-year-old Zaghawa woman, said that her 17-year-old son, who had been injured by shrapnel during the bombardment of Zamzam, was executed by the RSF on the road to Tawila:

“They asked me, ‘Where are you taking this one? This falangay is [one of those] who killed our men in El Fasher... They were saying, ‘You are all Zaghawa, you are all falangayat, you will just grow up to fight us and to kill us... Then they shot him in the head.’”²⁷⁵

The RSF often stole whatever food or water people had on them, causing some to suffer dehydration on the road.²⁷⁶ Livestock, carts or other means of transport were frequently taken by force, making transport for those with limited mobility or with young children even more difficult.

Children were forced to watch horrific violations against their guardians or other loved ones. *Walid*, a 13-year-old Zaghawa boy, said that he had watched as the RSF repeatedly kicked his pregnant mother in her stomach until she miscarried. Recounting the experience, he said: “One [RSF fighter] was searching [her], one kicked her... She was bleeding a lot... My grandmother was helping her. I was just thinking she was going to die... No one will take care of you if your mother dies.”²⁷⁷

Children have been left with deep psychological scars. *Safia*, whose daughter *Mawahib* was shot in both Dar el Naim and Saluma, said: “Her peace has been disrupted... When someone mentions El Fasher, she [shakes] and [cries and asks], ‘Are [the RSF] coming here? They are coming here, mum, what should we do?’... The things she saw and [the things] that happened, [they have] affected her.”²⁷⁸

Asia said her eight-year-old son, who witnessed the death of his two older brothers in Saluma (see above), had struggled to recover from the incident even though they were in relative safety in Chad:

“The most painful thing for me is that my [youngest] son is not feeling safe at all. When he saw the soldiers in Chad, he said, ‘Mama, are they the same soldiers as RSF? Why did you take me here if they can kill me?’”²⁷⁹

The absence of significant psychological support in IDP camps in Darfur and refugee camps in Chad risks leaving trauma untreated, with long-term consequences for children’s mental health, development, and ability to recover and rebuild their lives.

273. Interview in person with *Nima*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad; photograph, 23 October 2025, on file with Amnesty International.

274. Interview in person with *Ikram*, 24 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

275. Interview in person with *Buthaina*, 1 November 2025, Tiné, Chad.

276. Interview in person with *Mukhtar*, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

277. Interview in person with *Walid*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

278. Interview in person with *Safia* and *Mawahib*, 24 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

279. Interview in person with *Asia*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

5. SIEGE OF EL FASHER

“El Fasher city is... in chaos. If you are walking through the streets you will find a... person who has been killed by a drone, lying on the ground. Nobody is there to [remove the body]... People are starving. There is no clean water... This is a nonsense war.”

Yassin, a 27-year-old Zaghawa man who brought food into El Fasher for his family members, describing life in the city in September 2025²⁸⁰

In May 2024, fighting escalated between the RSF and the SAF and Joint Forces in and around El Fasher. Around this time, the city was home to about 1.5 million people.²⁸¹ What followed was the deliberate tightening of a siege, which continued until the RSF captured the city in October 2025. RSF forces not only repeatedly bombarded the city, but they also made it extraordinarily difficult for civilians to flee, blocked supply routes into the city and prevented traders, humanitarian organizations and others from bringing in essential goods.²⁸²

Amnesty International interviewed 32 people who were present in El Fasher during the siege between August and early October 2025. They described how residents were slowly cut off from food, medicine and other essentials.

280. Interview by voice call with Yassin, 30 September 2025.

281. UN News, “Sudan: Under siege, El Fasher teeters on the brink of famine”, 2 May 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/05/1149281>. See also OHCHR, *Under siege: the situation of human rights in El Fasher, North Darfur since May 2024*, December 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/report-ohchr-sudan-country-office-siege-el-fasher-north-darfur-may-2024>, para. 2 (stating El Fasher has a population of over 1 million people).

282. Sudan Tribune, “UN says RSF blocking vital aid to besieged El Fasher”, 22 September 2025, <https://sudantribune.com/article/305310>; WFP, “One year after famine first confirmed in Sudan, WFP warns that people trapped in El Fasher face starvation”, 5 August 2025, <https://www.wfp.org/news/one-year-after-famine-first-confirmed-sudan-wfp-warns-people-trapped-el-fasher-face-starvation>

On 13 June 2024, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution calling for an immediate halt to the fighting and the RSF siege of El Fasher, and increased humanitarian access.²⁸³ Hostilities nonetheless continued unabated, and El Fasher was steadily severed from the outside world. A fragile route in and out of the city, facilitated by the SLA/AW in neighbouring Tawila between June 2024 and November 2024, was closed by the group following tensions with the RSF.²⁸⁴ According to MSF, the route was being used by individuals bringing resources into the city and looking to join the fight.²⁸⁵ After its closure, many civilians were effectively trapped.

In July 2024, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Famine Review Committee confirmed the presence of famine (IPC Phase 5) conditions in Zamzam IDP camp and highlighted the likelihood that similar conditions existed in the nearby Abu Shouk and Al Salam camps, which were also under siege.²⁸⁶ By September 2025, the Committee determined that famine conditions had extended into El Fasher itself.²⁸⁷

By mid-2025, most of the population was surviving on *ambaz* – a byproduct of peanut oil production normally used as animal feed²⁸⁸ – to form a porridge as their primary source of sustenance. Mothers described giving birth amid severe deprivation, unable to breastfeed their newborns, and watching their children waste away. Family members risked their lives attempting to clandestinely bring food into the city; only a small and irregular trickle of supplies ever made it through.

As the year wore on, the RSF intensified its campaign against El Fasher, launching near-daily attacks in the final months before the city's fall. Children, long out of school, moved from one displacement site to another with their parents and caregivers, unable to find a place of safety. Those injured struggled to reach the city's last functioning hospital, where even basic medical supplies were scarce or non-existent. At night, El Fasher was plunged into near-total darkness. With electricity almost entirely cut off, residents feared that even a single light could draw the attention of drones overhead.

On 26 October 2025, the RSF completed its capture of El Fasher. The precise number of civilians trapped in the city at that time remains unknown. UN estimates from late August 2025 placed the civilian population at approximately 260,000 people, including an estimated 130,000 children, many of whom had already endured months of siege, hunger and relentless attack.²⁸⁹

283. UNSC, Resolution 2736 (2024), adopted on 13 June 2024, UN Doc. S/RES/2736.

284. MSF, *Mass Atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam, Sudan*, 3 July 2025, <https://www.msf.org/besieged-attacked-starved-mass-atrocities-el-fasher>, p. 37.

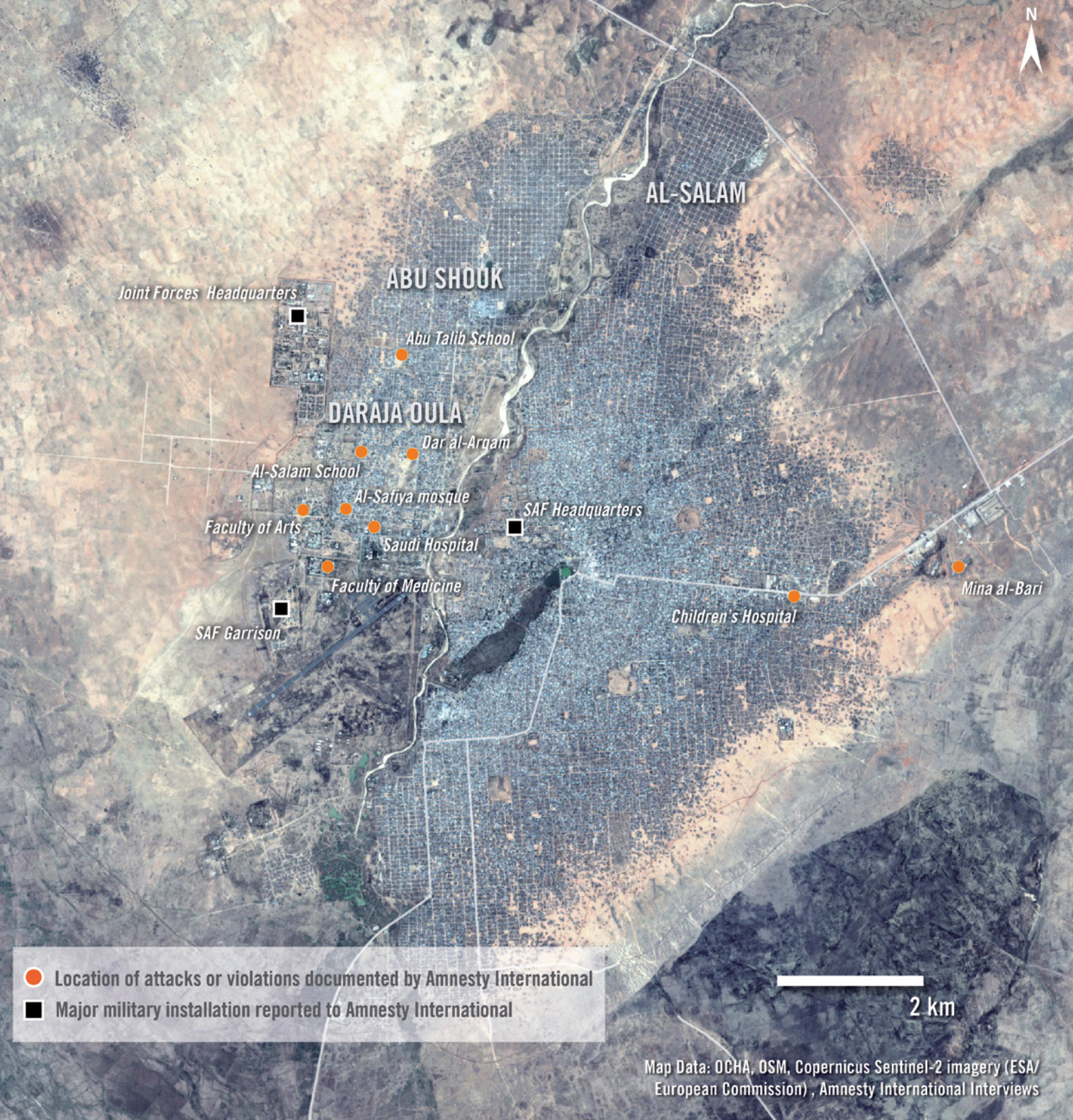
285. MSF, *Mass Atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam, Sudan*, 3 July 2025 (previously cited), p. 37.

286. IPC, *Famine Review Committee: Combined Review of: (i) The Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) IPC Compatible Analysis for IDP Camps in El Fasher, North Darfur and (ii) the IPC Sudan Technical Working Group Analysis of Zamzam Camp (North Darfur) Sudan, Conclusions and Recommendations*, July 2024, 1 August 2024, https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Famine_Review_Committee_Report_Sudan_July2024.pdf. IPC Phase 5 – the highest level on the IPC scale – is declared when at least 20% of households face an extreme lack of food, at least 30% of children suffer from acute malnutrition, and at least two people per 10,000 die each day as a result of the combined effects of malnutrition and disease. IPC, “What is Famine”, <https://www.ipcinfo.org/famine-facts/> (accessed 25 January 2025).

287. IPC, *Famine Review Committee: Sudan, October 2025, Conclusions and Recommendations*, 3 November 2025, https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Famine_Review_Committee_Report_Sudan_Oct_2025.pdf

288. Radio Dabanga, “Surviving on ambaz in North Darfur – when animal fodder becomes food for people,” 4 August 2025, <https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/surviving-on-ambaz-in-north-darfur-when-animal-fodder-becomes-food-for-people>

289. United Nations News, “Sudan: ‘Devastating tragedy’ for children in El Fasher after 500 days of siege”, 27 August 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165731>. In April 2025, after the three-day attack on Zamzam IDP camp described in the preceding chapter, thousands of people fled to El Fasher seeking safety from escalating violence. A representative from Zamzam IDP camp told Amnesty International that by June, approximately 125,000 families from Zamzam IDP camp had arrived in the town, and that by August, about 100,000 families remained. Interview by voice call with humanitarian representative, 18 August 2025. A humanitarian worker told Amnesty International that there were approximately 127 IDP sites across El Fasher, sheltering an estimated 200,000 people. By October 2025, that number had reportedly declined to between 90 and 100 sites, reflecting ongoing displacement, deaths and departures under extreme conditions. Interview by voice call with humanitarian representative, 13 October 2025.



Map of El Fasher showing key locations.

SIEGE WARFARE AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

Sieges are not prohibited as a method of warfare, if they are conducted in compliance with international humanitarian law. The most critical constraint on any siege is the absolute prohibition of starving the civilian population to achieve military objectives.²⁹⁰ The presence of combatants does not change the civilian character of a population that is predominantly composed of civilians.²⁹¹

Attacking objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population²⁹² and denying access to humanitarian aid intended for civilians in need, including deliberately impeding humanitarian aid,²⁹³ constitute violations of the prohibition of starvation. While parties may require consent for relief operations, such consent may not be withheld arbitrarily.²⁹⁴ Restrictions on the freedom of movement of humanitarian relief personnel may also constitute violations of the prohibition of starvation.²⁹⁵

In addition, international humanitarian law requires parties to an armed conflict to allow civilians to leave besieged areas, particularly where civilians lack objects essential for survival or face serious risks from ongoing hostilities.²⁹⁶ Where civilians cannot receive humanitarian aid and are denied objects essential to their survival, preventing them from leaving a besieged area effectively becomes a means of enforcing starvation.

Although the Rome Statute did not originally enumerate starvation of civilians as a war crime in the context of non-international armed conflicts (listing it only under Article 8(2)(b)(xxv) for international armed conflicts), starvation of civilians as a method of warfare is recognized as a war crime under customary international law regardless of the conflict classification.²⁹⁷ This includes situations in which civilians are deprived of essential supplies as part of a siege, even where starvation is not the sole objective of military operations. Under the Rome Statute, the war crime of starvation requires proof that the perpetrator acted with intent and knowledge.²⁹⁸ Pursuant to Article 30(2), intent is established where the perpetrator means to cause a particular consequence or is aware that it will occur in the ordinary course of events.²⁹⁹

The RSF committed multiple acts amounting to the war crime of starvation, by depriving civilians of objects indispensable to their survival and by denying access to humanitarian assistance. Following the closure of the “corridor”, many civilians, including children, remained trapped in the city, either because they feared leaving or because they lacked the physical or economic means to do so, or both. Over the course of the siege, the RSF tightened its control over the town. It deprived civilians of access to essential food supplies and refused to agree to ceasefires intended to facilitate humanitarian assistance, asserting that such pauses would be used to deliver food and ammunition to the SAF. As a result, civilians were left with little to eat other than *ambaz*. Amnesty International documented multiple attempts by relatives of people trapped under siege, as well as others, to bring food into the town; those involved in such efforts were targeted and, in some cases, narrowly escaped being killed. Famine conditions were declared in nearby Zamzam IDP camp in July 2024 and in El Fasher

290. Protocol II, Article 14; ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 53.

291. International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), *Prosecutor v. Radovan Karadžić*, Case IT-95-5/18-T, Trial Chamber judgment, 24 March 2016, para. 474.

292. Protocol II, Article 14; ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 54.

293. Protocol II, Article 18; ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 55.

294. Protocol II, Article 18(2); ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 55.

295. Protocol II Article 18(2); ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 56.

296. Protocol II, Articles 13(1) and 14; ICRC, Customary IHL, Rules 53 and 55.

297. Protocol II, Article 14; ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 53 and accompanying commentary; UNSC, Resolution 2417 (2018), adopted 24 May 2018, UN Doc. S/RES/2417 (2018); see also Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(b)(xxv), reflecting customary international law. In 2019, the Assembly of States Parties adopted an amendment to the Rome Statute criminalizing starvation in non-international armed conflicts, reflecting the existing customary prohibition. Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute, Resolution ICC-ASP/18/Res.5, 6 December 2019, amending Article 8 of the Rome Statute.

298. Rome Statute, Article 30.

299. Rome Statute, Article 30 (2)(b).

in September 2025. The RSF's continued enforcement of the siege after famine conditions had been declared in Zamzam IDP camp shows that the RSF knew starvation would occur in the ordinary course of its operations, satisfying the intent and knowledge standard under Article 30(2) of the Rome Statute.

By depriving civilians of food over a prolonged period, thereby inflicting severe physical pain and mental suffering on civilians trapped in the city, the RSF also committed the war crime of cruel treatment.³⁰⁰ As described in Chapter 11, the deliberate imposition of life-threatening conditions during the siege of El Fasher forms part of a broader course of conduct amounting to the crime against humanity of extermination.³⁰¹

5.1 NO WAY OUT

As the RSF escalated its campaign to seize control of El Fasher in May 2024, a growing number of civilians, mostly women and children, left the city.³⁰² Between June and November 2024, the only viable way out, short of dangerous escape attempts, was a “corridor” from El Fasher to Tawila. The route was facilitated by the SLA/ AW, and it allowed civilians to leave on Fridays, and occasionally twice per week.³⁰³ The SLA/AW ultimately closed the route, following tensions with the RSF.³⁰⁴ The route was reportedly being used to bring aid, goods and fighters into El Fasher.³⁰⁵

For many civilians, fleeing El Fasher after the “corridor” was closed was neither safe nor feasible. Many who stayed were constrained by poverty, insecurity, injury, disability and fear – leaving the most vulnerable civilians trapped in a city under escalating threat. *Rabab*, a 22-year-old Zaghawa woman who remained in the city until its fall, summarized the dilemma faced by many: “The dangers on the road are more than [the] dangers in El Fasher.”³⁰⁶ The road between El Fasher and Tawila became known as *tariq al-mawt* – the road of death.³⁰⁷

As bombardments intensified, exiting the city became increasingly perilous. *Dawood*, an 18-year-old Zaghawa man who fled El Fasher around 20 October 2025, told Amnesty International, “I tried to leave El Fasher many times and had to turn back... All [the] times I tried to leave there was an attack.”³⁰⁸

Civilians who attempted to flee the city were sometimes forced to turn back because of violations committed by the RSF on the road. *Mohamedain*, a 59-year-old Zaghawa man, tried to leave El Fasher in June 2025 with a group of about 70 people. He said, “I have made... one attempt at least to leave the city... They did not capture me [and the group I was with]... we ran away because of the shooting... I am one of the people that returned... to the city.”³⁰⁹

300. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(c)(i)(3); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(c)(i)(3); ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 90.

301. Rome Statute, Article 7(1)(b).

302. MSF, *Mass Atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam, Sudan* (previously cited), p. 34.

303. MSF, *Mass Atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam, Sudan* (previously cited), p. 37.

304. MSF, *Mass Atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam, Sudan* (previously cited), p. 37; see also WFP “One year after famine first confirmed in Sudan, WFP warns that people trapped in El Fasher face starvation” (previously cited).

305. MSF, *Mass Atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam, Sudan* (previously cited), p. 37.

306. Interview by voice call with *Rabab*, 8 January 2026.

307. Jérôme Tubiana, “Siege of El Fasher”, 23 October 2025, London Review of Books, Volume 47, Number 19, <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v47/n19/jerome-tubiana/diary>

308. Interview in person with *Dawood*, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

309. Interview by voice call with *Mohamedain*, 12 January 2026.

This report documents the physical risks faced by those who attempted to flee, including killings and rape of women and girls (see section 7.2). According to one essay, the RSF has claimed that such abuses were committed by *shafshafa* (bandits) who were unaffiliated with the RSF.³¹⁰ However, as documented throughout this report, RSF forces and their affiliates consistently perpetrated violence against fleeing civilians.

Beyond the major incidents documented in this report, survivors also described countless smaller, deliberate cruelties while fleeing El Fasher, such as an RSF fighter driving over a woman's foot or another who poured out civilians' drinking water and told them to drink from the mud.³¹¹

Fleeing through RSF-controlled area was also very costly. People had to pay not only for transportation, but also RSF fighters at checkpoints. Many families could not afford these costs. *Hiba*, a 30-year-old Berti woman and mother of three girls aged six to 10, who was living in an IDP shelter in El Fasher, told Amnesty International:

"I [do not] plan to leave El Fasher... Financially I am not able to leave... To reach Tawila or Korma it costs over 1 million [Sudanese pounds] (USD 300)... This is money to the RSF."³¹²

Only vehicles controlled or sanctioned by the RSF were permitted to travel along routes out of El Fasher. In some cases, the drivers were themselves members of the RSF, profiting from the exploitation of people forced to rely on their services and exposing civilians to the risk of being targeted by opposing forces. *Malka*, a 31-year-old Zaghawa woman displaced during the takeover of El Fasher, explained that she and three of her children paid a man wearing an RSF uniform SDG 500,000 (USD 147) to transport them from Turra to Tina.³¹³ *Widad*, a young Zaghawa woman, said her family paid SDG 80,000 (USD 24) each to travel from Garni to Kutum in a white Toyota Hilux driven by an RSF fighter holding the rank of *agid* (colonel), which helped to deter harassment by other RSF members along the road.³¹⁴

Some civilians remained in El Fasher because they were too sick or injured or had limited mobility. *Rasha*, a 23-year-old woman and mother of two, one of whom was killed during a strike on an IDP shelter in El Fasher in July 2025, described why she was unable to flee with her 12-year-old son after an attack on their IDP shelter:

"[My son] is paralysed, and we are not able to get him out to somewhere where he can get care. I tried to get out of the town to go to Tawila or to Mellit but I couldn't. I was not able to pay a cart to take me there. I can't walk the long distance with a child in such a situation. So, I stayed here."³¹⁵

310. Jérôme Tubiana, "Siege of El Fasher" (previously cited).

311. Interview in person with *Mabruka*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad; interview in person with *Rihaab*, 24 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

312. Interview by voice call with *Hiba*, 3 October 2025.

313. Interview by voice call with *Malka*, 9 December 2025.

314. Interview in person with *Widad*, 3 November 2025, Chad.

315. Interview by voice call with *Rasha*, 10 September 2025.



©↑ Weighing a child at a nutrition centre in Garni, Sudan, which was opened after El Fasher's capture by the RSF in October 2025. January 2026. © Private

5.2 STARVATION IN AND AROUND EL FASHER

The population in and around El Fasher faced acute food insecurity before the onset of the siege. Many residents of Abu Shouk, Al Salam and Zamzam IDP camps relied on small-scale farming and food assistance.³¹⁶

When the siege began, a community leader from Abu Shouk camp – a 12km² IDP camp established for people displaced during the 2003-2004 conflict in Darfur and located on the north-west side of El Fasher – told Amnesty International that residents' small farms outside the camp became inaccessible.³¹⁷ The camp

316. Interview by voice call with a humanitarian aid worker, 17 September 2025.

317. Interview by voice call with *Abdulazim*, 18 August 2025.

hosted about 105,000 IDPs from African tribes before the escalation.³¹⁸ Civilians trapped inside El Fasher similarly reported that there was limited available land within the town where they could grow food, leaving them entirely dependent on increasingly scarce supplies.³¹⁹

As the conflict progressed, the UN, humanitarian organizations and media outlets reported that the RSF repeatedly targeted markets, shops and other food sources.³²⁰ MSF found that attacks on markets led to reduced operating hours, further restricting civilians' access to food.³²¹ The RSF also razed many villages outside of El Fasher, significantly reducing agricultural activity that supports El Fasher's food security ecosystem.³²²

Over the course of the conflict, access to water was also restricted after numerous water sources and related infrastructure were attacked – with several incidents attributed to the RSF.³²³ According to the UN, on 27 May 2024, the RSF briefly took control of the Golo water reservoir, El Fasher's primary source of drinking water, and shut down the pumps, disrupting water supplies to the city.³²⁴ Even where water sources remained, access was often dangerous. Some residents reported purchasing water or receiving limited amounts through community kitchens.³²⁵ Others described improvised methods to collect rainwater. *Ibrahim*, a Zaghawa leader of an IDP camp, explained, "[We] dig a small hole and put a plastic sheet in the ground to collect water."³²⁶

By the time the RSF took over El Fasher in October 2025, most residents had not eaten a proper meal for months, surviving largely on animal feed. Children bore the brunt of this manufactured famine, as they were especially vulnerable to disease and malnutrition, with devastating and potentially irreversible effects on their growing bodies.

DENIAL/IMPEDING OF FOOD AND HUMANITARIAN AID

As concerns about worsening food insecurity grew, humanitarian organizations sought to strategically place or store food and other essential supplies across multiple locations, including within Zamzam IDP camp and El Fasher city, in anticipation of famine conditions.³²⁷

Delivering aid to Darfur depended largely on routes from Chad. From late 2024, the most direct route for large-scale humanitarian assistance into Darfur ran through the Adré crossing in Chad into RSF-controlled West Darfur, while further north the Tiné Chad crossing, under the control of the Joint Forces and SAF,

318. OHCHR, *Under siege: the situation of human rights in El Fasher, North Darfur since May 2024* (previously cited), para. 27; IPC, *Famine Review Committee: Combined Review of: (i) The Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) IPC Compatible Analysis for IDP Camps in El Fasher, North Darfur and (ii) the IPC Sudan Technical Working Group Analysis of Zamzam Camp (North Darfur) Sudan, Conclusions and Recommendations* (previously cited) p. 43.

319. Interview by voice call with *Samah*, 27 August 2025; interview by voice call with *Ibrahim*, 3 September 2025; interview by voice call with *Hashim*, 9 September 2025; interview by voice call with *Rashida*, 26 September 2025.

320. UN FFM, *Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan*, 5 September 2025, UN Doc. A/HRC/60/22, para. 74; MSF, *Mass Atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam* (previously cited), p. 29; Sudan Tribune, "WFP facility in Sudan's Darfur shelled, U.N. and U.S. condemn RSF", 31 May 2025, <https://sudantribune.com/article/301471>; UN Security Council, "Letter dated 14 April 2025 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council", 17 April 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2025/239>, para. 32.

321. MSF, *Mass Atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam, Sudan* (previously cited), p. 30.

322. Yale HRL, *The Impact of Systematic Razing of Agricultural Communities Around El Fasher: A Remote Sensing Study* (previously cited), pp. 1, 17.

323. OHCHR, *Under siege: the situation of human rights in El Fasher, North Darfur since May 2024* (previously cited), para. 50; UN FFM, *Sudan: A War of Atrocities* (previously cited), para. 77; MSF, *Mass Atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam, Sudan* (previously cited), pp. 32-33.

324. OHCHR, *Under siege: the situation of human rights in El Fasher, North Darfur since May 2024* (previously cited), para. 50; UN FFM, *Sudan: a war of atrocities* (previously cited), para. 77.

325. Interview by voice call with *Suad*, 8 September 2025; interview by voice call with *Esmat*, 1 October 2025; interview by voice call with *Marwan*, 6 October 2025.

326. Interview by voice call with *Ibrahim*, 3 September 2025.

327. Interview by voice call with humanitarian aid worker, 17 September 2025.

provided an alternative option.³²⁸ Despite not controlling the border at the time, the government of Sudan closed the Adré crossing for approximately six months, citing concerns about weapons smuggling, significantly delaying aid shipments from UN organizations, which continued to recognize the government's authority.³²⁹ Some humanitarian NGOs, however, continued to use this route to deliver aid to Darfur. The Adré crossing was eventually reopened in August 2024 following mounting international pressure.³³⁰

Despite improvements in access to other parts of Darfur during 2025, including to areas at risk of famine, El Fasher itself remained largely inaccessible to humanitarian actors. The UN attempted to send a convoy into the city on 3 June 2025, which came under attack, with both parties to the conflict accusing the other of responsibility.³³¹ Humanitarian agencies deemed food delivery by airdrop insufficient to address famine conditions and likely to pose significant security risks.³³²

Throughout this period, the UN continued to negotiate access to the besieged city. In September 2025, a top humanitarian official in Sudan, Denise Brown, stated that while the SAF had agreed to a ceasefire to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid into El Fasher, the RSF had not.³³³ According to media reporting, RSF advisers rejected proposals for a ceasefire for aid delivery because they believed it would be used to deliver food and ammunition to the SAF and that they wanted to set up "safe routes" for civilians to leave.³³⁴ As a result, no sustained humanitarian access was secured. It was not until January 2026, after the RSF was in control of the city and most of the civilian population had fled, that humanitarian organizations were permitted to bring food and supplies into the city.³³⁵

In the absence of regular humanitarian access, organizations increasingly stockpiled food in areas surrounding El Fasher. The only food entering the city came through small-scale clandestine trade. A community activist helping to bring supplies into El Fasher explained:

"At the beginning RSF made checkpoints. They didn't allow organizations with supplies to enter El Fasher, especially on the side [of the city] where there were Joint Forces and the army. They allowed traders and smugglers. But they had to pay... [a lot of] money just to get in... [the supplies] got expensive. Then... [the RSF] started to confiscate cars with the supplies, until you couldn't smuggle any food into El Fasher."³³⁶

Given the restrictions on food and humanitarian access to the city, a humanitarian agency began providing cash transfers to approximately 250,000 people in El Fasher city and in Zamzam, Abu Shouk and Dar el

328. New York Times, "Closed for Months, a Gateway for Aid to Famine-Stricken Sudan Swings Open", 15 August 2024, <http://nytimes.com/2024/08/15/world/africa/sudan-chad-adre-border-crossing-reopens.html>; WFP, "First WFP trucks cross Sudan's reopened Adre border with food for communities at risk of famine", 21 August 2024, <https://www.wfp.org/news/first-wfp-trucks-cross-sudans-reopened-adre-border-food-communities-risk-famine>

329. New York Times, "Closed for Months, a Gateway for Aid to Famine-Stricken Sudan Swings Open" (previously cited); Sudan Tribune, "Sudan reiterates rejection to open Adré crossing for international aid", 7 August 2024, <https://sudantribune.com/article/289210>

330. New York Times, "Closed for Months, a Gateway for Aid to Famine-Stricken Sudan Swings Open" (previously cited); Radio Dabanga, "Sudan govt to open borders, airports to humanitarian aid", 6 March 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-govt-open-borders-airports-humanitarian-aid>

331. WFP and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), "Joint Statement on Sudan convoy attack", 3 June 2025, <https://www.wfp.org/news/joint-statement-sudan-convoy-attack>; BBC, "Five killed in attack on UN aid convoy in Sudan", 3 June 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0j76z5jd1lo>

332. Interview by voice call with humanitarian aid worker, 17 September 2025.

333. Sudan Tribune, "UN says RSF blocking vital aid to besieged El Fasher", 22 September 2025, <https://sudantribune.com/article/305310>; see also WFP, "One year after famine first confirmed in Sudan, WFP warns that people trapped in El Fasher face starvation", 5 August 2025, <https://www.wfp.org/news/one-year-after-famine-first-confirmed-sudan-wfp-warns-people-trapped-el-fasher-face-starvation>

334. BBC, "Besieged Sudan city residents face starvation, UN warns," 5 August 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c776njyl74po>

335. U.S. Senior Advisor for Arab and African Affairs, X post: "Successfully delivery of life-saving assistance", 14 January 2026, https://x.com/US_SrAdvisorAF?lang=en; Sudan Tribune, "US senior advisor welcomes first aid delivery to besieged El Fasher", 14 January 2026, <https://sudantribune.com/article/309377>

336. Interview by in person with a community activist, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

Salam IDP camps.³³⁷ These are funds sent to mobile wallets or bank accounts as a means of delivering aid without the logistical challenges of transporting physical currency into a conflict zone. However, widespread shortages of food and other supplies and sharply rising prices made it difficult for recipients to meet basic needs using cash transfers alone. In addition, a 2024 report indicated that 70% of banks in conflict-affected areas of Sudan were closed and that cash liquidity was severely limited.³³⁸ With physical cash in short supply, recipients who needed to convert digital funds to physical currency were forced to pay substantial fees to informal financial service providers.³³⁹ Several people interviewed by Amnesty International reported that goods purchased using digital cash were more expensive (sometimes up to twice the cost of cash purchases)³⁴⁰ as vendors passed on the costs they incurred in converting digital revenue into usable cash, further reducing the value of the assistance.

With relatives hungry and trapped in El Fasher, family members both within and outside the city began risking their lives to bring in food. Amnesty International interviewed four people who survived these attempts.

Abdulrahim, a 38-year-old Zaghawa man living in Tawila after relocating his family to Chad, decided to carry food into the city after receiving repeated calls from relatives describing worsening hunger.³⁴¹ He joined a large group, including children, who walked for four days at night to avoid RSF patrols carrying 15-20kg of food on his back. He recounted one incident where RSF vehicles fired randomly near a village, forcing the group to flee into a brook where they found the bodies of 16 men, women and children, killed shortly before their arrival.

Others attempting to bring food faced similar risks. *Yassin*, a 27-year-old Zaghawa man, described making several attempts to bring supplies from his village about 170km away, travelling only at night after being shot at during one trip and detained for ransom during another.³⁴²

Traders were also targeted. *Samahir*, a 36-year-old Zaghawa woman, described RSF fighters intercepting her vehicle transporting her wheat into the city, shooting the driver dead, stealing her and the drivers' money, and burning the vehicle with the wheat inside.³⁴³ In another case, *Taiba*, a 24-year-old Zaghawa woman with a six-year-old son, who was displaced from Zamzam to Tawila in April 2025, described turning to small-scale trade to support her family after losing her money and cart.³⁴⁴ She said that during her last attempt to bring goods into El Fasher in May 2025, RSF fighters opened fire on a group of 15 people she was travelling with, and she saw them kill five people and detain three others. One video found online also shows RSF members punishing people for bringing food into the city.³⁴⁵

337. WFP, "One year after famine first confirmed in Sudan, WFP warns that people trapped in El Fasher face starvation" (previously cited).

338. Radio Dabanga, "Cash crisis exacerbates famine in Darfur and Kordofan", 22 September 2024, <https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/cash-crisis-exacerbates-famine-in-darfur-and-kordofan>

339. Interview by voice call with *Abdulbagi*, 6 October 2025; interview by voice call with *Marwan*, 6 October 2025; interview by voice call with *Shaza*, 8 October 2025.

340. Interview by voice call with *Abdulbagi*, 6 October 2025; interview by voice call with *Marwan*, 6 October 2025; interview by voice call with *Shaza*, 8 October 2025.

341. Interview by voice call with *Abdulrahim*, 5 September 2025.

342. Interview by voice call with *Yassin*, 30 September 2025.

343. Interview by voice call with *Samahir*, 1 December 2025.

344. Interview by voice call with *Taiba*, 2 December 2025.

345. Yasser, X post: "مقطع فيديو يُظهر تعذيب وإهانة مليشيا الدعم السريع لمدنيين حاولوا إدخال إمدادات غذائية إلى مدينة الفاشر المحاصرة" [Video clip showing the torture and humiliation by the Rapid Support Forces militia of civilians who tried to bring food supplies into the besieged town of Al-Fashir], 10 August 2025, <https://x.com/yasseralfadol/status/1954538951827415210> (translation from the original Arabic into English by Amnesty International). The video shows one RSF member beating two men on the ground with a whip for bringing food into El Fasher.

FROM SHORTAGE TO STARVATION

As noted above, prices rose precipitously during the siege. *Hinda*, a 35-year-old woman and mother of three children aged between three and nine, told Amnesty International: “You may find some other food [other than *ambaz*] in the city. It’s rare, very rare, but if you find it, it’s very expensive.”³⁴⁶

A community leader and a volunteer in Abu Shouk IDP camp told Amnesty International that, by August and September 2025, the price of many staple foods had, in some cases, risen by more than a hundredfold.³⁴⁷ For example, during the siege, the price of rice rose from SDG 2,000-3,000 (about USD 8.50-12) per kilogram to SDG 220,000-240,000 (approximately USD 64-70).³⁴⁸

As food became increasingly scarce, many residents began relying on *takaya* (community kitchens). These kitchens initially emerged as small, grassroots initiatives, where residents pooled what little food they had to prepare shared meals. Over time, the *takaya* expanded across the city: some were operated by formally registered organizations, while others were run by volunteers. WhatsApp groups, often comprising hundreds of members, were used to coordinate food supplies and donations to ensure that whatever limited resources were available could be directed to those most in need.³⁴⁹ They relied on a combination of international donations, contributions from the Sudanese diaspora, limited government support, and personal funds to purchase supplies and provide meals.³⁵⁰ The global pause on US foreign development assistance on 20 January 2025, followed by the closure of USAID in July 2025, combined with rising food prices in Darfur, triggered the closure of many *takaya*.³⁵¹

By mid-2025, with almost no conventional food left in the city or surrounding areas, many residents turned to *ambaz*. The precise timing of the shift to *ambaz* remains unclear, though it appears from interviews that from around May 2025 it became a main source of food for many.³⁵²

Children and adults with disabilities often struggled to reach the *takaya* and were forced to forego food as a result. For those who reached community kitchens, food was often inconsistently available and limited in quantity. Many interviewees reported receiving only one meal per day, often shared among several people.

A health professional from Saudi Maternity Hospital (Saudi Hospital) warned that *ambaz* was nutritionally inadequate and harmful. “*Ambaz* has nothing in there to cover the needs of the body because everything has been taken out, because it is [the byproduct] after oil manufacturing... it’s just to fill your stomach,” she said.³⁵³

Ten interviewees reported that consuming *ambaz* caused illness, particularly among children, including diarrhoea, nausea and vomiting. *Samah*, a 30-year-old woman and mother of six children, one of whom was killed in shelling in El Fasher, described the impossible choices facing parents:

346. Interview by voice call with *Hinda*, 9 September 2025.

347. Interview by voice call with local community leader in Abu Shouk IDP camp, 18 August 2025; interview by voice call with *Hashim*, 9 September 2025.

348. Interview by voice call with local community leader in Abu Shouk IDP camp, 18 August 2025; interview by voice call with *Hashim*, 9 September 2025.

349. Interview by in person with a community activist, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

350. Interview by voice call with humanitarian representative, 29 September 2025; interview by voice call with humanitarian representative, 13 October 2025.

351. Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS) Analysis Hub, “Sudan Implications of the US AID funding cuts”, 13 March 2025, https://www.acaps.org/fileadmin/Data_Product/Main_media/20250313_ACAPS_Implications_of_the_USAID_freeze_in_Sudan_.pdf; ABC News, “Sudan has become a ‘case study’ for the impact of USAID cuts, aid worker says”, 13 July 2025, <https://abcnews.com/Politics/humanitarian-system-struggles-fill-us-void-sudan-worlds/story?id=123483196>; Jérôme Tubiana, “Siege of El Fasher” (previously cited).

352. Interview by voice call with *Rashida*, 26 September 2025; interview in person with *Dawood*, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

353. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, 8 October 2025.

“The children are crying, they are looking for food and if you give this food, it kills them. If you don’t give them [food] they die, also from hunger.”³⁵⁴

When the rainy season began in mid-2025, some locally occurring plants could have provided limited supplemental food.³⁵⁵ However, one woman interviewed by Amnesty International said these plants often grew in areas that were too dangerous to access, where civilians risked being shot, abducted or killed.³⁵⁶

As the city edged closer to collapse, even *ambaz* became scarce. In interviews conducted in August, people trapped in El Fasher reported that the price of *ambaz* had begun to rise sharply. Initially distributed for free, *ambaz* later sold for SDG 8,000-16,000 (approximately USD 2-5) per plate.³⁵⁷ In the final days before the takeover of El Fasher, people interviewed by Amnesty International said that even the SAF and members of the Joint Forces were consuming *ambaz*, further driving up prices.³⁵⁸ *Batool*, a 35-year-old woman and mother of five children said that approximately five days before El Fasher fell, a single plate of *ambaz* could cost as much as SDG 100,000 (approximately USD 29).³⁵⁹ Eventually, people said, they ate animal hides.³⁶⁰ As of September 2025, the IPC declared that El Fasher city was experiencing famine conditions.³⁶¹

MALNUTRITION AND STARVATION

During the siege, children’s health deteriorated at an alarming speed. Mothers recounted harrowing births under these conditions, followed by the anguish of being unable to breastfeed their infants and watching their children waste away. Many parents described rapid weight loss, distended stomachs, extreme lethargy and other signs of severe hunger among their children.

The starvation imposed on El Fasher had a primary and disproportionate impact on children. Available data underscores the scale of the malnutrition crisis in El Fasher. An interagency assessment conducted at IDP gathering sites in El Fasher between 22 March and 22 April 2025 found that 11% of children were suffering from severe acute malnutrition and 27% from moderate acute malnutrition.³⁶² At these rates, malnutrition expert Dr Mark Manary noted, the risk of death could be as high as one in two children.³⁶³

Data collected by MSF teams treating people who fled El Fasher following its fall revealed even more alarming trends. Of the children aged under five who reached Tawila between 27 October 2025, when El Fasher was captured, and a few days later on 3 November, more than 70% of those screened were acutely malnourished,

354. Interview by voice call with *Samah*, 27 August 2025.

355. See also, Darfur 24, X post: “حصار الفاشر يدفع السكان لزراعة منازلهم طلباً للغذاء” (“El Fasher Siege Pushes Residents to Farm Their Homes in Search of Food”), @SudanTrends, 3 September 2025, <https://x.com/SudanTrends/status/1963285578184888695>

356. Interview by voice call with *Suad*, 8 September 2025.

357. Interview by voice call with *Hashim*, 9 September 2025; interview by voice call with *Sabah*, 12 September 2025; interview by voice call with *Rashida*, 26 September 2025; interview by voice call with *Azza*, 4 September 2025; interview by voice call with *Hashim*, 9 September 2025.

358. Interview by voice call with Colonel Ahmed Hussain Mustafa, former spokesperson for the Joint Forces, 15 October 2025; interview by voice call with *Batool*, 1 December 2025.

359. Interview by voice call with *Batool*, 1 December 2025.

360. Interview by voice call with *Rabab*, 8 January 2025; video on file with Amnesty International.

361. IPC, “SUDAN: IPC Acute Food Insecurity, September 2025 – May 2026”, https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Sudan_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Sep2025_May2026_Special_Snapshot.pdf

362. MSF, *Mass Atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam, Sudan* (previously cited).

363. Interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026.

including 35% suffering from severe acute malnutrition.³⁶⁴ Among the 1,130 adults screened, 60% were acutely malnourished, 37% of them severely.³⁶⁵ Rates were even higher among pregnant and breastfeeding women.³⁶⁶

Malnutrition during pregnancy also poses serious risks to both the mother and the unborn child.³⁶⁷ Amnesty International documented multiple accounts of premature births. Dr Lora Iannotti, a public health nutrition expert specializing in maternal and child nutrition, explained that this can result from the combined effects of malnutrition and trauma.³⁶⁸ She also noted that such conditions may increase the risk of miscarriage.³⁶⁹

While reliable mortality data directly linked to malnutrition in El Fasher remains scarce and inconclusive,³⁷⁰ the severity and scale of these findings indicate a substantial risk of serious health impacts and death.

Unable to access meaningful care in El Fasher, parents were only able to enrol their children in malnutrition programmes after reaching the relative safety of Tawila and other neighbouring areas, or after crossing into Chad. Ready-to-use therapeutic food is provided in sachets to children with severe acute malnutrition, but families with several hungry children were often forced to make agonizing decisions about how to use the supply, including by selling part of it to buy food for children who were not enrolled in the programme.³⁷¹ For families stripped of all possessions, the sachets were often the only remaining items that could be exchanged for cash.³⁷²

Amnesty International interviewed nine women whose children had been formally diagnosed with malnutrition and prescribed ready-to-use therapeutic food. Many others interviewed in El Fasher and in IDP and refugee camps believed their children were malnourished, but said their children were never formally assessed or treated, either because they could not access care or had not yet had the opportunity to do so.

IMPACT OF MALNUTRITION ON CHILDREN

With higher metabolic demands and a critical need for nutrients to support rapid growth and brain development, children are uniquely vulnerable to food deprivation.³⁷³ While adults may survive prolonged periods of hunger, even short-term nutritional deficits can be fatal for young children or result in irreversible physical and cognitive harm, particularly during the first two years of life.³⁷⁴

364. MSF, "People face extreme malnutrition in Sudan's protracted crisis", 11 November 2025, <https://www.msf.org/people-face-extreme-malnutrition-sudan-crisis>

365. MSF, "People face extreme malnutrition in Sudan's protracted crisis" (previously cited).

366. MSF, "People face extreme malnutrition in Sudan's protracted crisis" (previously cited).

367. Severe deficiencies in iron and calcium can increase the risk of maternal mortality. Robert E Black and others, "Maternal and child undernutrition and overweight in low-income and middle-income countries" (previously cited), pp. 430-432.

368. Interview by voice call with Doctor Lora Iannotti, Lauren and Lee Fixel Distinguished Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, 6 March 2026.

369. Interview by voice call with Doctor Lora Iannotti, Lauren and Lee Fixel Distinguished Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, 6 March 2026.

370. In a statement a few days before El Fasher fell, the Sudanese Doctors' Network reported that at least three children were dying every day as a result of malnutrition, disease and the severe lack of medical and humanitarian resources. Anadolu Agency, "3 children die every day in Sudan's El-Fasher amid worsening malnutrition: Medics", 24 October 2025, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/3-children-die-every-day-in-sudan-s-el-fasher-amid-worsening-malnutrition-medics/3725984>. The El Fasher Resistance Coordination Committee, a group of community leaders and local administration from North Darfur, stated that at least 239 children had died of hunger during the siege, though it did not specify the period covered. Anadolu Agency, "3 children die every day in Sudan's El-Fasher amid worsening malnutrition: Medics" (previously cited).

371. Interview in person with *Raheela*, 3 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad; interview by voice call with *Sulafa*, 3 November 2025.

372. Interview in person with *Raheela*, 3 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

373. Interview by voice call with Doctor Lora Iannotti, Lauren and Lee Fixel Distinguished Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, 6 March 2026.

374. Interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026; interview by voice call with Doctor Lora Iannotti, Lauren and Lee Fixel Distinguished Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, 6 March 2026; see also UNICEF, "Child Malnutrition," <https://data.unicef.org/topic/nutrition/malnutrition/> (accessed on 25 January 2025).

Acute malnutrition, also referred to as wasting, leaves children far more susceptible to disease and death.³⁷⁵ A severely malnourished child is up to 11 times more likely to die from common childhood diseases than a well-nourished child, as their body lacks the capacity to fight infection.³⁷⁶ Malnutrition and disease reinforce one another: undernourished children are more likely to fall ill, and illness in turn exacerbates malnutrition.

For children who survive, the consequences extend far beyond the immediate crisis. Stunted growth and delayed development can reduce intellectual performance and limit future opportunities.³⁷⁷ The effects can also be intergenerational. In girls, stunted growth, for example, is associated with increased risks during pregnancy and can affect the health and development of future children.³⁷⁸

BREASTFEEDING AND POST-NATAL CARE UNDER SIEGE

Women described giving birth under extreme and life-threatening conditions, often amid active hostilities, displacement and severe food shortages. Such conditions can significantly disrupt breastfeeding.³⁷⁹ These effects are compounded when a mother is undernourished, which can reduce milk production.³⁸⁰ Even when breastfeeding continues, prolonged food deprivation can affect the nutritional quality of the milk, potentially reducing essential fats and proteins.³⁸¹

Several women told Amnesty International that they experienced serious difficulties breastfeeding, which some attributed to fear, exhaustion and hunger. *Raheela*, a Zaghawa woman, explained:

“Because of the heavy shelling, I think I was scared a lot. I think that’s why my milk was low... I was feeling helpless, there was nothing I could do. There was no food that I could give her. I didn’t have milk... So I just gave her salt and water. When we got to Tawila she was hospitalized for one month. [During the siege] she was living on salt and water... I thought she would die... there was no food. She would suck my breast but nothing would come out... She was too young to eat ambaz. It got to the point... where people would come every day asking if she’s still alive.”³⁸²

Raheela and her daughter were diagnosed with malnutrition upon reaching Tawila.

375. World Health Organization (WHO), “Malnutrition”, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/malnutrition> (accessed 25 January 2025). Acute malnutrition is classified as either severe acute malnutrition or moderate acute malnutrition.

376. Interview by voice call with Doctor Lora Iannotti, Lauren and Lee Fixel Distinguished Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, 6 March 2026; UNICEF, *Severe Wasting: An overlooked Child Survival Emergency*, May 2022, <https://www.unicef.org/media/120346/file/Wasting%20child%20alert.pdf>, p. 5.

377. See Christine P. Stewart, Lora Iannotti, Kathryn G. Dewey, Kim F. Michaelsen and Adelheid W. Onyango, “Contextualising complementary feeding in a broader framework for stunting prevention”, 18 September 2013, *Maternal & Child Nutrition*, Volume 9, Supplement 2, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/mcn.12088>, pp. 29-31; Robert E Black and others, “Maternal and child undernutrition and overweight in low-income and middle-income countries”, 3 August 2013, *The Lancet*, Volume 382, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(13\)60937-X/abstract](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(13)60937-X/abstract), p. 438.

378. Christine P. Stewart and others, “Contextualising complementary feeding in a broader framework for stunting prevention” (previously cited), p. 31 (indicating maternal stunting is a consistent risk factor for perinatal mortality); Robert E Black and others, “Maternal and child undernutrition and overweight in low-income and middle-income countries” (previously cited), pp. 432-435, 443; interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026; and interview by voice call with Doctor Lora Iannotti, Lauren and Lee Fixel Distinguished Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, 6 March 2026.

379. See, for example, Emily M. Nagel and others, “Maternal psychological distress and lactation and breastfeeding outcomes: a narrative review”, February 2022, *Clinical Therapeutics*, Volume 44, Number 2, <https://www.clinicaltherapeutics.com/action/showPdf?pii=S0149-2918%2821%2900461-6>

380. Interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026; interview by voice call with Doctor Lora Iannotti, Lauren and Lee Fixel Distinguished Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, 6 March 2026.

381. Interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026; interview by voice call with Doctor Lora Iannotti, Lauren and Lee Fixel Distinguished Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, 6 March 2026.

382. Interview in person with *Raheela*, 3 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

Before the conflict, women giving birth in hospitals in El Fasher could access post-natal care, including breastfeeding support and formula when needed.³⁸³ Two health professionals said infant formula ran out sometime between early 2025 and September 2025 and that it was not available on the informal market.³⁸⁴ *Madina*, a health professional, said they started to provide newborns a solution of goat's milk and water.³⁸⁵ *Shaza* explained that the main form of support for women who gave birth came from humanitarian organizations in the form of cash transfers.³⁸⁶

Amnesty International documented milk shortages in other areas near El Fasher. *Aziza*, a Zaghawa health professional, explained that after infant formula supplies ran out in her village in July 2023, caregivers resorted to various improvised liquids to feed infants.³⁸⁷ With many mothers unable to produce breast milk, they initially diluted goat's milk to make it thin enough for babies to drink. After their livestock were lost, they relied on milk powder, but when those supplies were also exhausted, children were given a mixture of warm water with small amounts of salt and sugar.

Sulafa, a Zaghawa woman, similarly described being unable to breastfeed.³⁸⁸ Like *Raheela*, she resorted to feeding her daughter water with salt, diluted goat's milk or water mixed with juice. She recalled, "When we reached Tawila, she couldn't even cry."³⁸⁹

Shadia, a Berti woman living in an IDP shelter in El Fasher in September 2025 and breastfeeding her six-week-old son, told Amnesty International:

"I am nursing him, but the milk is not enough. I need to eat so there will be milk for him to nurse, but there is no milk, that is an issue... he is underweight. You know, [I eat] one time per day... Just ambaz. There is nothing."³⁹⁰

In the absence of adequate maternal nutrition, healthcare support or access to infant feeding substitutes, the water-based solutions described can actively worsen infants' condition. As Dr Manary explained, "Water with sugar or water with salt will kill a child. A baby does not have enough [nutrient] reserves to survive."³⁹¹ Dr Iannotti highlighted the high risks to infants if the water is contaminated.³⁹² She stressed that under these conditions, "breastfeeding is the best you can do."³⁹³ For infants under six months, even brief interruptions in adequate feeding can prove fatal, underscoring the extreme vulnerability of newborns and the life-threatening consequences of prolonged deprivation.³⁹⁴

383. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, health professional, 8 October 2025.

384. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, health professional, 8 October 2025; interview by voice call with *Madina*, health professional, 17 March 2026.

385. Interview by voice call with *Madina*, health professional, 17 March 2026.

386. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, health professional, 8 October 2025.

387. Interview in person with *Aziza*, 29 October 2025, Tiné Chad.

388. Interview by voice call with *Sulafa*, 3 November 2025.

389. Interview by voice call with *Sulafa*, 3 November 2025.

390. Interview by voice call with *Shadia*, 11 September 2025.

391. Interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026.

392. Interview by voice call with Doctor Lora Iannotti, Lauren and Lee Fixel Distinguished Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, 6 March 2026.

393. Interview by voice call with Doctor Lora Iannotti, Lauren and Lee Fixel Distinguished Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, 6 March 2026.

394. Interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026.

MALNUTRITION AMONG YOUNG CHILDREN

Young children also struggled to access adequate nutrition during the siege. Micronutrient deficiencies such as vitamin A and zinc deficiency can increase the risk of illness, impaired growth and death.³⁹⁵ Dr Manary explained that under these conditions, the body begins to consume itself – first using stored sugars, then breaking down fat and muscle, and eventually shutting down vital organs.³⁹⁶ In severe cases, death can follow quickly.³⁹⁷ He stressed that early treatment is critical, especially for infants.³⁹⁸ Without adequate nutrition, the energy needed for growth and development is lost, and there is only a short window to restore it before permanent damage occurs.³⁹⁹

During the siege, health professionals tried to address cases of moderate malnutrition through a network of outpatient centres, where children could, in principle, receive supplementary feeding.⁴⁰⁰ When available, children received 14 to 21 sachets of ready-to-use therapeutic food per week, though these were increasingly rationed as supplies dwindled.⁴⁰¹ When supplies finally ran out, families were still encouraged to attend weekly appointments so caregivers could receive advice on what foods to provide based on what was available at the time.⁴⁰² One health professional, *Shaza*, who worked at the outpatient centres, told Amnesty International that while some families could afford to buy food, there was often nothing available to purchase.⁴⁰³

For more severe cases, where children suffered from malnutrition alongside other medical complications, Saudi Hospital established a sensitive care unit. Although the Ministry of Health provided some food to the hospital, with virtually no nutrition supplies entering El Fasher, health staff were forced to search the city for smugglers in order to purchase rice and milk to feed hospitalized children.⁴⁰⁴

Shaza described how ongoing shelling severely constrained movement within the city to buy food:

“You can get rice from [one place], you move to another place to get milk and sugar... Sometimes we are [travelling]... for five hours to collect everything. Mostly we are getting it, but we are struggling to get it....”⁴⁰⁵

When food could not be secured, health staff relied on a limited stock of ready-to-use therapeutic food sachets held at the hospital which, according to two health professionals, ran out sometime between June and early October 2025.⁴⁰⁶

395. Robert E Black and others, “Maternal and child undernutrition and overweight in low-income and middle-income countries” (previously cited), pp. 439-441, 444; interview by voice call with Doctor Lora Iannotti, Lauren and Lee Fixel Distinguished Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, 6 March 2026.

396. Interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026.

397. Interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026.

398. Interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026.

399. Interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026.

400. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, health professional, 8 October 2025; interview by voice call with *Madina*, health professional, 17 March 2026.

401. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, health professional, 8 October 2025; interview by voice call with *Madina*, health professional, 17 March 2026.

402. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, health professional, 8 October 2025.

403. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, health professional, 8 October 2025.

404. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, health professional, 8 October 2025; interview by voice call with *Madina*, health professional, 17 March 2026.

405. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, health professional, 8 October 2025.

406. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, health professional, 8 October 2025; interview by voice call with *Madina*, health professional, 17 March 2026.

Only a small number of children were ultimately able to access inpatient treatment in the sensitive care unit. In October 2025, *Shaza* reported that eight children were admitted at the time of the interview and that she referred approximately six to seven children from the outpatient centres each day.⁴⁰⁷ At the time of the interview, three children had died in the unit in the preceding three months – two due to other complicating illnesses and one directly from malnutrition.⁴⁰⁸

A LETHAL CONVERGENCE: MALNUTRITION AND HEALTH SYSTEM COLLAPSE

Malnutrition acted as a force multiplier for disease. With immune systems severely compromised, illnesses that would otherwise have been manageable became deadly.⁴⁰⁹

Just when children were most in need of medical intervention, the health system in El Fasher was collapsing. As described in Chapter 6, repeated attacks on healthcare facilities forced services into a few locations near Saudi Hospital, while fear of bombardment deterred people from seeking hospital care. Medical supplies continued to dwindle, leading to critical shortages of even basic antibiotics and first-aid materials. An administrator at Saudi Hospital said the last supplies purchased from the market arrived in June 2024.⁴¹⁰ While a small number of donations were later received, she reported the last delivery of medicine was around June or July 2025.⁴¹¹

Vaccine shortages posed a grave threat. According to *Ibtihal*, a health professional at Saudi Hospital, most vaccines ran out from September 2024, leaving only measles and yellow fever vaccines available.⁴¹² By the time the RSF took over El Fasher, measles was the only remaining vaccine at Saudi Hospital.⁴¹³ She said that the RSF refused attempts by the health administration to supply vaccines.⁴¹⁴

DEATHS LINKED TO STARVATION AND MALNUTRITION

Parents described profound distress as they watched their children waste away in conditions of severe food deprivation, heightened vulnerability to disease, and lack of access to healthcare. Amnesty International documented the deaths of four children whose parents believed that severe malnutrition either directly caused or significantly contributed to their deaths.

These four cases likely represent a small fraction of the actual toll. As noted above, reliable mortality data linked to malnutrition in El Fasher remains scarce, but Dr Manary and Dr Iannotti emphasized that, for children deprived of adequate food during this period, malnutrition would have been inextricably linked to mortality.⁴¹⁵

407. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, health professional, 8 October 2025.

408. Interview by voice call with *Shaza*, health professional, 8 October 2025.

409. Robert E Black and others, “Maternal and child undernutrition and overweight in low-income and middle-income countries” (previously cited), p. 438; interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026.

410. Interview by voice call with *Husna*, 7 October 2025.

411. Interview by voice call with *Husna*, 7 October 2025.

412. Interview by voice call with *Ibtihal*, 17 and 19 December 2025.

413. Interview by voice call with *Ibtihal*, 17 and 19 December 2025.

414. Interview by voice call with *Ibtihal*, 17 and 19 December 2025.

415. Interview by voice call with Doctor Mark Manary, Professor of Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, 20 February 2026; interview by voice call with Doctor Lora Iannotti, Lauren and Lee Fixel Distinguished Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, 6 March 2026.

Rashida, a 39-year-old Shuweihat (an Arabic ethnic group) woman – and mother of eight, lost her youngest child, a twin just over one year old, on 27 August 2025. She explained that her family decided to flee El Fasher because of hunger and shelling:

“My milk was not coming. I was trying to breastfeed them [the twins]... I used to give them ambaz too... [but my son] was getting very weak [and] not taking milk from my chest. He became very thin. There was [a] change in his skin... Most of his body was swollen, including his stomach... I took him to the clinic... They did not have anything... I think he died from malnutrition.”⁴¹⁶

On the day he died, *Rashida* buried her son on the road to Tawila and was forced to continue her journey or risk abuse by RSF fighters.

Umalhassan, a 27-year-old Dajo woman caring for three biological children and two stepchildren, described the death of her eight-year-old stepdaughter *Aisha*. She explained that in the two months before fleeing El Fasher on 3 September, *ambaz* was the only food available:

“[My stepdaughter was] suffering from malnutrition... Then her sickness became a lot worse. That’s why I decided to take her to Tawila... [E]very day she was getting sicker and weaker... I noticed that her... body became swollen... She was not able to walk because of her weakness.”⁴¹⁷

Umalhassan fled El Fasher carrying *Aisha* in her arms, at times assisted by her aunt. She said that during the arduous journey, *Aisha* lost and regained consciousness. After being stopped and looted by RSF fighters, the family reached Tawila. Soon after their arrival, *Aisha* died.

In a third interview, *Maha*, a 30-year-old Zaghawa woman whose five children included two who died during the conflict, described the death of her nine-month-old son after 21 days of treatment in Tawila. *Maha* described the conditions as they fled:

“For four days we had no food at all, me or my children... We were just getting small amounts of water from other people on the road... he took [breastmilk]... from me. The diarrhoea started on the road and lasted all the way to Tawila... In just four days he lost that weight, I think because of the diarrhoea. Doctors said he had a serious infection... he was a very severe case of malnutrition.”⁴¹⁸

5.3 LIFE UNDER BOMBARDMENT

During the RSF’s siege of El Fasher, and particularly in the months leading up to the city’s capture, residents lived under near daily bombardment. Life ground to a halt: markets and shops closed, and people limited their movements to only the most essential. There were no formal underground shelters: civilians were forced to improvise makeshift bunkers. Sometimes these were shipping containers buried underground or, more often, ditches reinforced with sticks or other materials. The conditions inside these shelters, where families often spent hours and even days waiting out attacks, were suffocating. During the rainy season, they were often flooded.

416. Interview by voice call with *Rashida*, 26 September 2025.

417. Interview by voice call with *Umalhassan*, 24 September 2025.

418. Interview by voice call with *Maha*, 23 October 2025.

“I spent all my time in the underground shelter, I didn’t go outside,” said *Hamza*, a 16-year-old Berti boy whose injury from shrapnel confined him for at least two months in mid-2025 to a small underground water tank on the premises of a school where he was living as a displaced person. “You feel like you’re in prison, sometimes you just wish you would die.”⁴¹⁹

Between April 2023 and May 2025, medical facilities in El Fasher recorded over 13,000 conflict-related injuries, from which nearly 1,900 patients died.⁴²⁰ These figures are not a complete count, and the true number of injuries and deaths is likely higher. The vast majority of reported injuries (over 83%) were caused by explosive weapons. Nearly one in five of those injured by explosive weapons were children; of these, 300 died as a result of their injuries.

While many people spoke of bombardments generally, Amnesty International verified five specific strikes that took place between July and September 2025 and which resulted in at least 80 deaths and many injuries. Among these victims, Amnesty International received the names of 71 people, including 13 children, who were killed, as well as the names of eight injured, including six children. These attacks should be investigated as possible war crimes.

The attacks took place in the context of mass displacement inside El Fasher. At the time of these interviews, between August and October 2025, the SAF and allied groups controlled just a fraction of the city: the Daraja Oula neighbourhood and parts of Al Nasr and Abu Shouk neighbourhoods. Most civilians had been pushed out of other neighbourhoods by RSF attacks and many were living in displacement sites located in schools, universities or other public buildings. Most of the strikes documented below were on these kinds of displacement sites; all but one took place in the Daraja Oula neighbourhood.

Some displacement sites were located close to military positions, putting civilians there at great risk. During some interviews, people said that the shrinking of areas under SAF or Joint Forces control forced them to live in close proximity to military personnel. Given the state of siege and the likely proximity between civilians and military personnel, there may have been instances in El Fasher where civilian and military objects were difficult to distinguish.

Amnesty International was unable to definitively attribute responsibility for the attacks documented below. However, the RSF were likely the perpetrators of the strikes as they occurred in SAF-controlled areas, where no RSF fighters were reported on the ground at the time, indicating that the attacks were launched from outside those areas. One possible alternative explanation is that the strikes resulted from the malfunction of SAF weapons systems; such misfires are not considered unlawful. Amnesty International found no evidence to support this explanation.

Residents interviewed by Amnesty International said that no warnings were given to civilians before any of the attacks documented below. In some cases, satellite imagery confirms clear signs of civilian life at IDP sites before an attack, something the RSF could and should have verified before carrying out a strike.

419. Interview in person with *Hamza*, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

420. For further information about the statistics cited in this paragraph, please see the textbox below entitled “Injuries and Deaths Observed in Hospitals and Medical Facilities in El Fasher”.

PRINCIPLES OF DISTINCTION, PROPORTIONALITY AND PRECAUTION

A cardinal principle of international humanitarian law is the principle of distinction, whereby parties to a conflict must distinguish between military and civilian targets during an attack.⁴²¹ Military objectives are those which “make an effective contribution to military action and whose partial or total destruction... offers a definite military advantage.”⁴²² Attacks that deliberately target civilian objects are unlawful.⁴²³

International law also prohibits indiscriminate attacks. These include attacks that are not directed at a specific military objective, or which employ a method or means of combat that cannot be directed at a specific military objective, or whose effects cannot be limited as required by law.⁴²⁴ Disproportionate attacks are a form of indiscriminate attack. They are attacks against a specific military target that may be expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life or injury that “would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated.”⁴²⁵

Parties to a conflict must also respect the principle of precaution, which calls on parties to take “all feasible precautions” to “avoid, and in any event to minimize, incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians and damage to civilian objects.”⁴²⁶ This includes an obligation to “do everything feasible” to verify that targets are military objects, and to “give effective advance warning of attacks which may affect the civilian population, unless circumstances do not permit.”⁴²⁷

The duty to take precautions also extends to the defending party. Parties must, to the maximum extent feasible, remove civilians from the vicinity of military objectives, avoid locating military objectives within or near densely populated areas, and take other necessary precautions to protect the civilian population under their control against the dangers resulting from military operations.⁴²⁸ The use of civilians as human shields, including using their presence to render military objectives immune from attack, is prohibited.⁴²⁹

421. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 1.

422. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 8.

423. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 1.

424. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 12.

425. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 14.

426. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 15.

427. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rules 16 and 20.

428. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rules 22, 23 and 24.

429. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 97.



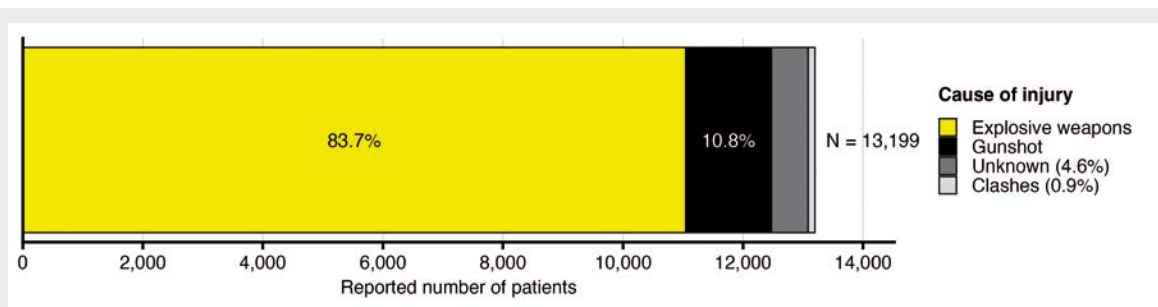
©↑ A foxhole at a school in El Fasher. During the siege of El Fasher, civilians and fighters dug and sheltered in similar foxholes (including at times buried containers) across the city to protect themselves from RSF bombings and shelling. January 2026.

© Private

INJURIES AND DEATHS OBSERVED IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL FACILITIES IN EL FASHER

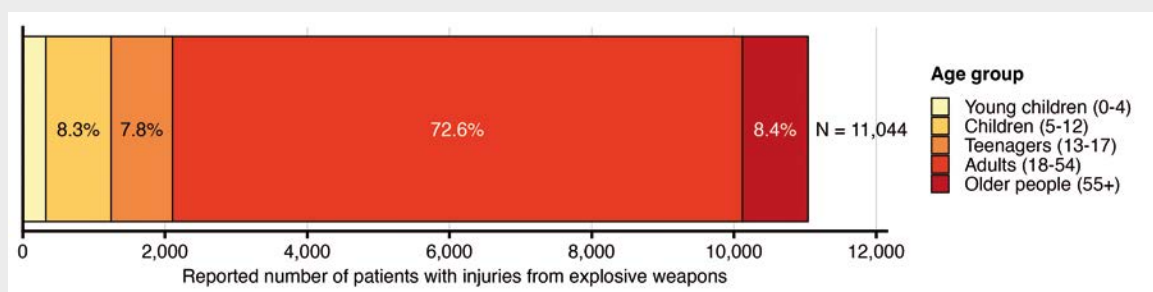
Amnesty International received a dataset from a reliable source that documents conflict-related injuries and deaths at several hospitals and other medical facilities in the city during part of the conflict.⁴³⁰ The data covers 15 April 2023 to 15 May 2025. This patient list undercounts total conflict victims during this period as individuals who died at or near the site of attack, who chose not to seek care, or who were unable to reach hospitals, would not have been registered. There were also times when health staff were unable to consistently record every instance of injury or death at their facilities, given the difficulties of doing so amidst the conflict. In addition, some medical records were lost when medical facilities were targeted by drones and shelling. Nonetheless, the data gives a partial account of how medical facilities in El Fasher provided critical care to victims of the conflict, while also attempting to document their work and create a historical record.

430. Amnesty International is unable to disclose the source of the data for security reasons. Data processing, cleaning, analysis and visualization were conducted in the R programming language. Standard data integrity checks were applied to rectify potential data entry errors and remove duplicate records. The records included information from the following hospitals: Saudi Hospital, South Hospital, Military Hospital, Said Al Shuhada Hospital, Jabel Marra Medical Complex, Tambasi Health Centre, Shala Health Centre, Alnasr Health Centre, Abdulsalam Health Centre, Abu Shouk Health Centre, Al Gouba Health Centre. Most incidents reported were from Saudi Hospital and South Hospital.



REPORTED NUMBER OF PATIENTS

Figure 1: This bar graph shows the distribution of the reported underlying cause of injury for 13,199 recorded patients who experienced a violent event and were subsequently seen by health facilities in El Fasher between 15 April 2023 and 15 May 2025. The total number of individuals who incurred injuries from violent events was likely higher during this time. Bar segments are coloured according to the reported cause of injury: explosive weapons (yellow), gunshot (black), clashes (light grey) and unknown cause of injury (dark grey). Bar segments (or legend keys) are annotated with the percentage of each reported cause of injury of the total number of 13,199 documented patients.



REPORTED NUMBER OF PATIENTS FROM EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS

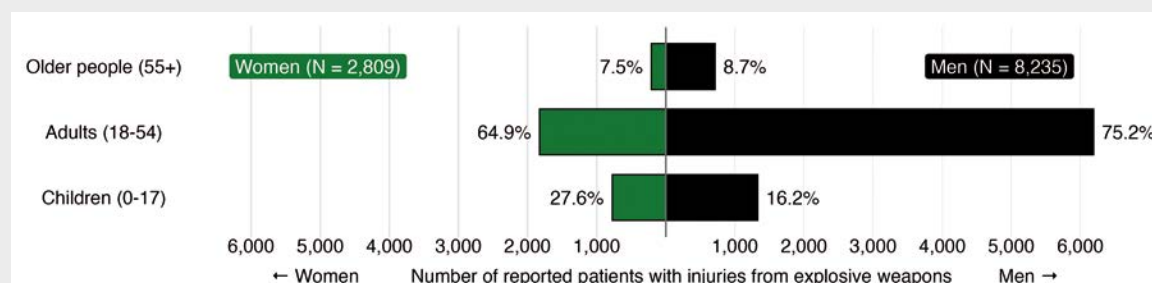
Figure 2: This bar graph shows the distribution of various age groups among 11,044 reported patients that were diagnosed with injuries from explosive weapons across health facilities in El Fasher between 15 April 2023 and 15 May 2025. The total number of individuals with injuries from explosive weapons was likely higher during this time. Bar segments are coloured according to the respective age group of reported patients: young children aged 0-4 (light yellow), children aged 5-12 (dark yellow), teenagers aged 13-17 (orange), adults aged 18-54 (red), and people aged 55 or older (dark red). Bar segments are annotated with the percentage of each age group of the 11,044 documented patients.

According to the available data, health facilities reported 13,199 patients with conflict-related injuries during this period, of whom 1,867 (about 14%) are reported to have died because of their injuries. Among all reported patients, 2,475 were children below the age of 18 (18.8%), 340 of whom died. The overwhelming majority of all registered injuries and deaths (11,044 or 83.7%) were caused by explosive weapons, demonstrating the devastating impact of bombardments on the city during this period (see Figure 1). Other causes of injury included 1,430 gunshot cases (10.8%) and 113 clashes (0.9%) with 612 cases where the causes were unknown (4.6%).

Among registered victims with injuries from explosive weapons, the majority (8,015 or 72.6%) were adults aged 18 to 54 years old (see Figure 2). Among adults with injuries from explosive weapons, 6,904 individuals were male (77.2%) and 2,034 female (22.8%). Another 923 people (8.4%) aged 55 or older were also recorded as victims of explosive weapons.

Explosive weapons also caused the injury and death of many children. Of all reported patients treated by medical facilities for injuries related to explosive weapons, 2,106 (19.1%) were children, meaning almost every fifth patient (see Figure 2). Among them were 322 children aged four or under, 919 children aged five to 12, and 865 teenagers (aged 13-17).

Explosive weapons pose unique risks to children due to their anatomy and physiology. Children cannot afford to lose as much blood as adults, and their thinner abdominal walls combined with proportionally larger vital organs make them more vulnerable to blasts and trauma.⁴³¹ Children are significantly more likely to suffer head injuries from blast incidents.⁴³² Eye and ear injuries, which are very common blast injuries, have severe long-term effects on children.⁴³³ Of the 2,106 documented children who were treated for injuries from explosive weapons, 300 (14.2%) reportedly died as a result.



NUMBER OF REPORTED PATIENTS WITH INJURIES FROM EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS

Figure 3: This bar graph shows the distribution of different age-sex groups among 11,044 reported patients treated for injuries from explosive weapons across health facilities in El Fasher between 15 April 2023 and 15 May 2025. Patients were divided into three distinct age groups: children aged zero to 17, adults aged 18-54 and people aged 55 and older. Bar graphs are coloured according to the reported sex of registered patients: women (green) on the left side of the graph and men (black) on the right. Bar segments are annotated with the percentage of each age group within each sex. For example, 27.6% of 2,809 registered female patients were children aged zero to 17.

A greater number of boys below the age of 18 were recorded among children injured by explosive weapons (1,331 or 63.2%) than girls (775). Regardless of age, 8,235 individuals (74.6%) treated for injuries from explosive weapons were male, while 2,809 were female. Among these 11,044 patients reported to have been injured by explosive weapons, the age profile differs by sex (see Figure 3). Children account for a larger share of female patients (27.6%) than of male patients (16.2%). Adults aged 18 to 54 constitute a higher proportion among male patients (75.2%) compared with 64.9% among female patients. The percent share of people aged 55 or older is comparable among female and male patients (7.5% and 8.7%, respectively). These patterns reflect differences among reported and treated cases and should not be interpreted as representative of the broader population of people in El Fasher injured by explosive weapons during this period.

It is unclear whether the reported patients included combatants, and if so, how many. The 11 medical facilities reporting patients injured in violent incidents were largely civilian establishments. However, El Fasher Military Hospital is also included in this data, reporting that it treated 1,028 injured people (7.8% of the total data) during this period, including many children, women and older people. According to sources, the military hospital provided first aid to civilians presenting at their facility before referring them to civilian facilities for further medical treatment. It is unclear to what extent the military hospital was treating civilians and civilian medical facilities were treating members of the military. Indicators of individual sex and age are insufficient to infer combatant status. In El Fasher, men were often more exposed to the risk of being injured in violent incidents than females as they more often left their homes to go to work.⁴³⁴ The prevalence of children, women and older people – who in the situation in El Fasher were not typically fighters – among patients treated for injuries from violent incidents suggests a significant impact of violent activities on the civilian population during the documented period.

431. ICRC, *Childhood in Rubble: The Humanitarian Consequences of Urban Warfare for Children*, 25 May 2023, <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/childhood-rubble-humanitarian-consequences-urban-warfare-children>, p. 26.

432. Save the Children, *Blast Injuries: The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children in Conflict*, 16 May 2019, https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/content/dam/gb/reports/blast_injuries.pdf, p. 10.

433. Save the Children, *Blast Injuries: The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children in Conflict* (previously cited), p. 12.

434. Interview by voice call with health official, 14 May 2026.

EL SALAM SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

El Salam Secondary School for Girls in the Daraja Oula neighbourhood of El Fasher was shelled at least three times in July and August 2025; two of the attacks struck the school, one struck a few metres away from it. The school had been serving as an IDP site since at least April 2024, when one of the women interviewed by Amnesty International arrived there.⁴³⁵ On 27 August 2025, a count by camp administrators recorded 125 families – approximately 875 people, including 243 children – living there.⁴³⁶

Satellite imagery of the school taken on the morning of 19 August 2025, just hours before a round of strikes began, shows what appears to be an IDP camp, with clustered tents and temporary structures surrounding the larger buildings. The site should have been recognized as only an IDP location, and not itself a military target, by parties to the conflict, who routinely gather intelligence through surveillance drones.⁴³⁷

Amnesty International interviewed *Rasha*, a woman whose daughter, along with three other children, was killed in an attack at the school on 11 July 2025. “My daughter got shrapnel [in her body]... [She] was seriously injured. We took her to the hospital but she passed away,” she said.⁴³⁸

Five weeks later, on or around 19 August, the school was hit again in the afternoon. Witnesses said they saw at least six people, including at least four children, killed and at least five, including at least one child, injured. Amnesty International interviewed three women – *Shadia*, *Sabah* and *Huda* – who were living in the school and were present when it was attacked. *Shadia* and *Sabah* each had a child who was killed; *Huda*’s daughter was severely injured. All three women provided Amnesty International with the names of their killed or injured children.

Shadia, a 28-year-old Berti woman, said that one of her three-year-old twin girls insisted on staying with her that day while the other went out to play. “That one never came back,” she said.⁴³⁹ Drones had been flying overhead before the attack. When the shelling stopped, *Shadia*, still recovering from a recent C-section, walked carefully to look for her daughter, only to learn she had already been taken to hospital. “Her legs were almost cut away [by the blast]... After half an hour, she passed away,” she said.⁴⁴⁰



435. Interview by voice call with *Rasha*, 10 September 2025.

436. Interview by voice call with representative from El Salam School IDP site, 3 September 2025.

437. Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, “Sudan: RSF drones kill civilians amid lack of efforts to stop external weapons flow”, 15 January 2026, <https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6963/Sudan:-RSF-drones-kill-civilians-amid-lack-of-efforts-to-stop-external-weapons-flow>. See also Reuters, “Sudan’s RSF Operating Drones from Darfur Base, Pictures Show”, 26 February 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/sudans-rsf-operating-drones-darfur-base-pictures-show-2025-02-26/>; Shem Siteki, “Technopolitics of Conflict: Unpacking the Role of Drones in Sudan’s War”, *Journal of Peace and Diplomacy*, 6 (02), <https://doi.org/10.59111/JPD.006.002.0177>, pp. 72–97.

438. Interview by voice call with *Rasha*, 10 September 2025; Death certificate, on file with Amnesty International.

439. Interview by voice call with *Shadia*, 11 September 2025.

440. Interview by voice call with *Shadia*, 11 September 2025.

Sabah, 42, described the moment she found her six-year-old daughter killed just outside their tent: “We found her in a critical position, blood coming from the mouth, teeth broken and her face... you cannot recognize it.”⁴⁴¹ *Huda*, 40, said her seven-year-old daughter *Mariam* suffered two broken legs and a dislocated arm as a result of the strike. Fearing attacks on Saudi Hospital, *Huda* took *Mariam* to a makeshift clinic instead:

“They said that she needs surgery [and the] surgery cannot be executed because there is no medicine... We brought her back into the camp... She still has some shrapnel in her body... She cannot walk... she is... in pain from the areas where she is wounded.”⁴⁴²

When asked about the proximity of armed forces near the school, *Huda* said there were no soldiers nearby at the time of the attack.⁴⁴³ *Shadia* noted that SAF forces regularly patrolled the area, and *Sabah* indicated that someone she referred to as Commander “Kash” lived nearby.⁴⁴⁴ Amnesty International identified “Kash” as Mohammed Adam Ahmed, the chairman for North Darfur of the SLA/MM, which is part of the Joint Forces. His house was less than 200m from the school.⁴⁴⁵ As a high-ranking official who fought alongside members of the SLA/MM, he is a lawful military target.

During the 19 August attack, the three women interviewed by Amnesty International said the school was hit by a *rajima* – a weapon they all recognized from the distinctive sound of multiple munitions being fired in rapid succession.⁴⁴⁶ Amnesty International has identified this as a type 63-pattern 107mm multiple launch rocket system, an inherently inaccurate weapon system that should never be used in the proximity of civilians or in densely populated areas, because such use would constitute an indiscriminate attack. If used by the RSF in the strike, its deployment would be inconsistent with international humanitarian law. Even if another weapon was used, the women said that the weapon was fired in salvos, generally indicating a system that is inappropriate for use in a densely populated area.

In a third attack, on 25 August 2025, Amnesty International received a photograph taken by a resident living near the school, showing the remnants of a 107mm rocket, which he said struck several metres outside the school.⁴⁴⁷ The person also described this weapon as a *rajima*.⁴⁴⁸ The resident said that he saw six people who were injured and four who were killed in that attack, including three children. He did not know the names of any individuals killed.

If SLA/MM Chairman Mohammed Adam Ahmed’s house was the designated target of these strikes, the RSF should have been aware of the presence of civilians at the school. By using a weapon system that cannot differentiate between the school and commander’s residence, the RSF appears to have not taken all feasible precautions to minimize civilian harm and committed an indiscriminate attack. These strikes should be investigated as possible war crimes.

441. Interview by voice call with *Sabah*, 12 September 2025.

442. Interview by voice call with *Huda*, 27 August 2025.

443. Interview by voice call with a representative from El Salam School IDP site, 3 September 2025; interview by voice call with *Huda*, 27 August 2025.

444. Interviews by voice call with *Shadia*, 11 September 2025; and *Sabah*, 12 September 2025.

445. Conversation with a Sudanese human rights defender, October 2025.

446. Interviews by voice call with *Huda*, 27 August 2025; *Shadia*, 11 September 2025; and *Sabah*, 12 September 2025.

447. Message exchange on Whatsapp with individual who took the photograph, 15 and 16 October 2025.

448. Message exchange on Whatsapp with individual who took the photograph, 15 and 16 October 2025.

📷→ Photo shared by a witness to the strike on Abu Talib School on 30 September 2025 showing damage to the kitchen area shortly after the strike. © Private

📷↘ Photo shared by a witness to the strike on Abu Talib School on 30 September 2025 showing the remnants of a mortar left from the second strike in the south of the compound. © Private

ABU TALIB SCHOOL

Abu Talib primary school, a site for displaced people located in Abu Shouk neighbourhood, was attacked on the morning of 30 September 2025, when residents were cooking and distributing breakfast. Amnesty International interviewed five people who survived the attack and witnessed its immediate aftermath.⁴⁴⁹ At least six people were killed, including two children; many others were injured.⁴⁵⁰ Amnesty International received the names of three people who were killed and one who was injured.

Abdelwahid, a 57-year-old Fur man, was helping distribute food when the first munition landed near the kitchen in the northern end of the school. People panicked and started running for cover.⁴⁵¹ Witnesses said that two to three minutes after the initial solitary strike on the kitchen, a second strike occurred, a salvo consisting of four or five munitions. This strike hit a different part of the school compound, towards the main gate in the south. This second salvo killed and injured the victims, witnesses said.⁴⁵²

Qasim, a 27-year-old Zaghawa man, emerged from an underground shelter when the shelling stopped and began helping the injured:

"I took people to the hospital... There were about four to five people in the cart. Two were children... The boy, his leg [had to be amputated] because of a fracture. [He] was about six years old. The girl was about 11... Shrapnel hit her stomach [on] the right side. She was conscious and crying the whole time."⁴⁵³

Qasim and another interviewee said they buried those who were killed later that night.⁴⁵⁴



449. Interviews by voice call with *Abdelwahid*, 3 October 2025; *Yahya*, 3 October 2025; *Hiba*, 3 October 2025; *Sabir*, 9 October 2025; and *Qasim*, 9 October 2025.

450. Interviews by voice call with *Abdelwahid*, 3 October 2025; *Yahya*, 3 October 2025; *Hiba*, 3 October 2025; and *Sabir*, 9 October 2025.

451. Interview by voice call with *Abdelwahid*, 3 October 2025.

452. Interviews by voice call with *Abdelwahid*, 3 October 2025; *Yahya*, 3 October 2025; *Hiba*, 3 October 2025; *Sabir*, 9 October 2025.

453. Interview by voice call with *Qasim*, 9 October 2025.

454. Interview by voice call with *Qasim*, 9 October 2025; and *Sabir*, 9 October 2025.



☺ ↑ Satellite imagery from 18 March 2025 (left) shows Abu Talib school where many tents and other temporary structures are visible along with the larger buildings. On 26 September (middle) many of the tents and structures are no longer visible. Many remaining structures appear to be lined up on the west side of the internal wall. On 12 October, imagery (right) shows damage to two buildings – highlighted with yellow boxes – and multiple craters inside and outside the compound – highlighted with yellow circles.

Satellite imagery of Abu Talib primary school from 18 March 2025 appears to show an IDP camp, with clustered tents and temporary structures surrounding the larger buildings. Four days before the strike, the satellite imagery shows that most of those structures were no longer present, suggesting that many IDPs may have fled by this time. Many of the remaining tents were lined up on the west side of the internal wall. Videos shared with Amnesty International from Abu Talib in September 2025 show several civilians still living there, including women and injured people.⁴⁵⁵ Satellite imagery confirms damage to at least two places in the south of the compound in imagery from 12 October 2025 and numerous craters around the site.

Witnesses shared videos and photos from the aftermath of the strike showing damage to the kitchen area, as well as photos of a mortar that they said was left from the second strike, in the south of the compound.⁴⁵⁶ This is an inherently inaccurate weapon, and its use in or around shelters for displaced civilians is inappropriate.⁴⁵⁷

All five witnesses said that there were no SAF or Joint Forces fighters close to or patrolling near the school at the time of the strike.⁴⁵⁸ The absence of a clear military target raises the possibility that this was a targeted attack intended to kill and injure civilians, which is prohibited by international law.⁴⁵⁹ If, on the other hand, there was a legitimate military target in the area, the use of such an inaccurate weapon in an area densely populated with civilians may signify that this was an indiscriminate attack. In either case, the strike should be investigated as a possible war crime.

In a separate incident on 6 October 2025, Abu Talib school was raided by RSF soldiers, according to two witnesses. *Sabir*, a 32-year-old Zaghawa man, said he was in the bathroom that morning when he heard

455. Videos, on file with Amnesty International.

456. Photos and videos, on file with Amnesty International.

457. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 12.

458. Interviews by voice call with *Abdelwahid*, 3 October 2025; *Yahya*, 3 October 2025; *Hiba*, 3 October 2025; *Sabir*, 9 October 2025; and *Qasim*, 9 October 2025.

459. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 1.

©→ Photo shared by witness showing the remnant of a Chinese-made GB 50A bomb used in the attack on El Fasher University on 21 August 2025. © Private

shooting and people screaming that the RSF had entered the compound. He ran away and came back a few hours later. He said he saw the bodies of three men, who had been shot and killed. Two people, a woman and an older man, were injured.⁴⁶⁰ According to *Sabir* and another witness, all displaced people from Abu Talib moved to another displacement site after the raid.⁴⁶¹

EL FASHER UNIVERSITY

On 21 August 2025, drones conducted air strikes on three parts of El Fasher University, which housed many displaced people. Amnesty International interviewed three people with knowledge of these strikes and their aftermath; one was at the scene during the attack, while two others arrived shortly after. These three witnesses saw that at least 26 people had been killed and 12 injured in the attack, including many children.⁴⁶² Amnesty International received the names of three people who were killed and one who was injured.

One witness, *Hisham*, shared a photo he took of a remnant of the munition that he said was used in the attack. The photo was of a tail section of a Chinese-made GB-50A bomb.⁴⁶³ The GB-50A is a relatively small, guided weapon that can hit a target with relative accuracy, raising the possibility that it could have been used to deliberately target civilians. In previous investigations, Amnesty International found that these bombs can be fitted on drones that are exclusively used in Sudan by the RSF and very likely provided by the UAE.⁴⁶⁴ The presence of such a bomb in El Fasher necessarily results from a violation of the UN Security Council embargo on Darfur, as laid out in UN Security Council resolution 1591.⁴⁶⁵

Siham, 37, was preparing food for her children at around 11pm near the girls' dormitory of the Medical Faculty, where she lived as a displaced person. She heard an explosion from a bomb that had landed about 10m away. *Siham* said that six children, four women and three men were instantly killed. Her sister and her sister's children, aged four and two, were among them:

"There was nothing to do... [Their] bodies were cut into parts. Both my sister's legs were cut off. [She and her children] were injured in different parts of their bodies. I could not even recognize which part belongs to which body."⁴⁶⁶

460. Interview by voice call with *Sabir*, 9 October 2025.

461. Interviews by voice call with *Sabir*, 9 October 2025; and *Qasim*, 9 October 2025.

462. Interviews by voice call with *Siham*, 12 October 2025; *Hisham*, 22 September 2025; and *Khalid*, 1 October 2025.

463. Photo, on file with Amnesty International.

464. Amnesty International, "Sudan: Advanced Chinese weaponry provided by UAE identified in breach of arms embargo – new investigation," 8 May 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/05/sudan-advanced-chinese-weaponry-provided-by-uae-identified-in-breach-of-arms-embargo-new-investigation/>

465. UNSC, Resolution 1591 (2005) (previously cited); UNSC, Resolution 2791 (2025), adopted on 12 September 2025, [https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2791\(2025\)](https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2791(2025)).

466. Interview by voice call with *Siham*, 12 October 2025.



Siham rushed her five-year-old cousin, who was injured by shrapnel during the strike, to the hospital. She said, “They sent him to do an X-ray and found the leg was broken. When they went to do the surgery, his leg was [amputated].”⁴⁶⁷

About 800m north of the Medical Faculty, at the Faculty of Arts, another drone conducted a strike, also at around 11pm. *Esmat*, a 26-year-old Zaghawa man who was living with his displaced family in that building, was nearby and ran to the scene. *Esmat* said he saw fragments from the munition that had struck the ground. He saw the bodies of three men who were killed in the attack, and four injured women, who he said died from their wounds soon after.⁴⁶⁸

After helping people at the Faculty of Arts, *Esmat* ran to the Faculty of Medicine. He said it was struck with drones in two places: near the girls’ dormitory, as described by *Siham* above, and near the boys’ dormitory. *Esmat* ran to the boys’ dormitory, where he found the remains of six bodies – three older men, two children and one woman – and about 11 injured people. He helped take the injured to the hospital:

“We carried some of them on beds, and some of them we carried with cart and horse... The person I was carrying was an older man. He was injured in three places: in his stomach, in his arm, and in his leg. The most severe injury was in his stomach, almost all of his stomach was [outside] his body. He was unconscious, in very bad condition.”⁴⁶⁹

Amnesty International has not determined the intended target of this attack. Satellite imagery suggests that parts of El Fasher University, which is on the western outskirts of the city, were close to SAF and Joint Forces military presence. A defensive berm (earthen wall) built by the SAF/Joint Forces was approximately 1km to the west; the area between the university and said berm was filled with foxholes, trenches and a radar, making it possible that a military installation was present there.⁴⁷⁰ The three people interviewed said that the Joint Forces and SAF did not visit the university, which was well known as an accommodation site for IDPs.

As noted above, these attacks appeared to use the relatively accurate GB-50A bombs, raising the possibility that they could have been used to deliberately target civilians. However, it is impossible to determine this with certainty without more information about the intended target and the circumstances of the attack. Even if the military presence west of the university was the intended target, the distance between that presence and the university, together with the known civilian use of the site, raises serious concerns about whether the attack complied with the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions. This strike should be further investigated as a possible targeted attack on civilians.

467. Interview by voice call with *Siham*, 12 October 2025.

468. Interview by voice call with *Esmat*, 1 October 2025.

469. Interview by voice call with *Esmat*, 1 October 2025.

470. Yale HRL described the area near the airfield, west of El Fasher, as “SAF’s de facto base of operations.” Yale HRL, *Residents of El-Fasher Attempting to Escape as RSF Attacks Continue*, 25 September 2025, <https://files-profile.medicine.yale.edu/documents/707c8961-be27-4e6d-ba3a-42d89439340a>, p. 4. Amnesty International estimates this area to be around 360m west of the Faculty of Medicine at El Fasher University.



©↑ A photo shared with Amnesty International by witnesses on the ground shows damage to El Safiya mosque immediately after the attack on 19 September 2025. © Private

EL SAFIYA MOSQUE

Children and other civilians faced deadly danger while trying to carry out ordinary, everyday activities, such as attending Friday prayers. On 19 September 2025, shortly after 5am, there was a strike on the El Safiya mosque in El Fasher, at a time when dozens of people, including children, had gathered for early morning prayers. Amnesty International spoke to five witnesses of the attack. Three were praying at the mosque and left the building just moments before the strike.⁴⁷¹ Two who were nearby heard the explosion and arrived at the scene shortly after.⁴⁷²

At least 90 people were praying in the mosque at the time of the strike.⁴⁷³ Three witnesses who helped bury the dead said that approximately 70 people were killed, including children.⁴⁷⁴ A list shared with Amnesty

471. Interviews by voice call with *Abdelsalam*, 6 October 2025; *Marwan*, 6 October 2025; and *Abdelbagi*, 6 October 2025.

472. Interviews by voice call with *Hamid*, 6 October 2025; and *Husna*, 7 October 2025.

473. Interviews, October 2025.

474. Interviews by voice call with *Abdelsalam*, 6 October 2025; *Marwan*, 6 October 2025; *Abdulbagi*, 6 October 2025; and *Wagdy*, 6 October 2025.



📡 ↑ Satellite imagery from 18 September shows El Safiya mosque. On 26 September, satellite imagery shows major destruction at the mosque.

International identified 57 victims by name, four of whom were children.⁴⁷⁵ Amnesty International corroborated the names of 10 people on the list through interviews. UNICEF reported that at least 11 children, aged between six and 15, were killed.⁴⁷⁶

Abdelsalam, a 25-year-old Berti man, was praying at the mosque that morning but left with about five other young men immediately after the first prayer. About 20 seconds later, he said he was thrown to the floor by an enormous blast.⁴⁷⁷ “The first hit was very strong, houses around the mosque started shaking,” he said. A second explosion followed within less than a minute, he added. When things were quiet again, *Abdelsalam* got up:

“We started to hear people screaming... When we saw the whole building was destroyed, we ran [to help]. We saw the remains of people: one arm here, one hand there... We tried to get the dead bodies [out] from the rubble.”⁴⁷⁸

Husna, a 50-year-old woman of Hawara ethnicity, lost her husband as well as her 12- and 14-year-old sons in the strike. She lived so close that she could see the mosque from her window. She was praying at home when she heard the explosion. “I got up, I ran outside and started screaming at the neighbours,” she said, before rushing to the scene:⁴⁷⁹

“I saw my husband and I spoke to him... He said he had a huge pain in his back... My two sons were already dead. I saw them. I went home because I live next to the mosque. I brought white sheets so I could bury them.”⁴⁸⁰

475. See Annex III for a list of reported deaths from the El Safiya mosque strike.

476. UNICEF, “At least 11 children reportedly killed in attack on a mosque in Sudan’s North Darfur State”, 21 September 2025, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/least-11-children-reportedly-killed-attack-mosque-sudans-north-darfur-state>

477. Interview by voice call with *Abdelsalam*, 6 October 2025.

478. Interview by voice call with *Abdelsalam*, 6 October 2025.

479. Interview by voice call with *Husna*, 7 October 2025.

480. Interview by voice call with *Husna*, 7 October 2025.

Husna's husband was rushed to Saudi Hospital but did not survive. His body was brought back to the mosque and he was buried that day. Doctors told *Husna* that he had died of internal bleeding.

Most of the people in the mosque were killed instantly, witnesses said, but a small number were taken to Saudi Hospital. *Abdelbagi*, a 28-year-old Zaghawa man, helped transport five survivors in a donkey cart, including one child about 10 to 12 years old.⁴⁸¹ “[The injured] were all unconscious, they were all seriously injured,” he said. “Unfortunately, all of them lost their lives in the hospital.”⁴⁸²

All witnesses said they could hear a drone in the sky leading up to the strike. Satellite imagery of the mosque confirms that massive damage to the building took place on 19 September 2025. One video from the aftermath of the strike, shared with Amnesty International, shows what appears to be at least 11 dead bodies in the rubble.⁴⁸³ The extensive level of damage seen on this and other videos, and the high number of casualties, would be consistent with drone-dropped munitions that that RSF is known to use. However, witnesses said that no fragments were found at the site, making confirmation impossible.

The mosque is a large, distinctive building in a compound clearly separated from other buildings. It is likely that it was the intended target of the strike. All witnesses said that there was no military presence near the mosque on the day of the attack, and that those attending the prayer service were unarmed. None of the individuals visible in the available footage appears to be wearing uniforms associated with the SAF or Joint Forces, and witnesses and available documentation indicate that SAF and Joint Forces fighters were generally identifiable by uniforms during combat operations.

Amnesty International reviewed a casualty list compiled by relatives and community members, which identified some individuals as SAF soldiers. While their ranks could not be verified, no widely known senior officials were identified.⁴⁸⁴ Several prominent political and tribal leaders were also among the dead, including *sharief* (King) Adam Tahir, a traditional leader of the Zaghawa people, and one of the *omdas* (mid-level traditional leader) of Abu Shouk IDP camp. While there is no information indicating that either were actively participating in hostilities, they may have been perceived as influential figures within the Zaghawa community, one of the main ethnic groups represented in the Joint Forces. Such influence, however, would not render them legitimate military targets under international humanitarian law. On the list of those killed was also Ahmed Adam Ali Hassan, the Secretary General of Central Darfur State, a civilian position.

Under international humanitarian law, mosques and other places of worship are considered civilian objects and are entitled to protection.⁴⁸⁵ They may not be targeted unless, and only for such time as, they are being used for military purposes, including to, for example, store weapons or shelter combatants.⁴⁸⁶ The mere presence of combatants or individuals affiliated with armed groups does not in itself make a mosque a lawful military target. Individuals inside a mosque may only be attacked if they are lawful military targets, such as members of armed forces or individuals directly participating in hostilities.⁴⁸⁷ Even where a mosque or an individual inside it becomes a lawful target, any attack must comply with the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution.⁴⁸⁸

481. Interview by voice call with *Abdelbagi*, 6 October 2025.

482. Interview by voice call with *Abdelbagi*, 6 October 2025.

483. Video, on file with Amnesty International.

484. Conversation with a Sudanese human rights defender, April 2026.

485. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rules 7 and 9.

486. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rules 8 and 10.

487. Protocol II, Article 13(2)-(3); ICRC, Customary IHL, Rules 1 and 6.

488. Protocol II, Article 13; ICRC, Customary IHL Rules 1, 14 and 15.

The interviews conducted by Amnesty International provide no indication that the mosque was being used for anything other than religious purposes or that any high-ranking combatants were present when it was struck. Even if some lower-ranking Joint Forces or SAF members were present and considered the intended targets, attacking a crowded mosque during prayers, causing mass civilian casualties, would be disproportionate to any anticipated military advantage. The apparent targeting of the mosque therefore appears inconsistent with international humanitarian law and should be investigated as a war crime.

DAR EL ARQAM

Amnesty International spoke to four people who were living in and witnessed a strike on a displacement site called Dar el Arqam, located in Daraja Oula neighbourhood. Dar el Arqam, according to media reports and local human rights defenders, was previously used by the UN mission in Sudan for training purposes.⁴⁸⁹ The other half of the site was a university. The director of the site said that up to 160 families were living there at one time.⁴⁹⁰

A strike on Dar el Arqam on or around 20 August 2025 killed several children. All four interviewees were parents of children injured or killed in the strike. Amnesty International received the names of four people who were killed and three who were injured. The witnesses described hearing four or five explosions in rapid succession, with some munitions hitting the compound and some landing beyond the grounds.

Samah, who has six children, said they were playing in the yard when she heard an explosion. “I ran into the ditch [to take cover],” she said. “I thought my children were already hiding in the ditch. When the bombs hit the ground, there was a lot of dust, you could not see anything.”⁴⁹¹ When she emerged, she found that her 12-year-old son had a shrapnel wound in his head. He was unconscious and was taken to the hospital, where he died three days later. *Osama*, *Samah*’s 14-year-old son, was partially blinded in the attack:

“When Osama realized that his brother fell down, he returned back to pick him up and was hit [with shrapnel] from a second explosion. Now most of the time tears are running down [his face].”⁴⁹²

Suad, who has three children, said that her 14-year-old daughter was injured in the same attack. “I was cooking... some children ran up to me and told me that my daughter had been injured,” she said. “She was injured in her upper left leg and was bleeding there. She was unconscious.”⁴⁹³ *Suad* said that a Joint Forces vehicle that was stationed nearby took her daughter to the hospital. Her daughter was left with extremely limited mobility after the attack.

A third woman, *Hinda*, said that her seven-year-old daughter was killed in the same strike.⁴⁹⁴ A fourth witness, who was the director of the displacement site, said he arrived at the scene shortly after the strike and found out that his sons, aged two and three, as well as his pregnant 23-year-old wife, had been killed.⁴⁹⁵

Unlike other strikes documented above, witnesses from Dar el Arqam said that they lived near to military checkpoints belonging to the SAF and Joint Forces – so close that they could see a checkpoint over the wall

489. Sudan Tribune, “Sudan launches training of security forces in El-Fasher State”, 26 September 2022, <https://sudantribune.com/article/264582>; conversation with a human rights defender from El Fasher, January 2026.

490. Interview by voice call with *Murad*, 12 September 2025.

491. Interview by voice call with *Samah*, 28 August 2025.

492. Interview by voice call with *Samah*, 28 August 2025.

493. Interview by voice call with *Suad*, 8 September 2025.

494. Interview by voice call with *Hinda*, 9 September 2025.

495. Interview by voice call with *Murad*, 12 September 2025.

from where they were living.⁴⁹⁶ One man, who worked for a humanitarian organization that arranged cash payments to IDPs, said that the population living at Dar el Arqam was a mix of civilians and military: “In the past it was one of the military sites, but then due to bombardment the civilians came and moved to the site... This includes children.”⁴⁹⁷

Dar el Arqam, or the checkpoints nearby, may therefore have been legitimate military targets. However, as the area was densely populated, the RSF may not have taken all feasible precautions to protect civilians, who were known to be living at Dar el Arqam, in this attack.

On 11 October 2025, Amnesty International received information from the Humanitarian Aid Commission of Sudan, a government agency, that 57 people had been reportedly killed that day in a series of drone and artillery attacks on Dar el Arqam.⁴⁹⁸ Seventeen were children and eight were over 60 years old.⁴⁹⁹ Amnesty International was unable to verify these deaths. However, Amnesty International received photos and videos of Dar el Arqam around the time of the incident, showing near-total destruction of the compound and numerous corpses in the underground containers at the site.⁵⁰⁰

ATTACKS ON HEALTHCARE INFRASTRUCTURE

Hospitals in El Fasher were regularly attacked during the siege of the city.⁵⁰¹ At times, these attacks were so frequent that they deterred people from seeking healthcare, even for serious injuries.

El Fasher had several major hospitals at the start of the war, but most were forced to close as hostilities intensified. According to MSF, Babiker Nahar paediatric hospital was damaged by an SAF air strike in May 2024 that caused the roof to cave in, killing two children.⁵⁰² South Hospital, one of the city's largest, was hit by mortars and bullets multiple times in May 2024 and then forced to close after being stormed and looted by the RSF.⁵⁰³

Rather than stop their work, both hospitals evacuated staff, patients and equipment to Saudi Hospital and nearby buildings; at that time, the neighbourhood, Daraja Oula, was relatively safe.⁵⁰⁴ The three hospitals effectively functioned as one. Even after this consolidation, however, attacks were frequent. As of July 2024, MSF said that the hospital had been hit four times, including one attack on 29 July 2024 that killed three people and injured 25.⁵⁰⁵ After another deadly strike in August 2024, MSF was forced to end its support to the hospital.⁵⁰⁶

496. Interviews by voice call with *Hinda*, 9 September 2025; and *Suad*, 8 September 2025.

497. Interview by voice call with *Noorain*, 12 December 2025.

498. List of casualties from 11 October 2025 strike on Dar al-Arqam shelter, on file with Amnesty International.

499. List of casualties from 11 October 2025 strike on Dar al-Arqam shelter, on file with Amnesty International. See also UNICEF, “At least 17 children reportedly killed in attack on displacement centre in North Darfur’s Al Fasher, Sudan”, 12 October 2025, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/least-17-children-reportedly-killed-attack-displacement-centre-north-darfurs-al>

500. Photos and videos, on file with Amnesty International.

501. See, for example, UN FFM, *Sudan: A War of Atrocities* (previously cited), paras. 89, 91-96; OHCHR, *Under siege: the situation of human rights in El Fasher, North Darfur since May 2024* (previously cited), paras. 23-26; ACHPR, *Report of the Virtual Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights Situation in the Sudan* (previously cited), para. 124.

502. MSF, “One by one, hospitals are damaged and closed in El Fasher as fighting rages”, 14 June 2024, <https://www.msf.org/one-one-hospitals-are-damaged-and-closed-el-fasher-sudan>. See also MSF Canada, “Sudan: Bomb puts El Fasher paediatric hospital out of action”, 13 May 2024, <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.ca/sudan-bomb-puts-el-fasher-paediatric-hospital-out-of-action-kills-two-children-and-one-caregiver-urges-warring-parties-to-ensure-protection-of-civilians-and-health-structures/>; UNSC, “Letter dated 14 April 2025 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council (previously cited), para. 33.

503. MSF, “One by one, hospitals are damaged and closed in El Fasher as fighting rages” (previously cited).

504. Interviews, November 2025 – January 2026.

505. MSF, “Sudan: Attacks on El Fasher hospitals and supply blockade put lives at risk”, 1 August 2024, <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/sudan-attacks-el-fasher-hospitals-and-supply-blockade-put-lives-risk>

506. MSF, *Besieged, Attacked, Starved: Mass Atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam, Sudan*, 3 July 2025, <https://www.msf.org/besieged-attacked-starved-mass-atrocities-el-fasher>. See also: MSF, “Last hospital in El Fasher risks closure during intensive bombardment on the city”, 14 August 2024, <https://www.msf.org/last-hospital-el-fasher-risks-closure-during-intensive-bombardment-city>



© ← Two photos from human rights defender showing damage to Saudi Maternity Hospital following an air strike during the siege of El Fasher.
© Private



The hospital continued to operate, but attacks escalated. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), one attack in January 2025 killed 70 patients and their companions, including several children.⁵⁰⁷ In early October 2025, just weeks before the RSF stormed the hospital, a strike on the hospital killed at least 12 people, according to media reports.⁵⁰⁸

One doctor said: “When you say Saudi I become emotional... Sometimes there [were] injured people coming to the hospital, we [couldn’t] support them because of drone strikes, sometimes you just see people bleeding and you cannot stop the bleeding because [you cannot work during] the drone strikes.”⁵⁰⁹

Many staff and patients were at the hospital when it was attacked. Amnesty International spoke to three women who gave birth at Saudi Hospital but were forced to flee shortly afterwards when the facility came under shelling. *Hawa*, a 35-year-old Zaghawa woman, described her experiences during a C-section in December 2024:

“When they took me to the theatre for surgery, [it] was hit by a rocket. The power went off... I was still on the table of the operating theatre, my surgery wound was not even closed... The doctor ran away and his assistant was putting her hand on my chest and the baby was crying. She stayed with me and was trying to support me. She said, ‘This is our fate, I will stay with you’... The theatre was hit again... 10 to 15 minutes later it stopped.”⁵¹⁰

After the doctor returned and finished stitching up *Hawa*’s surgery wounds, she said her baby could not breastfeed and was struggling to breathe. He was taken to the ICU and died there that day.⁵¹¹

Ensherah, a 36-year-old Zaghawa woman and mother of five, said that a few days after she gave birth at Saudi Hospital in February or March 2025, the hospital was shelled, shattering the window next to her bed.⁵¹²

507. The Guardian, “Scores killed in hospital attack in Sudan’s besieged El Fasher, says WHO”, 26 January 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jan/26/hospital-attack-sudan-besieged-el-fasher-who>. See also: UNICEF, “At least 4 children reportedly killed and 3 injured in attack on Saudi Hospital, El Fasher, North Darfur – Sudan”, 28 January 2025, <https://www.unicefusa.org/press/least-4-children-reportedly-killed-and-3-injured-attack-saudi-hospital-el-fasher-north-darfur>

508. Al Jazeera, “RSF attack on hospital in Sudan’s el-Fasher kills 12, medics say”, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/10/8/rsf-attack-on-hospital-in-sudan-el-fasher-kills-12-medics-say>

509. Interview by voice call with *Nada*, 17 December 2025.

510. Interview with *Hawa*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

511. Interview with *Hawa*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

512. Interview in person with *Ensherah*, 3 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

Fathiya, a 16-year-old Zaghawa girl, said that in 2024 her mother went to give birth at Saudi Hospital and was killed during an attack there.⁵¹³

Many people never reached the hospital because of the bombardments. *Thoriya*, 32, described giving birth in a bomb shelter in El Fasher in April or May 2025 because she could not reach the hospital:

“When [the midwife] came there was heavy shelling and rockets everywhere including in the yard of our house... [The shelter] was big enough but we [had] no fresh air. After I gave birth, sometimes I felt like it was just too hot, we used to take the baby outside to get fresh air and then [we had to] bring him back inside because there was shelling.”⁵¹⁴

IHL prohibits attacks on civilian objects, with heightened protection for objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, including hospitals.⁵¹⁵ Such facilities may not be made the object of attack; they lose this protection only in cases where they “are being used, outside their humanitarian function, to commit acts harmful to the enemy.”⁵¹⁶ Interviews with witnesses from Saudi Hospital indicate no active military presence at the facility. Accordingly, attacks on the hospital likely constitute the war crime of intentionally directing an attack against a hospital.⁵¹⁷ Amnesty International did not interview a significant number of witnesses from other hospitals, so was unable to assess the presence of military personnel. Regardless, these incidents warrant further investigation, as they may also amount to the war crime of attacking a protected civilian object.

513. Interview in person with *Fathiya*, 28 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

514. Interview in person with *Thoriya*, 3 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

515. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 28.

516. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 28.

517. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(iv); see also Article 8(2)(e)(ii); ICRC, Customary IHL, Rules 28 and 156.

6. RAPID SUPPORT FORCES' SEIZURE OF EL FASHER

“[The RSF] said, ‘We will not leave any falangay here, whether [they] are an adult or young.’”

*Mutawakil, a 17-year-old boy who narrowly escaped execution at the berm while fleeing El Fasher*⁵¹⁸

“The whole hospital was full of dead people, [killed] like locusts.”

*Samahir, a 36-year-old Zaghawa woman: RSF soldiers executed a relative of hers at Saudi Hospital in El Fasher on 26 October 2025*⁵¹⁹

On 26 October 2025, the RSF seized the parts of El Fasher remaining under SAF and Joint Forces control.⁵²⁰ The final offensive began on the night of 24 October.⁵²¹ According to the Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), by the morning of 25 October, wireless communications were disrupted, severing contact between the SAF and allied forces, as hundreds of RSF fighters entered the city.⁵²² By the evening of

518. Interview by voice call with *Mutawakil*, 19 December 2025.

519. Interview by voice call with *Samahir*, 1 December 2025 and 25 January 2026.

520. Rapid Support Forces, “الدعم السريع” تعلن تحرير الفاشر “[“Rapid Support [Forces] announce the liberation of El Fasher”], 27 January 2026, <https://rapidsupportforce.com/ar/news-details/Liberation-El-Fasher>

521. OHCHR, “They were shooting us like animals”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (24-30 October 2025) (previously cited), para. 27.

522. OHCHR, “They were shooting us like animals”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (24-30 October 2025) (previously cited), para. 27.

27 October, SAF forces had withdrawn.⁵²³ At the time of publication, the RSF maintained control of all of El Fasher and the surrounding areas.

While shelling was already a daily occurrence for many residents during the siege, bombardments were so intense in the hours before the takeover of the city that many civilians were forced out of any remaining hiding place. Survivors saw people being killed in wave after wave of attack.⁵²⁴ Those fleeing were forced to travel slowly, moving from one destroyed building to the next to shield themselves from non-stop shelling. One doctor, describing the experience, said: “The RSF were everywhere: inside the city, around the city. They were killing and shooting with different types of heavy weapons; sometimes they would shoot people in front of you and you just had to leave them there... This was my longest journey.”⁵²⁵

Once civilians realized the city was falling under RSF control, most ran for their lives. Having seen videos of or personally experienced abuses at the hands of the RSF before, they had few illusions about how they would be treated if they stayed. Amnesty International interviewed 70 people who fled El Fasher on or after 26 October, almost all of whom witnessed or experienced abuses while attempting to flee.

Most of the survivors interviewed fled north or west on roads to Tawila, a town approximately 60km west of El Fasher that is under the control of the SLA/AW, an armed opposition group that has largely remained outside the fighting between the SAF and the RSF. As of September 2025, Tawila was already home to over 650,000 people displaced from El Fasher and surrounding areas, most of whom arrived after March 2025.⁵²⁶ Some people attempted to evade RSF patrols by moving to Wana Mountain, just north of the city. A small number fled to Mellit, a town 50km north of El Fasher, which is also under RSF control, and fled from there to Chad soon after.

The RSF made fleeing El Fasher extraordinarily difficult. By October, a 57km network of earthen berms and barriers controlled by the RSF encircled most of the city, with checkpoints on the roads leading out. One woman described the berms, approximately 3m high, as “wall(s) of soil”.⁵²⁷ When civilians came across them, they usually tried to clamber over and keep running, but RSF fighters were patrolling the tops of the berms and swooped down to stop them.

What followed was a massacre. Men and older boys were often separated from women, girls and young boys. RSF fighters often called them by ethnic slurs, such as *falangay* or *ambay*. The RSF also characterized most men and boys of affiliation with the SAF or allied groups, calling them *abulda* (a derogatory term used to refer to lower-ranking SAF soldiers) or *toro boro* (a term used to refer to the Joint Forces). Without waiting for responses to these claims, the RSF often executed or beat them. Many survivors witnessed the killing of dozens of men and boys; often people only managed to escape because they pretended to be dead.⁵²⁸

Women and girls were also tortured and killed. Young children were beaten, sometimes with the butt of a gun or with whips, or deliberately run over with cars while trying to flee.⁵²⁹ Multiple people witnessed the murder of a child under the age of 14. Parents were often separated from their children in the fray. RSF fighters stole belongings, including food and water. People died of dehydration along the way.⁵³⁰

523. OHCHR, “They were shooting us like animals”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (24-30 October 2025) (previously cited), para. 28.

524. Interviews, November-December 2025.

525. Interview by voice call with *Alsir*, 11 December 2025.

526. The New Humanitarian, “As RSF attacks escalate, a Darfur town struggles to shelter the displaced”, 2 June 2025, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2025/06/02/rsf-attacks-escalate-darfur-town-struggles-shelter-displaced>. See also IOM, “Displacement and Humanitarian Needs Snapshot: Tawila, North Darfur”, 29 October 2025, <https://dtm.iom.int/report-product-series/displacement-report-1#:~:text=As%20of%2030%20September%202025,were%20unable%20to%20receive%20treatment>

527. Interviews by voice call with *Taiseer*, 4 December 2025; and *Alsir*, 11 December 2025.

528. Interviews, November 2025 to January 2026.

529. Interviews, November 2025 to January 2026.

530. Interviews, November 2025 to January 2026.



☺↑ The map above shows the 57km berm constructed by the RSF between May and October 2025. Blue squares indicate openings in the berm with controlled checkpoints. The location of the “Abu Lulu” mass killing is highlighted.

Even those who managed to escape past the berms near El Fasher were often picked up two or three times by RSF patrols, risking abuses at each encounter. For some, it took more than a week to reach Tawila because they travelled only at night to evade the RSF. Many women were raped or sexually abused while fleeing El Fasher; hostage-taking, already a common practice, became rampant (see Chapter 8).

OHCHR reported over 6,000 people killed between 25 and 27 October, with at least 4,400 people killed within El Fasher and at least 1,600 killed while attempting to flee along exit routes.⁵³¹ OHCHR emphasized that the real death toll was most likely much higher, as many people reported seeing hundreds of bodies in trenches while fleeing El Fasher.⁵³²

The situation inside El Fasher during the RSF takeover was equally dire. Relating to one of the worst reported incidents, Amnesty International interviewed 18 patients, staff and others who were at Saudi Hospital when it was taken over by the RSF. In a series of attacks beginning on 26 October, witnesses said they saw uniformed RSF soldiers killing scores of civilians, as well as injured and unarmed soldiers. Amnesty International

531. OHCHR, “They were shooting us like animals”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (24-30 October 2025) (previously cited), para. 40.

532. OHCHR, “They were shooting us like animals”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (24-30 October 2025) (previously cited), paras 40, 45, 46.

confirmed the names of 12 people, including a 15-year-old boy, who were killed in the attack, as well as dozens and possibly hundreds of unidentified victims.⁵³³

Amnesty International also spoke to seven people who remained in El Fasher for several weeks after the RSF takeover, primarily because they were injured, detained or in some cases had been turned back by the RSF when they tried to leave. Several of these people witnessed extrajudicial killings, particularly of young men, in El Fasher. In general, people described dire humanitarian conditions and were forced to negotiate at length with the RSF to eventually leave the city.

There is an abundance of evidence to prove that RSF fighters were the perpetrators of the above acts. Witnesses said they could identify RSF fighters by their uniforms and insignia; often, they said, the RSF introduced themselves as RSF fighters.⁵³⁴ In addition, Amnesty International verified 13 videos in which identifiable RSF soldiers perpetrated a massacre at a section of the berm north-west of El Fasher.⁵³⁵

The RSF has publicly acknowledged that civilians remained in El Fasher during the siege, although it has claimed that armed groups inside El Fasher “are the ones detaining residents and using some of them as human shields”.⁵³⁶ But in their interactions with civilians, RSF fighters consistently characterized everyone remaining in the city at that time as being affiliated with the military. One man, aged 21, who worked as a water porter, said that a group of RSF fighters who killed his brother and three other men on the road out of El Fasher told him: “In El Fasher there are no civilians, everybody is a soldier.”⁵³⁷

Some men fleeing the city had participated in its military defence on behalf of the SAF or allied armed groups. Two witnesses said that the men with whom they were fleeing El Fasher were armed and fired back at the RSF at the berm; several others said that they had fled in large groups that included Joint Forces or SAF soldiers but that these soldiers did not engage in fighting with the RSF while fleeing.⁵³⁸ In the videos verified by Amnesty International, all the people executed by the RSF – some of whom are in uniform – are unarmed.⁵³⁹ In all other cases, witnesses said that the RSF had executed and abused people who were civilians.

The RSF’s actions against people fleeing El Fasher in the days following 26 October 2025 amount to the war crimes of attacking civilians, attacking a hospital, murder and forcible displacement.⁵⁴⁰ Mere suspicion of affiliation with a party to the conflict does not deprive a person of civilian protection. Attacking fighters who are hors de combat, meaning those who are not participating in the fighting because they have surrendered or are injured, is a war crime.⁵⁴¹ As further detailed in Chapter 11, the conduct also amounts to the crimes against humanity of murder, forcible transfer of a population, persecution on the basis of gender and ethnicity and extermination.⁵⁴²

533. The WHO and local political figures from Darfur reported that 460 people were killed in this attack. See WHO, “WHO condemns killings of patients and civilians amid escalating violence in El Fasher, Sudan”, 29 October 2025, <https://www.who.int/news/item/29-10-2025-who-condemns-killings-of-patients-and-civilians-amid-escalating-violence-in-el-fasher-sudan>. See also Governor of Darfur Minni Minawi, X post: مجزرة المستشفى السعودي في الفاشر ، هكذا تمت تصفية أكثر من 460 مواطن مريض كانوا في المستشفى ، على دولة الإمارات العربية: اما ان تتبرأ من مليشيا الدعم السريع او تتحمل المسؤولية كاملة، مجلس الأمن الدولي تقع في الفاشر [The massacre at the Saudi Hospital in El Fasher, in which more than 460 sick citizens were killed, demands that the United Arab Emirates either disavow the Rapid Support Forces militia or bear full responsibility. The UN Security Council has a responsibility to arrest Hemedti, Abdelrahim Dagalo, and his brother wherever they are found (video)], 29 October 2025, <https://x.com/arkominawi/status/1983428936475304252?s=12>

534. Interviews, November–December 2025.

535. See footnotes in textbox below, Video evidence of massacre at the berm on 27 October”.

536. RSF, “The RSF: Humanitarian corridors remain open to evacuate civilians from El Fasher”, 13 August 2025, <https://rapidsupportforce.com/en/news-details/Humanitarian> (accessed on 10 February 2025).

537. Interview by voice call with *Badr*, 11 November 2025.

538. Interview by voice call with *Omer*, 5 January 2026; interview by voice call with *Taiba*, 2 December 2025; interview by voice call with *Kaltham*, 5 December 2025; interview with *Amir*, 4 November 2025, Tiné, Chad.

539. See footnotes textbox below, “Video evidence of massacre at the berm on 27 October”.

540. Rome Statute Articles 8(2)(c)(i)(1), 8(2)(e)(i), 8(2)(e)(iv) and 8(2)(e)(viii).

541. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 47.

542. Rome Statute Articles 7(1)(a), 7(1)(b), 7(1)(d), 7(1)(h) and 7(2)(g).

6.1 MASS KILLINGS AT THE BERM

Amnesty International analysed satellite imagery from El Fasher in the months leading up to the RSF's last offensive. In May 2025, construction began on a machine-dug outer berm, extending berms previously built by the Joint Forces. This construction began about 1.6km north of El Fasher, at the road that connected the city to Mellit. Construction continued over the next few months; by early October 2025, the city was almost completely surrounded by a network of earthen berms and barriers.⁵⁴³ Five checkpoints controlled the main roads in and out of the city. By September, extra control features, including S-shaped berms and layered entries, meant to slow and control vehicles approaching the checkpoints, had been added, making it even more difficult for vehicles or people to pass through.

Survivors described chaos and carnage at the berms. Almost all of the 70 people interviewed by Amnesty International who fled El Fasher after the fall said they had witnessed an execution or mass execution, rape, torture or hostage-taking at the berms and trenches surrounding the city.

Ashosha, a 58-year-old Berti woman, told Amnesty International that around 4am on 27 October, she saw more than 1,000 dead bodies in the trench of a berm on the route to Hillet el Sheikh, a village about 6km north of El Fasher.⁵⁴⁴ She said, "[In] the berm is a deep hole, and it became a barrier for the people... People were killed inside the berm and outside the berm. The people who were shot were thrown inside the berm... [The RSF] said they would fill in the berm with the bodies."⁵⁴⁵

Zubeida, 15, witnessed an RSF massacre at the berm. She had been separated from her parents a few days before 26 October during heavy bombardments of El Fasher. When the RSF seized the city, she fled with a group of about 25 neighbours and relatives in the direction of Garni, a village 17km north-west of the city. When they reached the berm, a group of RSF fighters in cars with mounted machine guns raced towards them. They took the men and older boys to one side and instructed them to shout pro-RSF slogans. When questioned, the men and boys denied that they were part of the SAF. The RSF fighters immediately shot and killed 10 of them. The youngest boy killed was 10 years old, a former neighbour of *Zubeida*'s.⁵⁴⁶

Women and girls were not spared, *Zubeida* said: "They wanted to sexually abuse the girls and the women. The women were refusing, [so the RSF] had swords and they slaughtered the women."⁵⁴⁷ *Zubeida* witnessed five women who attempted to resist rape being killed with swords, including her 18-year-old cousin. A few women and girls, including those as young as 10, were hung from a tree with their arms behind their backs. *Zubeida* also said she witnessed the RSF murdering four children under the age of 10, who were shot because they were screaming after witnessing the deaths of their mothers.

Zubeida said she was spared because she is ethnically half Arab on her father's side (on her mother's side she is Tunjur, a non-Arab ethnicity). She told the RSF fighters, falsely, that her father was also in the RSF, and gave them his full name. One of the RSF fighters at the berm recognized *Zubeida* from their old neighbourhood and helped advocate for her. While the massacre was happening, she sat on the ground nearby. She told Amnesty International:

543. For more details, see OHCHR, "*They Were Shooting Us Like Animals*": RSF Final Offensive and Capture of Besieged El Fasher (24-30 October 2025) (previously cited).

544. Interview by voice call with *Ashosha*, 23 February 2026. Both the OHCHR and the UN FFM stated that they received consistent reports from witnesses who fled El Fasher on or soon after 27 October that they saw several hundreds or thousands of dead bodies near the berms and exit routes from the city. For more details, see OHCHR, "*They Were Shooting Us Like Animals*" (previously cited), paras 45-56; UN FFM, *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher*, 17 February 2026, UN Doc. A/HRC/61/77, paras 50-53.

545. Interview by voice call with *Ashosha*, 23 February 2026.

546. Interview by voice call with *Zubeida*, 9 December 2025.

547. Interview by voice call with *Zubeida*, 9 December 2025.



© ↑ A team of volunteers from Tawila burying dead bodies found on the road from El Fasher. Thousands were killed by RSF soldiers as they tried to escape from El Fasher. Others died from thirst, including after their water reserves or the donkeys pulling their carts were confiscated by RSF soldiers or allied militias. January 2026. © Private

“I was watching everything... I am the only survivor.”⁵⁴⁸

Zubeida said that Commander Al-Fateh Abdullah Idris, more widely known as “Abu Lulu”, was present at this massacre at the berm and introduced himself by name before the massacre began.⁵⁴⁹ She said that Abu Lulu was directing the operations and that she saw him shooting some of the men and boys and killing women.⁵⁵⁰ More information about Abu Lulu’s abuses are documented in the textbox below.

Taiseer, a 68-year-old Zaghawa woman, was with her five grandchildren, aged six to 15, when they fled El Fasher on 26 October. *Taiseer* was the children’s primary caretaker after their mother, *Taiseer*’s oldest daughter, died during the war. Despite the difficulty of such a journey with so many children, she felt she had no choice but to leave: “Everywhere was fire and burning and shelling. I was told to go, take the children out of El Fasher.”⁵⁵¹ Two boys *Taiseer* knew from her old neighbourhood, aged 12 and 15, helped her carry the younger children.

They fled north-west towards Jabal Wana, a mountain where they thought they would be safe from RSF patrols. When they reached the berm, RSF fighters on motorbikes cornered them. The large group of people fleeing panicked and scattered:

548. Interview by voice call with *Zubeida*, 9 December 2025.

549. BBC, “RSF commander linked by BBC Verify to Sudan massacre sanctioned in UK”, 12 December 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0jeeq6xnyvo>

550. Interview by voice call with *Zubeida*, 9 December 2025.

551. Interview by voice call with *Taiseer*, 4 December 2025.



👁️↑ Commander Al-Fateh Abdullah Idris, more widely known as “Abu Lulu”.

“When we reached the berm, the [12-year-old] boy who was helping me with the children was shot dead... I stopped but other people kept running. I saw him opening and closing his mouth again and again. At some point he closed his mouth and didn’t open it... Then I ran too.”⁵⁵²

Taiseer also witnessed the murder of a relative who was in his forties. “He ran until he was tired from running and sat down by a bush... [RSF fighters] on motorbikes shot him.”⁵⁵³ *Taiseer* lost track of two of her grandchildren in the fray but was reunited with them later.

Whole groups or families were wiped out. *Daoud*, a 19-year-old Zaghawa man, was escaping with seven friends, aged 17 to 19, all of whom were shot and killed. “I watched my friends die in front of me and I could not help,” he said.⁵⁵⁴ Those who managed to survive often did so by pure luck or by feigning dead. *Khalil*, a 34-year-old Zaghawa man, fled El Fasher on 27 October with a group of 20 men who were rounded up by RSF fighters at the berm:

“[They] asked us to lie on the ground. They encircled us with their vehicles. Two RSF fighters opened fire on us while we were lying on the ground. They fired from the top of the vehicles. They killed 17 of the 20 men I was fleeing with... One of the RSF fighters shot me in my right shoulder. I was bleeding so I pretended to be dead, and they left us there.”⁵⁵⁵

Khalil managed to crawl away and used a piece of cloth to stem the bleeding in his shoulder, before walking north to the village of Garni.

Making it past the berms was not the final hurdle. Many people were picked up by three or more groups of RSF fighters. *Alsir*, a 28-year-old man of Manasir ethnicity (an Arab tribe), fled El Fasher on 26 October with a group of about 100 men, both civilians and military. They fled at night and managed to escape past two RSF-controlled berms.⁵⁵⁶ At a third berm, however, the RSF discovered them. *Alsir* heard shouts and gunfire, and the group scattered. He remained with about 15 men, hiding inside the berm. When things were quiet again, they walked south inside the berm for about half a kilometre until they reached a road, where another group of RSF fighters apprehended them.⁵⁵⁷ He saw the RSF kill five soldiers and one civilian:

“They started interrogating us. There were five military personnel, four civilians and two doctors. When some of [our group] said they were from the military, they were shot directly and killed, all five of them... They killed one of [the civilians].”⁵⁵⁸

Alsir and the remaining civilians were taken hostage for ransom (see Chapter 8).

In every case documented by Amnesty International, the RSF stole any personal belongings civilians had managed to grab while leaving the city, including water or food for the journey. In one case, a man who was travelling with an older woman said she had died from dehydration on the road.⁵⁵⁹

552. Interview by voice call with *Taiseer*, 4 December 2025.

553. Interview by voice call with *Taiseer*, 4 December 2025.

554. Interview by voice call with *Daoud*, 11 November 2025.

555. Interview by voice call with *Khalil*, 11 November 2025.

556. Interview by voice call with *Alsir*, 11 December 2025.

557. Interview by voice call with *Alsir*, 11 December 2025.

558. Interview by voice call with *Alsir*, 11 December 2025.

559. Interview by voice call with *Badr*, 11 November 2025.

VIDEO EVIDENCE OF MASSACRE AT THE BERM ON 27 OCTOBER

Amnesty International collected and verified 19 videos documenting a large massacre near the berm, about 12km north-west of El Fasher.⁵⁶⁰ Nine of these videos show Commander Al-Fateh Abdullah Idris, more widely known as “Abu Lulu”, executing captive men in civilian clothing.⁵⁶¹

The massacre was carried out in the early hours of 27 October after fighting broke out at the berm, as shown in a verified video filmed by people attempting to flee.⁵⁶² Shadow lengths and the position of the sun suggest that earliest available videos of the massacre were likely shot at around 9am, showing intense burning and large plumes of smoke as well as dozens of apparent corpses, especially on the southern side of the berm. Videos celebrating the massacre, posted by RSF-linked accounts, started to emerge on the Telegram messaging app at around that time. In one video, the individual filming the massacre refers to the deceased as *abulda*, a derogatory term.⁵⁶³

Amnesty International verified that 13 of these videos were shot near the same gate at the berm. These videos, as well as satellite imagery taken on 1 November, show 25 to 30 burning vehicles, mostly pick-ups (including heavy machine gun-mounted ones), at least one ZPU-23 anti-aircraft gun and civilian cars. Several videos show a large number of corpses at the southern rim of the berm or in the trench immediately behind it. An approximate, but partial, count would indicate that about 100 dead bodies can be seen in total, either directly at the berm or at execution sites around it.

These videos primarily show adult male victims. In several videos, two different sets of crutches, almost certainly belonging to the victims, can be seen, which could suggest that an injured person or people with disabilities may have been among those killed. While the presence of several pickups equipped with heavy weapons suggest the presence of the SAF among the escapees, only a few of the victims are seen wearing SAF uniforms.⁵⁶⁴

Nine of the videos show Abu Lulu actively participating in the massacre, and he is filmed killing at least 14 unarmed men in civilian clothing who have surrendered, or are lying or sitting on the ground, or are moving in a bush. However, he does not appear in the first videos taken at the scene of the massacre, and some verbal clues indicate that he joined soldiers at the berm later in the day. In one video, he tells soldiers: “I will not leave any *falangay* alive, assure the people.”⁵⁶⁵

560. محمد حسن قوبا يكتب قصة آخر لحظات ابطال مدينة #الفasher, على حجر تيراب, Facebook Post: <https://www.facebook.com/yhirtyrab/videos/1154132126836623/>, in Arabic; TwilightDewey, X post: “RSF Commander ‘Issa Abu Lulu’ boasts of executing 15+ civilians at point-blank in El Fasher, SW Sudan. More footage of his atrocities emerging”, 27 October 2025, <https://x.com/TwilightDewey/status/1982873669434257640>; الحقيقة كما هي, Telegram post: “جعم الفلنقايات مشتركة” [The *falangay* units and Army Militia were completely wiped out and they are fake], 27 October 2025, <https://t.me/fastsupport88/15982>, in Arabic; الحقيقة كما هي, Telegram post: “[Genocide for the Joint Forces and they are fake], 27 October 2025, <https://t.me/fastsupport88/15976>; الحقيقة كما هي, Telegram post: “من حفر حفرة لأخيه وقع فيها” [He who digs a pit for his brother falls into it himself], 27 October 2025, <https://t.me/fastsupport88/15973>, in Arabic; الحقيقة كما هي, Telegram post, “تم القضاء على المشتركة المنسحبه” [The retreating Joint Forces were wiped out.], 27 October 2025, <https://t.me/fastsupport88/15968>, in Arabic; الحقيقة كما هي, Telegram post: “تمت إبادة المشتركة والفارين من الفasher إبادة تامة” [The Joint Forces, the army, and those fleeing El Fasher were completely annihilated], 27 October 2025, <https://t.me/fastsupport88/15964>, in Arabic; الحقيقة كما هي, Telegram post: “تمت إبادة المشتركة والجيش والفارين من الفasher إبادة تامة” [The Joint Forces, the army, and those fleeing El Fasher were completely annihilated], 27 October 2025, <https://t.me/fastsupport88/15959>, in Arabic; الحقيقة كما هي, Telegram post: “ابولولو والطق النضيف جعم” [Abu Lulu and the clean kill wiping out badly], 27 October 2025, <https://t.me/fastsupport88/15986>, in Arabic; Don FadLallah, Facebook post: “Still Abu Lulu Purifying the innocents in Fasher”, undated, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1891530151464151>; Don FadLallah, Facebook post, “I swear it’s a real evening”, undated, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/838657435522100>. All other videos are on file with Amnesty International.

561. For further analysis of this incident, see Centre for Information Resilience, *Displacement, Detentions and Killings Following the RSF Takeover of El Fasher: 26-31 October*, CIR-Report-RSF-takeover-of-EL-Fasher-October-2025.pdf, 6 November 2025, pp. 9-10; UN FFM, *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher* (previously cited), para. 53; Reuters, “Commander who was filmed killing civilians in Sudan is back in combat, sources say”, 18 May 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/investigations/commander-who-was-filmed-killing-civilians-sudan-is-back-combat-sources-say-2026-05-18/>; BBC, “New videos show executions after RSF militia takes key Sudan town”, 29 October 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cd9kjw515pyo>

562. على حجر تيراب, Facebook Post: <https://www.facebook.com/yhirtyrab/videos/1154132126836623/>, in Arabic; Hamad Hassan Quba writes the story of the final moments of the heroes of the town of El Fasher] (previously cited).

563. Aljazeeraamubasher, [Widespread destruction and bodies covering the ground: shocking scenes left behind by the Rapid Support Forces in El Fasher, western Sudan], 1 November 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/XglfkyogvLQ> (in Arabic).

564. Video, on file with Amnesty International.

565. Video, on file with Amnesty International.

The killings at the berm in the videos analysed above represent just one of many similar mass killings committed by the RSF along the western and northern parts of the berm, according to witness testimonies. While verifiable video evidence of abuses from other parts of the berm has not been published, Yale Humanitarian Research Lab found 83 clusters of objects consistent with human remains outside El Fasher, most of which appear in satellite imagery on 27 and 28 October 2025. This includes 56 clusters along informal roads outside El Fasher and SAF defensive berms west of Daraja Oula, and 21 clusters along the RSF berm around El Fasher.⁵⁶⁶

6.2 TARGETING OF MEN AND BOYS

All civilians faced extreme risks while fleeing El Fasher. But men of fighting age and older boys (usually those 15 and over) were targeted the most, as the RSF often characterized all of them as being directly affiliated with the military or allied forces. Men and boys who were injured could be at even greater risk, as the RSF sometimes suspected them of having received such injuries while fighting.⁵⁶⁷

Hamdi, a 15-year-old Berti boy, left El Fasher three days after it was seized by the RSF. He and his father travelled slowly and only at night, because they feared being caught by RSF patrols. They nonetheless encountered the RSF three times. The first two times, they were beaten and robbed. On the fourth day of their journey they were captured a third time. The RSF fighters accused *Hamdi's* father, 45, of being part of the military. *Hamdi* witnessed him being shot in the head and killed, after which they turned on *Hamdi* himself:

“One of them said, ‘This young boy is also from the military.’ And he was about to shoot me, but another [RSF fighter] grabbed the gun and the shot came to my shoulder... They can make up anything, because they think that everyone who is still in El Fasher, even if they are children, are from the military.”⁵⁶⁸

After *Hamdi's* father was shot, *Hamdi* ran until he lost consciousness. People carried him the rest of the way to Tawila, which he reached nine days after fleeing El Fasher.⁵⁶⁹

Mutawakil, a 17-year-old Berti boy, was detained by the RSF with his family at the berm on 26 October and held overnight. In the morning, he was taken aside with five people; three were executed with a knife in front of him. Despite his protests that he was a civilian, the RSF insisted that *Mutawakil* was in the military because of a shrapnel injury in his back:

“[The RSF said] there are no civilians in El Fasher, all people [there] are in the military. I said I have no affiliation with the military, I have nothing to do with them... They said, ‘We will not leave any talangay here, whether [they] are an adult or young.’”⁵⁷⁰

Mutawakil was only spared because his mother threw herself between him and the RSF, and was brutally beaten herself.

566. Yale HRL, *RSF Systematic Mass Killings and Body Disposal in El-Fasher, North Darfur 26 October – 28 November 2025*, 16 December 2025, <https://files-profile.medicine.yale.edu/documents/001a93f9-1c99-4437-a023-bac1294d3d0e>, p. 1.

567. Interviews in person with *Buthaina*, 1 November 2025; and with *Hamza*, 29 October 2025; interview by voice call with *Mutawakil*, 19 December 2025.

568. Interview by voice call with *Hamdi*, 9 December 2025.

569. Interview by voice call with *Hamdi*, 9 December 2025.

570. Interview by voice call with *Mutawakil*, 19 December 2025.

Ehsaan, a 19-year-old woman of Shuweihat ethnicity, witnessed the RSF's summary execution of her two younger brothers, aged 15 and 18, after they were held hostage for ransom for almost a week. *Ehsaan* was first detained in El Fasher, separately from her brothers. After a week, the RSF put her and other detainees in a military car and took them to Um Gidabo, a village south of El Fasher, where they were forced to march for an hour. "We had no food, no drinks and they kept beating the men and the boys," she said. "In the morning they told us, 'If you don't pay the ransom by tomorrow you will all be killed.'"⁵⁷¹

Ehsaan, who worked as a cleaner, said her family could not afford to pay the SDG 5 million (about USD 1,470) ransom per person that was demanded for her and her brothers' release.⁵⁷² The next morning, the RSF executed 10 men and boys in front of *Ehsaan*, including her brothers, who she had not seen for most of her detention. She said:

"First [the RSF] asked them, 'What is your occupation?' [My brothers said], 'We are not working and we have no money and no one to provide us with money.' They said, 'That's impossible, you are abulda, how come you don't have money?' And then they shot one in his eye and the other in the head.'"⁵⁷³

Batool, a 35-year-old Zaghawa woman, fled El Fasher towards Garni with her three children, aged four to 15, and her nephew, 17. Near Hillet el Sheikh, they were stopped by seven or eight cars with RSF fighters:

"They said, 'Your boy [the 17-year-old] is in the army.' I told them he is not. They said, '[He] is a soldier.' And I told them 'no'. Then he [the RSF fighter] told [him] to sit down, to put the children [he was carrying] down. And they hit him on the back with a gun, and they just shot him there.'"⁵⁷⁴

She said she saw others, mostly men, being shot and killed in the same place.

Boys younger than 15 were also targeted. *Nadia*, a 17-year-old Zaghawa girl, was at a berm west of the city with a large group when they encountered the RSF. She said that the RSF questioned one woman and her two sons, aged about nine and seven, about whether their father was an *abulda*:

"They asked [the woman], 'Is your husband abulda?' She said, 'No, he's not.' Then they asked her nine-year-old boy and he said 'no'. Then they asked [the seven-year-old boy] and he said, 'My father is not abulda, but he is from the military.' Then they shot the nine-year-old to death and they took the woman with them... They said [to the nine-year-old before they shot him], 'When you grow up you will be abulda again.'"⁵⁷⁵

571. Interview by voice call with *Ehsaan*, 18 December 2025.

572. Interview by voice call with *Ehsaan*, 18 December 2025.

573. Interview by voice call with *Ehsaan*, 18 December 2025.

574. Interview by voice call with *Batool*, 1 December 2025.

575. Interview by voice call with *Nadia*, 8 December 2025.

6.3 SAUDI MATERNITY HOSPITAL

As the RSF took control of the city on 26 October, they attacked Saudi Hospital, the last hospital functioning in El Fasher. Amnesty International interviewed 29 people from the hospital, 11 of whom fled before the RSF arrived because they feared reprisals. The 18 who remained included four staff members, two patients, six relatives of patients, and six people who either lived at the hospital or took shelter there due to shelling.

These interviewees confirmed that the RSF killed scores of people at the hospital beginning on 26 October. Witnesses gave the full names of 10 people, including one 15-year-old boy, who they saw killed during the attack; another two names were given by people who did not witness the attack, but who found the bodies of their relatives soon after. Eight people witnessed the RSF killing dozens of people whose names they did not know; another eight saw scores of unidentified dead bodies after the attack. Two people who fled were forced to leave their injured relatives behind; they did not witness their deaths but said they had heard nothing from them in the months since, leading them to suspect they had been killed. Two men were taken hostage directly from the hospital during the RSF attack. In a statement, the RSF denied reports of mass executions at the hospital.⁵⁷⁶

The hospital was large. Due to frequent shelling it operated out of several different locations (see more details below). While staff clearly distinguished between different wards or parts of the hospital, other witnesses often could give only a general indication of where in the hospital they were located. What took place appears to be a series of massacres in different parts of the hospital at different times. The earliest reported incident, at a former World Food Programme (WFP) building that was used for hospital services, took place on the morning of 26 October; the rest of the massacres, in the original Saudi Hospital compound, appear to have started in the late afternoon or early evening of 26 October and continued into the night, and possibly the next day. One man who visited the hospital briefly on 27 October said that by that point, the hospital was full of bodies, but the situation was quiet and no RSF were present.⁵⁷⁷

The number of people who were at the hospital at the time of the attack is unclear, but it was likely hundreds, including many children. Many patients lived at the hospital for weeks or months, long after they recovered from surgery, because their homes had been destroyed by bombardments or because going back and forth for post-surgical checkups was too dangerous.⁵⁷⁸ The numbers also increased dramatically in the days leading up to the capture of El Fasher, as strikes intensified, injuring more people and forcing others to take shelter in the hospital.⁵⁷⁹ One nurse said, referring to 26 October, “The hospital was... full of injured people”.⁵⁸⁰ Many staff also lived at the hospital full-time due to strikes in the area:⁵⁸¹ one person believed there were around 150 employees working there, while another estimated around 300.⁵⁸²

The UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan (UN IFFM) also reported mass killings by the RSF at the hospital during the takeover of El Fasher.⁵⁸³ In a report analysing satellite imagery of El Fasher after the RSF seized it, Yale Humanitarian Research Lab identified 150 clusters of objects consistent

576. RSF, “Rapid Support Forces refute claims of targeting patients in El Fasher hospitals” (updated 27 January 2026), <https://rapidsupportforce.com/ar/news-details/El-Fasher-hospitals>. See also BBC, “Sudan RSF chief promises investigation as anger mounts over el-Fasher killings”, 30 October 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cq50jg5nv45o>

577. Interview by voice call with *Mohamedain*, 12 January 2026.

578. Interviews by voice call with *Abdelmoneim*, 3 December 2025; and *Mohammed Ibrahim*, 11 December 2025.

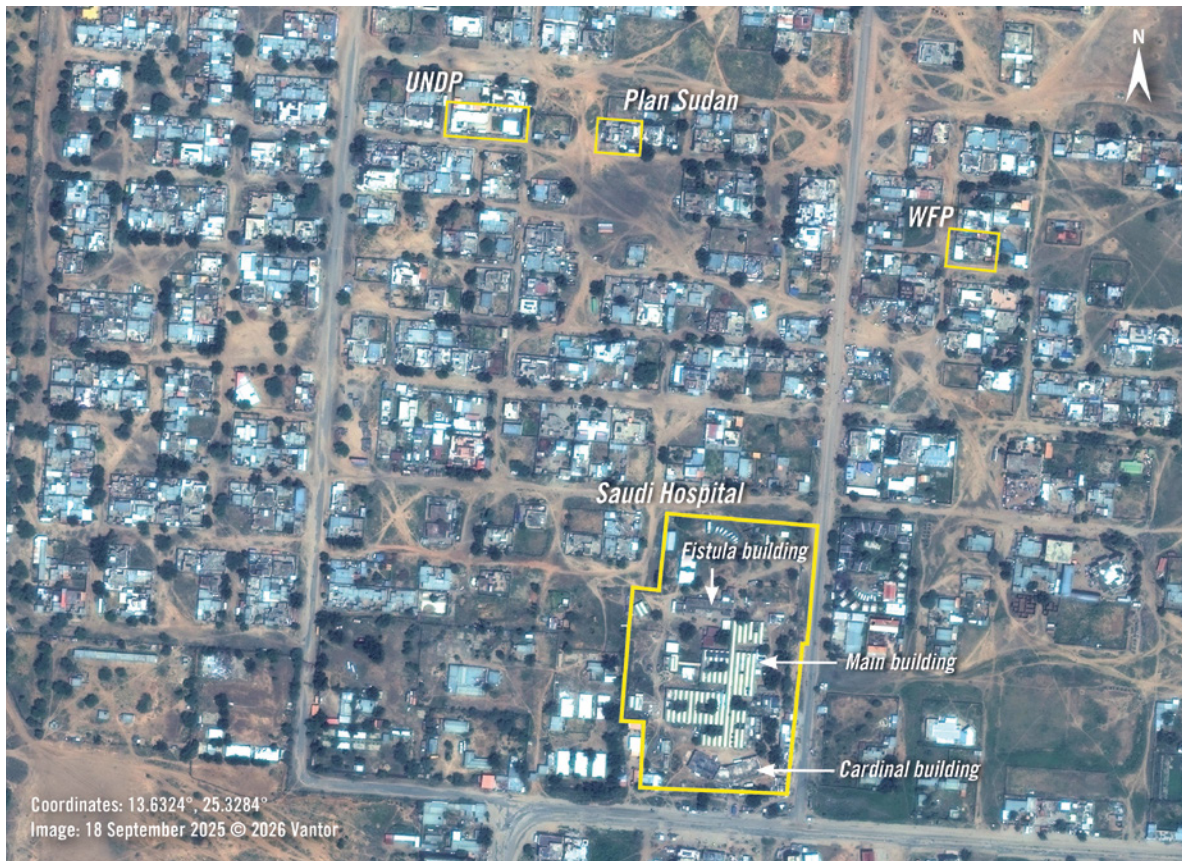
579. Interviews by voice call with *Ibtihal*, 17 and 19 December 2025; and *Alsir*, 11 December 2025.

580. Interview by voice call with *Kauther*, 5 January 2026.

581. Interviews by voice call with *Ibtihal*, 17 and 19 December 2025; *Abdelmoneim*, 3 December 2025; and *Ammar*, 13 November 2025.

582. Interviews by voice call with *Wagdy*, 6 October 2025; and *Abdelmoneim*, 3 December 2025.

583. UN IFFM, *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher* (previously cited), paras 62-65.



☺ ↑ Satellite imagery shows the Saudi hospital and various NGO offices nearby which were used to supplement hospital capacity.

with human remains in and around El Fasher. Four of these clusters were at Saudi Hospital, where they become visible between 27 and 28 October 2025.⁵⁸⁴ In imagery collected in November, the group found evidence that these objects appeared to be burning.⁵⁸⁵ If these objects were bodies, it is unclear whether they were people who were killed during the RSF's takeover of the hospital or who died due to shelling on or before 26 October, given the high number of reported casualties in that period.

Interviewees said that the hospital was never used for military purposes, rendering the attack on the hospital a war crime.⁵⁸⁶ The hospital was treating some military personnel at the time: while a separate military hospital was located in El Fasher university, staff from Saudi Hospital said that due to frequent strikes, they were forced to bring patients, including from the military, to whichever facility was closest.⁵⁸⁷ However, the presence of military personnel who were injured, unarmed and unable to take part in military action does not justify targeted killings at the hospital or render it a legitimate target: under international humanitarian law, wounded fighters are considered hors de combat and may not be targeted.⁵⁸⁸

584. Yale HRL, *RSF Systematic Mass Killings and Body Disposal in El-Fasher, North Darfur 26 October – 28 November 2025* (previously cited), p. 8.

585. Yale HRL, *RSF Systematic Mass Killings and Body Disposal in El-Fasher, North Darfur 26 October – 28 November 2025* (previously cited), p. 10.

586. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(iv); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(e)(iv); ICRC, Customary IHL, Rules 28 and 156.

587. Interviews by voice call with *Ibtihal*, 17 and 19 December 2025.

588. Common Article 3 to the Geneva Conventions; Protocol II, Article 4(1); ICRC Customary IHL, Rules 47 and 110.

The massacres marked a tragic end for the hospital, which had been an important symbol of resilience for El Fasher residents during the siege. Up until 26 October, medical staff continued to provide treatment despite frequent bombardments and extreme shortages of supplies. The hospital played a critical role for children in particular: it was the only facility in the area where women could give birth; it housed a children's health unit; and served as a shelter for displaced families.

Relatives of people who were killed called for the world not to forget the crimes committed at Saudi Hospital on 26 October. *Omaima*, whose 21-year-old brother was killed, said:

"We want justice for him. If we can't find justice in this life, we'll find it on the day of judgment."⁵⁸⁹

OPERATIONS OF SAUDI HOSPITAL AS OF OCTOBER 2025

The Saudi Hospital was a large facility with many different buildings and departments. As of 2025, it was actually several hospitals operating as one, as other hospitals had been forced to move their staff and equipment due to strikes. Amnesty International spoke to staff to understand which buildings were being used for what services as of October 2025:⁵⁹⁰

- Saudi Hospital proper continued to operate from its original buildings; as before the war, it focused on **maternal health care and deliveries**; it also carried out **surgeries, particularly abdominal or internal surgeries**, in a concrete building to the north of the compound known before the war as the "Fistula Department".
- **Non-surgical paediatric services**, such as those related to vaccination or malnutrition, were provided in an unfinished concrete building in the south of Saudi Hospital, named the Cardinal Building. Staff from various facilities, including the Specialized Children's Hospital in eastern El Fasher and the Babiker Nahar paediatric hospital, worked there.
- South Hospital, which was forced to move its operations in 2024 due to attacks, ran a **general surgery unit** in a building previously owned by the NGO Plan Sudan; the building was chosen for its concrete structure which withstood bombardments, and it was located 100m to the north of Saudi Hospital.
- South Hospital also operated an **incident ward** in a former WFP building 300m north-east of Saudi Hospital, and a **post-surgical recovery ward** in a former United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) building about 400m north-west of Saudi Hospital.
- All parts of the hospital operated **admission rooms** in civilian homes nearby, to ensure patients' safety and avoid unnecessary travel to the hospital during bombardments.

Most of the people Amnesty International spoke with witnessed attacks in the original Saudi Hospital complex, including in the Fistula Department, the main building, and the Cardinal Building. Amnesty International also interviewed two people who had witnessed killings or seen dead bodies at the former WFP building, which was run by South Hospital. One person reported seeing dead bodies at the former Plan Sudan building several days after 26 October.

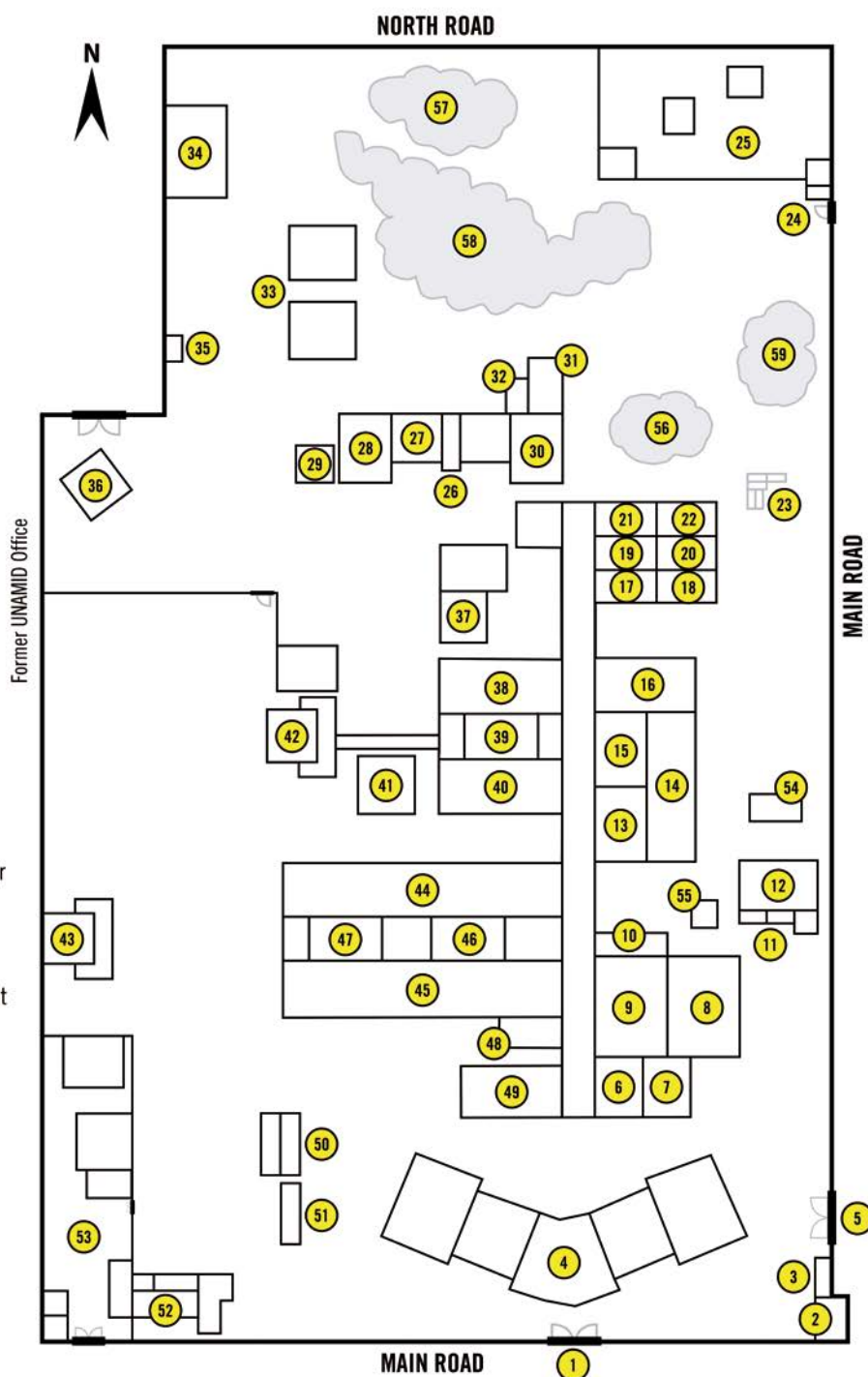
589. Interview by voice call with *Omaima*, 14 January 2026.

590. Interviews by voice call with *Imad*, 4 December 2025; *Alsir*, 11 December 2025; and *Ibtihal*, 17 and 19 December 2025.

LAYOUT OF SAUDI MATERNITY HOSPITAL, EL FASHER

Reconstruction of Saudi Maternity Hospital, based on descriptions provided by a human rights defender and engineer familiar with the facility. Building and location labels are approximate.

1. South Gate
2. Central Pharmacy
3. Shop
4. New building (Cardinal) (Under Construction)
5. East Gate
6. Statistics Office
7. Laboratory
8. Emergency Department
9. Blood Bank
10. HIV Unit
11. Bathrooms
12. Electric Generator
13. Ultrasound Room
14. Theater
15. Anesthesia Room
16. Delivery Room
17. Teaching Hall
18. Medical Staff Lounge
19. Kitchen
20. Store
21. Office
22. Store
23. Containers
24. Gate
25. Police Office
26. Fistula Centre
27. Patient Wards
28. Theater
29. Laboratory
30. Office
31. Store
32. Office
33. Shelters
34. Medical Waste Incinerator
35. Bathroom
36. Entry Building
37. Intensive Care Unit
38. Delivery Ward 1-7
39. Immunization Department
40. Nurses' Offices
41. Newborn Nursery
42. Newborn Nursery
43. Shop
44. Patient Wards
45. VIP Patient Wards
46. Immunization Administration Office
47. Nurses' Offices
48. Medical Director's Office
49. Hospital Administration Offices
50. Shop
51. Container
52. Psycho-Social Support Center
53. Visitors' Waiting Area
54. Hospital Water System Point
55. Unused Room
- 56 - 59. Cemeteries



MASSACRES AT MAIN SAUDI HOSPITAL BUILDINGS

On the morning of 26 October, Saudi Hospital was in chaos. Staff described sheltering from intense shelling for most of the first half of the day, hiding under stairs or in ditches for hours, unable to treat the dozens of injured people who needed care.

At some point, most likely in the afternoon or early evening, the RSF entered the hospital, after which mass killings took place in different parts of the hospital at different times. Because interviewees who were not staff members often did not know the layout of the hospital, Amnesty International used satellite imagery, maps and photographs of the hospital to approximate where each incident occurred, but was unable to do so in all cases.

Samahir, a 36-year-old Zaghawa woman, came to Saudi Hospital on 26 October. Earlier that day, a strike had killed five and injured three of her relatives. With help from a female neighbour, *Samahir* brought the injured relatives to the hospital: *Mahmood*, 34; *Abdulhadi*, approximately 38; and *Muhsin*, who was over 60. They were in the emergency room of the hospital, in the south-east corner of the building. At around sunset, as RSF soldiers in uniform entered the hospital, *Samahir* attempted to hide *Mahmood* and *Abdulhadi*, who were of military age, because she feared the RSF would kill them:

“When we heard the RSF came [to the hospital], we hid Mahmood. We put four [dead bodies of] children on top of him. We were running to hide Abdulhadi... when [the RSF] entered the ward... [When they arrived] I hid in the toilet. When everything was quiet and they left, we came back [with Mahmood’s car]. We tried to cover the dead people and took Mahmood and left the hospital.”⁵⁹¹

Because he was covered with dead bodies, *Mahmood* survived the attack. *Samahir* said she saw the body of *Abdulhadi*, who was shot and killed. *Muhsin*’s fate in the immediate aftermath of the attack remains unknown. *Samahir*’s neighbour, who was running with her to hide in the toilet, was also shot and her body fell against the door to the toilet, possibly saving *Samahir* because the RSF did not check inside.⁵⁹² *Samahir* said that most people in that ward, including many women and children, were killed:

“I can’t tell you the numbers, but the whole hospital was full of dead people, [killed] like locusts.”⁵⁹³

Huwaida, a 35-year-old Fur woman, witnessed the RSF killing 32 people, including five women and nine children, in one ward of the hospital. *Huwaida* had lived in the ward for several months with her three young children, her 38-year-old cousin, and his 15-year-old son. At some point on the afternoon of 26 October, RSF soldiers in uniform entered the ward and killed all residents, including her cousin and his son:

“[The RSF] were throwing people’s bodies to the side. They were talking to some people, but they were mostly killing and shooting. They were saying, ‘Falangayat, are you falangayat?’... They [asked] my cousin, ‘Are you from the Joint Forces?’ [My cousin’s son] said... ‘This is my dad, please don’t kill him.’ They did not respond to him directly, they just shot him [and his father].”⁵⁹⁴

Huwaida and her children were spared by an RSF soldier: “[He said], ‘These are children, this is a woman, don’t kill her, she will not benefit us.’”⁵⁹⁵ *Huwaida* believed the part of the hospital she was staying in was a delivery ward, which is in the north-east of the main hospital building.⁵⁹⁶ When she exited the ward, *Huwaida*

591. Interview by voice call with *Samahir*, 1 December 2025 and 25 January 2026.

592. Interview by voice call with *Samahir*, 1 December 2025 and 25 January 2026.

593. Interview by voice call with *Samahir*, 1 December 2025 and 25 January 2026.

594. Interview by voice call with *Huwaida*, 23 January 2026.

595. Interview by voice call with *Huwaida*, 23 January 2026.

596. Interview by voice call with *Huwaida*, 23 January 2026.

said she walked through two other rooms that were full of dead bodies. She found one pregnant woman who was still alive but had a broken leg; she tried to ask more about her situation to help her, but was told by an RSF soldier to leave.⁵⁹⁷

Shogar, a 47-year-old Zaghawa man, had been living in the hospital with his family for several months since being treated for two injuries. On 26 October, he said, there was intense shelling in the morning, after which RSF soldiers in uniform entered the hospital. An RSF soldier shot him in his arm.⁵⁹⁸ He saw about 50 people, including two of his male cousins and an uncle, being shot and killed by the RSF, before he was taken hostage:

“[The RSF] were saying, ‘These are talangayat, just kill them’... In my ward there were [about] 50 people [killed]... They did not distinguish between people, they just shot. Even children and women were killed... All three [of my relatives] were killed there... [When the RSF found me] they were saying... ‘He is already injured, he is a prisoner of war.’ There were about seven other people taken. All [were] men.”⁵⁹⁹

Shogar said that the killings and his kidnapping took place in what he called the “injury department.” Based on his testimony and interviews with other staff and patients at Saudi Hospital, Amnesty International believes that he most likely meant one of the patient wards in the south of the main hospital.⁶⁰⁰ *Shogar* was taken hostage by the RSF during the hospital attack, and detained for a month and a half in Mina al-Bari detention centre (see Chapter 8).

Ibtihal, who worked at the hospital, saw RSF soldiers enter the compound early in the day on 26 October and then leave without attacking anyone. She said a second group entered in the early evening and shot and killed many people. At the time, *Ibtihal* was hiding in the ultrasound room of the hospital with about 30 people, mostly children and mothers who had just given birth. The RSF did not enter the ultrasound room where she was: “If you don’t know it, you cannot get access. You have to go through [several] doors to get there.” *Ibtihal* described a killing in the delivery room, which was next door:

“We heard the gunshot. We stepped into the delivery room... We found [a woman] on the table, she was shot, she died on the delivery table. I saw [her] dead body. She was pregnant, she had come for delivery... I did not hear [the RSF interacting with her]. The women [she was with] said [the RSF] said she was an abulda wife with a SAF son.”⁶⁰¹

When the RSF left, *Ibtihal* walked outside. She found several dead bodies outside the hospital kitchen and the Fistula Department. She believed that some had died from gunshot wounds and others from shelling injuries. She said she saw about eight dead bodies outside, including several children.⁶⁰²

The RSF executed men who they suspected of being combatants. *Zuhal*, a 25-year-old Fur woman who had sheltered at Saudi Hospital since a strike near her home a few days earlier, said four uniformed RSF soldiers entered the ward she was in on 26 October. She saw them kill four men, including one wearing a Joint Forces uniform. She said:

597. Interview by voice call with *Huwaida*, 23 January 2026.

598. Interview by voice call with *Shogar*, 15 January 2026.

599. Interview by voice call with *Shogar*, 15 January 2026.

600. Interview by voice call with *Shogar*, 15 January 2026.

601. Interview by voice call with *Ibtihal*, 17 and 19 December 2025.

602. Interview by voice call with *Ibtihal*, 17 and 19 December 2025.

"[The RSF] looked at them, and they were saying, 'You don't look like the others, you are a bit fatter, how can you be a civilian? You are not very skinny.' Other [patients] looked skinny and pale... Some people did not even have the clothes to cover themselves."⁶⁰³

Zuhal said she was in the main hospital building at the time, possibly in one of the delivery wards. She said that later, she went to another ward where she found the dead bodies of two distant relatives, a woman in her thirties and a man in his forties, who had been shot.⁶⁰⁴

Taiba, a 24-year-old Zaghawa woman, was at Saudi Hospital with her aunt, Kaltham, seeking shelter from intense shelling on 26 October. Three RSF soldiers entered the ward, which held about 18 people. Taiba said the RSF soldiers shot and killed three injured men who were wearing Joint Forces uniform:

"[The RSF] asked us, 'Where are your men?' I answered that my husband was killed, my brothers were also killed... I said, 'We are civilians.' They asked the three injured Joint Forces [members]. They were not able to speak, so they just opened fire on them and killed them."⁶⁰⁵

Kaltham confirmed Taiba's account.⁶⁰⁶ Kaltham and Taiba said they were in a newly constructed building at the south of Saudi Hospital; based on this, it is most likely they were in the Cardinal Building.

Some people left the hospital during the attack but returned only to find many bodies, including those of loved ones. Omaina, a 24-year-old woman, was at Saudi Hospital with her brother, 21, who was injured in his leg during a strike. His surgery was scheduled for 26 October. After arriving at the hospital, a nurse told Omaina to go and purchase medication for him elsewhere, a common practice at the hospital at the time due to supply shortages. "I went outside of the hospital and then the shelling became more and more intense... I saw people running everywhere. I couldn't buy any of the medication."⁶⁰⁷ Omaina was trapped for over an hour. When she went back to Saudi Hospital to the Fistula Department, where her brother had been, she saw numerous dead bodies, including her brother's:

"From the door [of the building] until the surgery rooms there was blood, dead bodies, people that were dying... they all looked the same, covered with blood and injuries... I arrived at the surgery room where my brother was. I was looking around and from his arm I saw that it was my brother's body. [I recognized] a bracelet on his arm."⁶⁰⁸

Amnesty International interviewed two people who fled or were taken from the hospital on 26 October and had not heard from their relatives since, leading them to fear they had been killed. Sameer, a 29-year-old Fur man, was at the hospital with his mother after her lower leg was injured in an explosion. They were in the Fistula Department, when in late afternoon or early evening on 26 October, the RSF entered and took him and six other men:

"They were shooting in the air to scare people. They were armed and they were saying, 'Hands up!' And they tied our hands behind our backs. They kept saying, 'You are from the military, you work for the military hospital.' Then we were taken into the vehicle."⁶⁰⁹

603. Interview by voice call with Zuhal, 21 and 22 January 2026.

604. Interview by voice call with Zuhal, 21 and 22 January 2026.

606. Interview by voice call with Kaltham, 5 December 2025.

607. Interview by voice call with Omaina, 14 January 2026.

Sameer was taken with six other men to Mina al-Bari detention centre (see Chapter 8). He had not heard from his mother, aged 53, since 26 October.⁶¹⁰

Ammar, a 27-year-old Zaghawa man, was at the hospital with his two brothers, aged eight and 10. Based on his testimony and his indications on a map, they were most likely in the VIP Patient Wards. “I heard people crying, ‘[The RSF] invaded the hospital, they invaded the hospital!’” Fearing he would be targeted, *Ammar* fled through the main corridor of the hospital. He said he saw dead bodies in the area outside the Fistula Department, although he did not know whether they had been shot or killed due to the shelling. He jumped over the wall to the road and managed to flee El Fasher. He had not received any news about his younger brothers since then.⁶¹¹

Amnesty International interviewed five people present at Saudi Hospital after 26 October. One man, who could not leave the city because he was injured, went there on 27 October in search of water and a stick to help him walk. He said: “There were dead bodies, you could see that they were shot. I went to the wards but didn’t spend much time there. There were dead bodies in the hallway.”⁶¹² He left quickly, fearing the RSF might appear again.

Other witnesses visited the hospital later, between early to mid-November 2025. They said that there were very few patients or residents living at the hospital compared to before 26 October. Most units had been shut down, and the only fully functional ward was the surgery unit. *Imad*, a staff member, said:

***“The hospital was chaos. The children’s unit was not working, the internal unit was not working, maternity services were not working. Only the surgery unit was functioning.”*⁶¹³**

The witnesses said that the RSF appeared to have brought additional staff, about 200 people, from Nyala and elsewhere to operate the hospital. They said that most medical supplies had been looted or depleted.

WFP BUILDING

Amnesty International interviewed two people about killings in the incident ward, located in a former WFP building and run by staff from the South Hospital. One staff member, who was in the building on 26 October, witnessed the RSF executing patients; another visited the facility after it was attacked and saw dozens of bodies.⁶¹⁴

Imad, the staff member, said that on the morning of 26 October, SAF soldiers entered the building and told him that the city was being captured by the RSF, warning him to leave. He continued tending to patients. Shortly afterwards, the RSF entered the building. “[They took me] by surprise,” he said. “I didn’t see them when they came into the compound, whether they came by the door or they jumped over the wall.”⁶¹⁵ *Imad* managed to hide in a medical supply closet. He heard the RSF questioning and then executing patients:

***“When [the RSF] saw people they asked them, ‘Are you a civilian or a soldier?’ And nobody says they are a soldier, they say they are civilians. And when they tell them [that], they say, ‘No, you are a liar, you are a talangay’, and they shoot him. It’s as if there is no point even asking the question.”*⁶¹⁶**

610. Interview by voice call with *Sameer*, 14 January 2026.

611. Interview by voice call with *Ammar*, 13 November 2025.

612. Interview by voice call with *Mohemedain*, 12 January 2026.

613. Interview by voice call with *Imad*, 4 December 2025.

614. Interview by voice call with *Abdelhafiz*, 18 December 2025.

615. Interview by voice call with *Imad*, 4 December 2025.

616. Interview by voice call with *Imad*, 4 December 2025.

Imad said that there were 98 patients in the WFP facility at the time. He said he was confident of this number because he was typically the one responsible for registering patients. *Imad* managed to escape from the back door of the compound together with a security guard and another medical staffer. He was taken hostage on his way out of the city and eventually released.⁶¹⁷

Noorain, a Fur man who stayed in El Fasher for several weeks after the seizure of the city, said that the RSF asked him to help clean up bodies from the WFP site about five days after the takeover of the city:

“Thirty or 40 bodies were scattered inside and outside the WFP [building]. I was asked to go and at least collect those who are alive and [take] them to the [IDP] gathering sites... But there were a lot of people already dead, [I] don’t know by which means because I did not see any [signs of] bombardment or shelling... The floor was covered with blood, blood [that] became black and nasty.”⁶¹⁸

Noorain said that he found two people at the WFP building who had survived the earlier attack, though they were dehydrated and starving and could hardly speak.

KILLINGS AT EL FASHER UNIVERSITY

Immediately after the RSF seized El Fasher, a video posted on social media claimed to show a massacre taking place at Saudi Hospital.⁶¹⁹ This video was quickly disseminated by various media outlets.⁶²⁰

Amnesty International has verified that the video was filmed at the University of El Fasher’s Faculty of Medical and Laboratory Sciences, which is less than 200m south-west of Saudi Hospital. The video shows at least 14 bodies lying on the floor, most of whom appear to be men wearing civilian clothing. No weapons are visible on or immediately beside them in the video. One man in an RSF-style uniform and armed with an FN FAL-pattern rifle walks through the bodies and shoots at close range two people who show signs of life. The voices of apparent RSF fighters can be heard referring to people in the room as *falangayat*.

Despite widespread media reports that this building was affiliated with Saudi Hospital, eight hospital employees, when asked about the building, did not recognize it as being part of Saudi Hospital. Some suspected that it might be a dormitory of the university, or an extension of the military hospital, which was in another part of the university. “Saudi Hospital had no operation there. Maybe the military hospital [did],” said one Saudi Hospital staff member.⁶²¹

Other groups reported mass killings at El Fasher University. OHCHR reported that around 500 people were killed at the Al-Rashid dormitory of El Fasher University, where civilians as well as hors de combat members of the Joint Forces were sheltering.⁶²² The UN FFM reported that mass executions, including of women and children, took place at the university campus during the RSF takeover. Some of these executions were reportedly carried out by the RSF commander known as Abu Lulu.⁶²³

617. Interview by voice call with *Imad*, 4 December 2025.

618. Interview by voice call with *Noorain*, 12 December 2025.

619. Governor of Darfur Minni Minawi, X post: “مجزرة المستشفى السعودي في الفاشر، هكذا تمت تصفية أكثر من 460 مواطن مريض كانوا في المستشفى، علي دولة الإمارات العربية: مجلس الأمن الدولي تقع في عاتقه مسؤولية إلقاء القبض علي حميدتي و عبدالرحيم دقلو وشقيقه أينما وجدو (previously cited).”

620. BBC, “‘There was a state of terror’: Sudan hospital worker describes fleeing before alleged massacre”, 11 November 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cqx31ezjr04o>. See also Al Jazeera, “RSF fighters film execution in el-Fasher hospital massacre”, 29 October 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/video/newsfeed/2025/10/29/rsf-fighters-film-execution-in-el-fasher-hospital-massacre>

621. Interview by voice call with *Ibtihal*, 17 and 19 December 2025.

622. OHCHR, “They were shooting us like animals”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (24-30 October 2025) (previously cited), para. 43.

623. UN FFM, *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher* (previously cited), paras 54-61.

Amnesty International was repeatedly told by interviewees that several university buildings hosted large groups of displaced people, as well as a military hospital for injured soldiers.⁶²⁴ Regardless of whether the building in this video is part of Saudi Hospital, the military hospital or something else, the act depicted in the video – the execution of unarmed people – should be investigated as a war crime.

Amnesty International documented executions at Al-Rashid dormitory that took place several days or possibly weeks after the takeover of El Fasher, by which time the dormitory had reportedly been converted into an RSF detention centre (see Chapter 8).

6.4 EL FASHER AFTER 26 OCTOBER

Amnesty International interviewed seven people who stayed in El Fasher for several weeks after 26 October. Some stayed because they were injured, while others feared abuses on the road.⁶²⁵ Some were prevented from leaving: *Rawiya*, a 38-year-old Tunjur woman, tried to leave El Fasher on 26 October, but her three children, aged five, 11 and 14, were killed in a drone strike that day.⁶²⁶ In shock at the loss of her children, she spent three nights in a school with other displaced people before trying to flee again by herself: “The RSF forced people to return back,” she said. “They forced us to walk back to the school and they said, ‘You are not allowed to leave the city, we will provide you with food and other things, you have to stay here.’”⁶²⁷

All seven interviewees saw or experienced abuses while in El Fasher, including executions, sexual violence and detention. The Yale Humanitarian Research Lab said that, of 150 clusters of objects consistent with human remains in El Fasher, at least 52 were in the Daraja Oula neighbourhood, where many civilians were known to be living. The group said that these images were “consistent with RSF conducting door-to-door mass killings throughout the neighbourhood.”⁶²⁸

Mohamedain, a Zaghawa man, said he couldn’t leave El Fasher because he was injured. He went to Ahmed Hanafi mosque on 27 October, which was housing about 200 displaced people, he said.⁶²⁹ The RSF came there daily. He witnessed interrogations and the summary killings of six men:

“[The RSF] were calling people by their names, or just selecting people. They were interrogating them five to 10 metres away from us... Some of them would come back to the group and some were shot in front of us. [On 28 and 29 October] six of them were executed. After a couple of days we had to bury these bodies.”⁶³⁰

Mohamedain said all of those killed were men in their twenties, thirties and forties. He believed that several others at the mosque died from starvation or extreme exhaustion. Eventually, *Mohamedain* was able to negotiate with one of the RSF soldiers, who was from the same area as some of his family members, to help him leave the city.⁶³¹

624. Interviews, August to October 2025.

625. Interviews by voice call with *Mohamedain*, 12 January 2026; and *Noorain*, 12 December 2025.

626. Interview by voice call with *Rawiya*, 21 January 2026.

627. Interview by voice call with *Rawiya*, 21 January 2026.

628. Yale HRL, *RSF Systematic Mass Killings and Body Disposal in El-Fasher, North Darfur 26 October – 28 November 2025* (previously cited), p. 8.

629. Interview by voice call with *Mohamedain*, 12 January 2026.

630. Interview by voice call with *Mohamedain*, 12 January 2026.

631. Interview by voice call with *Mohamedain*, 12 January 2026.

Doha, a 28-year-old Fur woman who had remained in El Fasher with her 65-year-old father, was taken from the home where she was staying in Daraja Oula by RSF fighters on 27 October. After interrogating her father, one of the fighters took *Doha* into a house and raped her.

Doha and her father were eventually taken to the Ahmed Hanafi mosque, mentioned by *Mohamedain* above. She said the RSF would not let people leave: “All the people [were] trapped. The commander came to the [IDP] site and said to the civilians there that they cannot move out of the city... They told people there is no way to go out of the city, we will let you go later on.”⁶³²

At the mosque, *Doha* lived in fear of being raped by another RSF fighter who had noticed her. “I was hiding and ignored my personal hygiene in order not to attract attention. I was just sitting between other women, [older] women. I was desperate,” she said. Eventually, in late November, *Doha* and her father were able to negotiate with an RSF officer to facilitate their evacuation to Tawila.⁶³³

In December 2025, Denise Brown, the UN humanitarian coordinator for Sudan, conducted the organization’s first visit to El Fasher since the RSF takeover. She called the city a “crime scene.”⁶³⁴ She said that it was mostly deserted, but that hundreds of people were still living in displacement sites.⁶³⁵ After being allowed into El Fasher for just a few hours in January 2026, MSF described the city as “a ghost town, with few civilians who remained or have since returned”.⁶³⁶ Yale Humanitarian Research Lab also said that satellite imagery did not show evidence of large-scale civilian activity after the RSF takeover of the city, with some markets appearing to have been abandoned and a reduction in transportation movements.⁶³⁷

Amnesty International received two accounts suggesting that the RSF tried to bring civilians into El Fasher after the takeover, possibly to create the appearance that life in the city was returning to normal. *Altahir*, a 27-year-old Fur man, told Amnesty International that during the war he moved to Tabit, a town about 50km south-west of El Fasher where the RSF was present. He said that on 29 November 2025, RSF members came to Tabit and offered him work cleaning houses and streets inside El Fasher. He refused. “I think what was happening in El Fasher was not correct,” he said.⁶³⁸

Altahir also said that some people from Tabit were forced to go to El Fasher. He said in November 2025 he witnessed a man he knew being taken from his car by the RSF. The man later contacted his brothers in Tabit, who confirmed to *Altahir* and others in the community that he had been taken to El Fasher against his will.

Wadi, a 36-year-old man from the Shattiya Rizeigat community in Arab Bashir, a town about 15km south of El Fasher, said that people he had grown up with in Arab Bashir contacted him from El Fasher after the takeover. They told him they had received money from the RSF to move there and that the RSF was helping them find work. *Wadi* said he believed the RSF wanted people to move to El Fasher “to show the international community that everything is okay.”⁶³⁹

632. Interview by voice call with *Doha*, 2 December 2025.

633. Interview by voice call with *Doha*, 2 December 2025.

634. AP, “UN makes first visit to Sudan’s el-Fasher since its fall, finding dire conditions”, 31 December 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/sudan-elfasher-north-darfur-united-nations-d7ffd25eaa5671da38f0451cbd7845f4>

635. AP, “UN makes first visit to Sudan’s el-Fasher since its fall, finding dire conditions” (previously cited).

636. MSF, “MSF finds El Fasher largely destroyed and empty during visit”, 28 January 2026, <https://www.msf.org/msf-finds-el-fasher-sudan-largely-destroyed-and-empty-during-visit>

637. Yale HRL, *RSF Systematic Mass Killings and Body Disposal in El-Fasher, North Darfur 26 October – 28 November 2025* (previously cited), p. 11.

638. Interview by voice call with *Altahir*, 13 April 2026.

639. Interview by voice call with *Wadi*, 13 April 2026.

CHILDREN SEPARATED BY VIOLENCE

During RSF attacks, thousands of children were separated from their parents and caregivers, leaving many alone or in the care of extended family or other civilians fleeing the violence. Under international humanitarian law, parties to an armed conflict are obliged, where necessary and whenever possible with the consent of parents or caregivers, to remove children from areas of active hostilities and to facilitate family reunification when separation occurs.⁶⁴⁰

The number of unaccompanied⁶⁴¹ and separated⁶⁴² children surged when the RSF captured El Fasher.⁶⁴³ Humanitarian representatives in Tawila described being overwhelmed, with severely limited resources to shelter and care for the growing number of children arriving without caregivers.⁶⁴⁴ A humanitarian representative told Amnesty International that, as of 24 November 2025, there were 2,701 unaccompanied children in Tawila and surrounding areas.⁶⁴⁵ Estimates from other humanitarian actors during the same period ranged between 400 and 800 unaccompanied children in Tawila alone.⁶⁴⁶ A report by MSF found insufficient protection referral pathways for specialized and age-appropriate support, including education and psycho-social services.⁶⁴⁷

Amnesty International interviewed 14 children who had been separated from their parents during attacks or while fleeing, and five children who had been orphaned during the war. Among the children who had been separated, only two knew where their parents were. With communication networks disrupted and limited systems in place to trace the missing, families were left in prolonged and agonizing uncertainty.

Sometimes, reunification occurred by chance – children encountered relatives or family friends along displacement routes or were reunited with parents after independently reaching the same IDP or refugee camps. For many, however, separation persisted.

Parents and children described the chaos that led to their separation. *Batool*, 35, a mother of five children – two of whom are missing – recalled fleeing El Fasher:

“People ran in two directions – Garni and Tawila. I don’t know which way [my sons] took. Maybe they died at the berm. I don’t know where they are... [T]hey just ran after the army and [other] people who were running. We lost them in the chaos.”⁶⁴⁸

Noora, a Zaghawa girl aged between 13 and 14, described how she was separated from her parents during an attack on Sag el Naam village in February 2025:

“I saw my mum was in front of us. I don’t know how we separated. [The RSF] were trying to take one of the girls and hit the boys... [My sister and I] found a group of people going to Tina [on the border

640. Protocol II, Article 4(3)(b) and 4(3)(e).

641. An unaccompanied child is a child “who [has] been separated from both parents and other relatives and [is] not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so.” ICRC, *Inter-agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children*, January 2004, https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/external/doc/en/assets/files/other/icrc_002_1011.pdf, p. 13; see also Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), General Comment 6, Treatment of Unaccompanied and Separated Children Outside Their Country of Origin, 1 September 2005, UN Doc. CRC/GC/2005/6, para. 7.

642. A separated child is a child “separated from both parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary care-giver, but not necessarily from other relatives. These may, therefore, include children accompanied by other adult family members.” ICRC, *Inter-agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children*, January 2004, https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/external/doc/en/assets/files/other/icrc_002_1011.pdf, p. 13; see also CRC, General Comment 6, Treatment of Unaccompanied and Separated Children Outside Their Country of Origin (previously cited), para. 8.

643. Interview by voice call with humanitarian representatives in Tawila, 24 November 2025; Time, “Hundreds of Unaccompanied Children Are Arriving in This Remote Sudanese Town”, 26 November 2025, <https://time.com/7336775/sudan-el-fasher-rsf-children-tawila/>; Al Jazeera, “Hundreds of children ‘terrified’ and alone after fleeing Sudan’s el-Fasher”, 27 November 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/11/27/hundreds-of-children-terrified-and-alone-after-fleeing-sudans-el-fasher>.

644. Interview by voice call with humanitarian representatives in Tawila, 24 November 2025.

645. Interview by voice call with humanitarian representatives in Tawila, 24 November 2025.

646. Time, “Hundreds of Unaccompanied Children Are Arriving in This Remote Sudanese Town” (previously cited); Al Jazeera, “Hundreds of children ‘terrified’ and alone after fleeing Sudan’s el-Fasher” (previously cited).

647. MSF, “There is Something I want to Tell You...” *Surviving the Sexual Violence Crisis in Darfur*, 31 March 2026, <https://www.msf.org/msf-report-finds-no-safe-places-women-and-girls-darfur>, p. 17.

648. Interview by voice call with *Batool*, 1 December 2025.

with Chad]. I decided to join... I was alone [with my younger sister]. I had nothing except the clothes I was wearing... I am always praying and asking God for [my mother] to come back.⁶⁴⁹

Noora did not know what had happened to her parents. When she arrived in Chad, her aunt, who also knew nothing about their whereabouts, found her and took her and her sister in.

Alone, children faced heightened risks of further violations. Nadia, a 17-year-old Zaghawa girl, who fled towards Garni with her mother and sisters when the RSF took over El Fasher, observed, “whenever there is a girl who is unaccompanied [the RSF] will take her away.”⁶⁵⁰

Children described the shock, fear and overwhelming loneliness of being suddenly on their own. Manahil, 17, who lost both parents during the April attack on Zamzam IDP camp and was living with her aunt in a refugee camp, explained:

“No one takes care of you, or shows you kindness... I miss [my mum] a lot. It is not easy to be a girl without a mum. I have to take care of my sister. It is hard for me... We cannot cover our needs.⁶⁵¹

Mujtaba, a 17-year-old boy, who witnessed the RSF kill his father and was later separated from his mother and siblings when the RSF took over El Fasher, said: “I have nothing to sustain myself with, I am relying on [other refugees]. I am sometimes eating with them.”⁶⁵²

Parents were equally distraught. Nima a Zaghawa woman – who, as noted in section 4.3 above, dressed her son as a girl while fleeing Zamzam to protect him – lost sight of him as he ran from an RSF member.⁶⁵³ She described searching desperately and finding no trace of him. When asked whether she told his siblings what had happened, she said:

“I didn’t tell them in the beginning. I told them that their brother is in El Fasher. And that he has no way to get to Tiné. And that he will follow... After I told them, the oldest girl [his sister]... she has become an isolated person. She doesn’t like to talk to anyone, she just is always staying alone, crying, and being sad.⁶⁵⁴

In some cases, families deliberately separated to protect their children. Older boys – who faced heightened risks of killing, detention or forced recruitment – were intentionally sent along different escape routes. Anas, a 16-year-old Zaghawa boy, described why his mother sent him away during the April 2025 attack on Zamzam IDP camp: “[The RSF] kill boys like my age. That’s why my mum sent me away.”⁶⁵⁵ Anas eventually reached Tawila alone, where he met two other boys who had also been separated from their families. When funds sent by relatives ran out in Kabkabiya, they turned to small-scale trading to finance their journey to Chad. They sold items like toothpaste and padlocks for profit:

“[T]he three of us combined could bring in SDG 15,000 [about USD 4.4] per day. We would sleep in the market and eat from the restaurant.⁶⁵⁶

At the time of the interview, Anas was preparing to meet his mother and siblings in a refugee camp in Chad.

In other instances, limited resources forced painful choices: only some family members could travel, while others remained behind. Some children were also left with grandparents or other caregivers if parents believed this offered greater safety. Due to the dangers men and boys faced on the road, many children were cared for by their mothers alone.

649. Interview in person with Noora, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

650. Interview by voice call with Nadia, 8 December 2025.

651. Interview in person with Manahil, 28 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

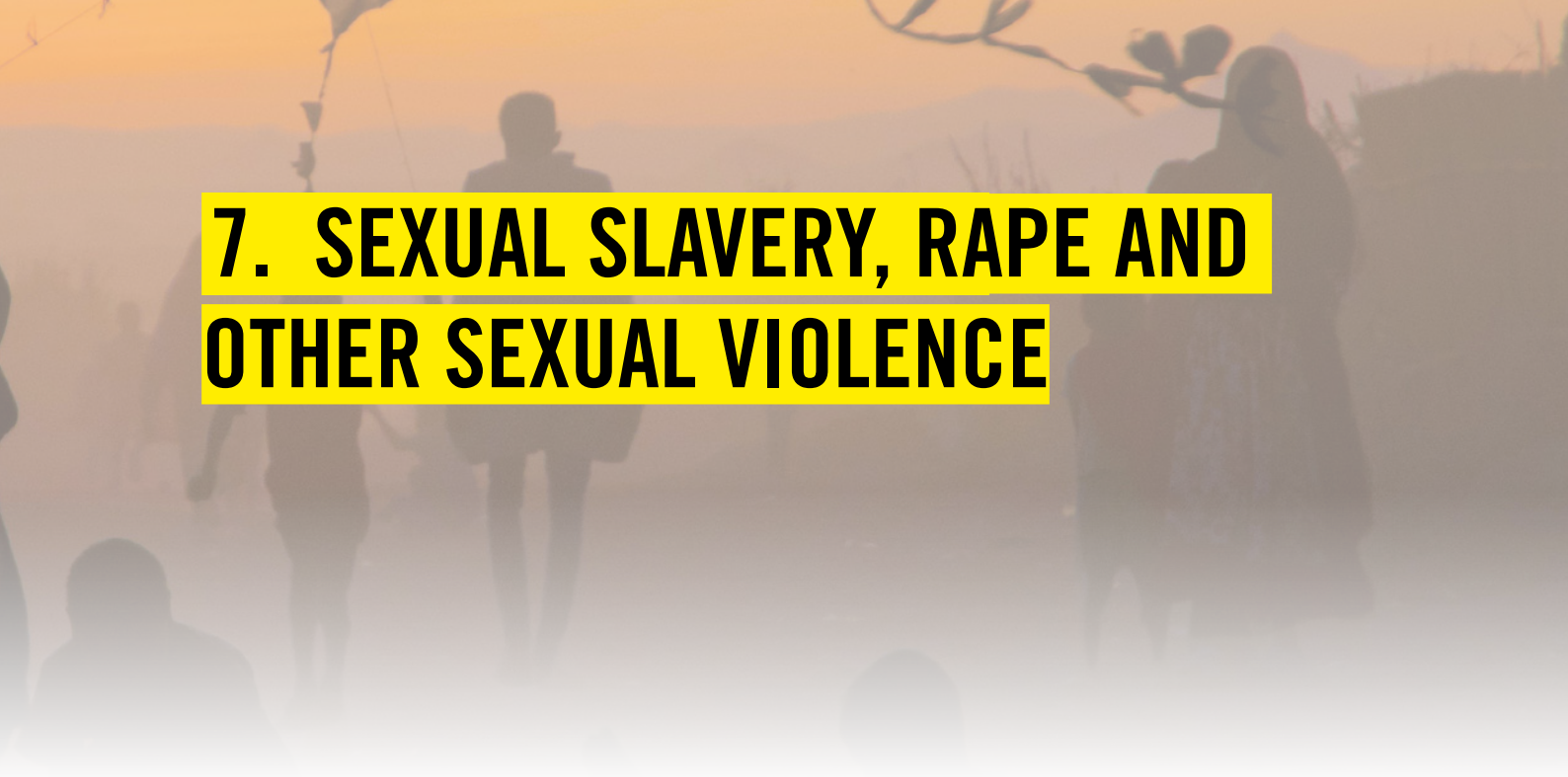
652. Interview by voice call with Mujtaba, 3 December 2025.

653. Interview in person with Nima, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

654. Interview in person with Nima, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

655. Interview in person with Anas, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

656. Interview in person with Anas, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.



7. SEXUAL SLAVERY, RAPE AND OTHER SEXUAL VIOLENCE

“[The first time I was raped] it was by three people... The second time, I could not tell how many... The third time was in El Daein... They raped me [while I was blindfolded].”

Tasneem, a 13-year-old girl abducted from her village in Shagra and raped by several people over multiple days.⁶⁵⁷

As the RSF attacked the SAF and Joint Forces in El Fasher and surrounding areas, RSF soldiers raped and committed other forms of sexual violence against many women and girls. Survivors described how this had caused lasting physical and psychological harm. These violations occurred in multiple settings, including during attacks on villages and IDP camps and along escape routes used by civilians fleeing the fighting. One woman was raped while held in RSF detention during the takeover of El Fasher.

Amnesty International interviewed 26 survivors of sexual violence, including 20 female survivors of rape, among them three girls under the age of 18 and one young woman raped when she was 17. A further three women and three children survived other forms of sexual violence. The youngest survivor of rape interviewed was 13 years old. Amnesty International also interviewed three service providers who supported survivors.

Most of the incidents documented below occurred between early 2025 and late October 2025. Two cases of rape perpetrated by the RSF in and near El Fasher in mid-2024 were documented in an Amnesty International report published in April 2025.⁶⁵⁸

657. Interview in person with *Tasneem*, 1 November 2025, Tiné, Chad.

658. Amnesty International, “*They Raped All of Us*”: Sexual Violence against Women and Girls in Sudan (previously cited), p. 20. In these cases, RSF fighters raped a 34-year-old woman – who said she was raped alongside 19 other women and girls – while fleeing El Fasher on 25 May 2024, and a 32-year-old pregnant woman in El Fasher on 27 May 2024.



© ↑ A displaced woman from El Fasher builds a shelter with some of her clothes in Omda displacement camp in Tawila, Sudan, May 2025. © Private

Among the 20 women and girls raped, 14 were raped at or near the point of capture. The other six were abducted by RSF forces and assaulted at another location. Eight women and girls were raped multiple times, and 13 were subjected to rape by multiple people, at or around the same time.⁶⁵⁹ Three survivors and two witnesses reported seeing the RSF rape or sexually assault 17 additional women and girls.⁶⁶⁰ In 14 cases, women and girls reported that others in their group were likely also raped or otherwise assaulted, based on what they overheard, observed immediately after the suspected attack, or were told directly.

In all cases, survivors were raped by RSF members, whom they identified through their uniforms and vehicles. In one case, after RSF fighters raped a girl, they handed her over to a group of shepherds who also raped her.

659. In one case, Amnesty International did not establish whether more than one man raped the woman.

660. Amnesty International also spoke to other survivors and witnesses who saw women and girls raped and sexually assaulted, but they did not specify how many victims they saw.

Some incidents of rape carried an ethnic dimension, with non-Arab women and girls often referred to as *falangayat* or the wives and relatives of the *falangayat*. In the context of the attacks documented in this report, RSF members sometimes used the term to mark victims as belonging to communities they treated as hostile or aligned with SAF and the Joint Forces.

When survivors reached areas of relative safety, many were too afraid to report the abuse or seek medical care. None of the 12 survivors who reported rape to health professionals had accessed psycho-social support through medical facilities, although some girls and young women identified trusted individuals within their communities for informal support. Women and girls interviewed by Amnesty International described ongoing psychological trauma resulting from their rape, while some also described stigma and rejection after families and community members learned of the assault.

The UN and other organizations have documented widespread rape and other forms of sexual violence in Darfur.⁶⁶¹ A report released by the MSF in March 2026 showed that between January 2024 and November 2025, more than 3,396 survivors of sexual violence looked for care in MSF-supported health facilities in North and South Darfur, and that 95% of the attackers in North Darfur were armed, non-civilian men, frequently identified as RSF fighters.⁶⁶² The report further indicated that 27% of the survivors seen in North Darfur between September and October 2025 were under 18.⁶⁶³

While Amnesty International did not document any male survivors of sexual violence, a study by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) found that 33% of a group of 221 child rape survivors in Sudan in 2024 were boys.⁶⁶⁴ The organization also found that 16 of the child survivors were under the age of five.⁶⁶⁵ In addition, the UN has recognized the RSF as a perpetrator of sexual violence through its key monitoring and accountability mechanisms for grave violations.⁶⁶⁶

661. See, for example, UN FFM, *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher* (previously cited), paras 72-83; UN FFM, *Sudan: A War of Atrocities* (previously cited), paras 60, 62; OHCHR, "They were shooting us like animals": RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (previously cited), paras 60-66; MSF, "There is Something I want to Tell You..." *Surviving the Sexual Violence Crisis in Darfur* (previously cited); OHCHR, *Under siege: the situation of human rights in El Fasher, North Darfur since May 2024* (previously cited), paras 40-43; UNICEF, *Sudan's Child Rape and Sexual Violence Crisis* (previously cited); MSF, *Besieged, Attacked, Starved* (previously cited), p. 20, 36-37; Eric Reeves, "Victims of sexual violence in Darfur: in their own words", 21 May 2024, <https://sudanreeves.org/2024/05/21/victims-of-sexual-violence-in-their-own-words/>

662. MSF, "There is Something I want to Tell You..." *Surviving the Sexual Violence Crisis in Darfur* (previously cited), p. 4.

663. MSF, "There is Something I want to Tell You..." *Surviving the Sexual Violence Crisis in Darfur* (previously cited), p. 4.

664. UNICEF, *Sudan's Child Rape and Sexual Violence Crisis*, March 2025, <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/reports/sudans-child-rape-and-sexual-violence-crisis>, p. 3.

665. UNICEF, *Sudan's Child Rape and Sexual Violence Crisis* (previously cited), p. 3.

666. The UN Secretary-General's 2026 Annual Report on *Children and Armed Conflict* verified 193 incidents of sexual violence perpetrated against children in Sudan, including 161 attributed to the RSF, acts for which the group is also listed in the report's annual "list of shame". The list comprises state forces and non-state groups in the annexes of the Secretary-General's report for committing one of five grave violations against children. UNSG, *Children and Armed Conflict*, 17 June 2026 (previously cited) para. 188, Annex 1. See also UNSG, *Children and Armed Conflict* (previously cited), para. 190, Annex I; UNSG, *Children and Armed Conflict*, 3 June 2024 (previously cited). In addition, the RSF is listed in the Secretary-General's 2026 and 2025 Annual Reports on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence for patterns of rape or other forms of sexual violence in Sudan. UNSG, *Conflict-related sexual violence*, 2 June 2026, S/2026/321, Annex, p. 34; UNSG, *Conflict-related sexual violence*, 15 July 2025, S/2025/389, Annex, p. 33.

RAPE, TORTURE, CRUEL TREATMENT, OUTRAGES UPON PERSONAL DIGNITY AND SEXUAL SLAVERY

Under the ICC's Elements of Crimes, rape is defined as the invasion of a person's body by conduct resulting in penetration, committed by force, by threat of force or coercion, by taking advantage of a coercive environment, or against a person incapable of giving genuine consent.⁶⁶⁷ Where such acts cause severe physical and mental suffering, or were committed for purposes such as punishment, intimidation or coercion, they constitute cruel treatment and torture.⁶⁶⁸

Other forms of sexual violence include acts of a sexual nature committed against a person, or in which a person is caused to engage, through force, threats, coercion, fear of violence, detention, psychological oppression, abuse of power, a coercive environment, or because the person could not genuinely consent.⁶⁶⁹ To constitute a war crime the act must be serious enough to amount to a grave violation of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions.⁶⁷⁰

Sexual slavery is defined as the exercise of powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, including by depriving them of their liberty and causing such a person to engage in an act of a sexual nature.⁶⁷¹

The acts of rape perpetrated by RSF members against women and girls documented in this section are violations of international humanitarian law and amount to the war crimes of rape, cruel treatment and torture. In instances where the fighters exercised powers of ownership over women and girls, the acts amount to sexual slavery.

The aggressive searches carried out by RSF fighters, during which women and girls were sexually assaulted and, at times, stripped naked, amount to acts of sexual violence. Where acts of rape and assault also humiliated and degraded the women and girls, they may also amount to the war crime of outrage upon personal dignity.⁶⁷²

As detailed in Chapter 11, because these acts were carried out as part of the widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population, they also amount to the crimes against humanity of rape, torture, imprisonment, sexual slavery and other forms of sexual violence.⁶⁷³ The targeting of women and girls for sexual violence on the basis of their gender also amounts to the crime against humanity of persecution.⁶⁷⁴ The underlying acts documented in this chapter were also, themselves, widespread and systematic.

The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol) defines trafficking in persons as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.⁶⁷⁵ By forcibly transferring women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation, the RSF committed the crime of trafficking in persons.

667. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(e)(vi)-1(2).

668. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(c)(i); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(c)(i)-3; Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(vi); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(e)(vi)-1; ICRC Customary IHL, Rule 90. See also Felice D. Gaer, "Rape as a form of torture: The experience of the committee against torture", CUNY Law Review, Vol. 15: 293, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Women/SR/RapeReport/Other/204-gaer-general.pdf>

669. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(vi); ICC Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(e)(vi)-6(1).

670. ICC Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(e)(vi)-6(2).

671. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(vi); ICC Elements of Crimes Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(vi)-2.

672. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(c)(ii); ICC Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(c)(ii).

673. Rome Statute, Article 7(1)(e)-(g); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(e)(1)-(2), 7(1)(f)(1)-(3), 7(1)(g)(1)-(2), 7(1)(g)-2(1)-(2), 7(1)(g)-6(1)-(2).

674. Rome Statute, Article 7(1)(h); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(h).

675. Palermo Protocol adopted on 15 November 2000 by UNGA resolution 55/25, Article 3(a). It further provides, "[t]he recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered trafficking in persons even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a)." Palermo Protocol, Article 3(c).

7.1 SEXUAL VIOLENCE DURING ATTACKS ON VILLAGES AND IDP CAMPS

As the RSF attacked villages and IDP camps in and around El Fasher, fighters seized women and girls. In every case documented by Amnesty International, the women and girls were transported away from the site of the attack and then raped, often by multiple fighters. What varied was the duration and severity of their captivity: some were enslaved for weeks; others were raped and abandoned within days.

ABDUCTION AND SEXUAL SLAVERY

Amnesty International interviewed three survivors – a girl, a young woman who was abducted as a girl, and a woman – who were taken from their villages or an IDP camp and held captive for periods ranging from several days to several weeks. During their captivity, all three were subjected to sexual slavery, and two were forced to perform domestic labour. The survivors endured extreme abuse, including rape by multiple people at the same time; two were raped on multiple occasions. All three had been abducted alongside other women and girls, many of whom they believed were also subjected to sexual violence.

When *Ghalia*, a Zaghawa woman, was 17 years old, RSF fighters attacked her village near Abu Zerega in early 2025. She was abducted along with approximately nine other women and girls from the same area. *Ghalia* was taken to a farm several hours away, where she was tied to a tree and held for at least several weeks. According to *Ghalia*, the site appeared to be part of a sprawling RSF base that held up to 40 vehicles, although only two remained there consistently. She said that approximately 10 Colombian mercenaries working with the RSF were permanently stationed at the site. When asked how she knew their nationality, she explained that one of the Colombian mercenaries who raped her identified himself to her:

"[F]rom what I understood he was asking... if I knew where he came from. I shook my head. He said, 'I am from Colombia.'"⁶⁷⁶

Ghalia was kept separate from the other women and girls abducted with her, though she said she could sometimes hear others screaming nearby. RSF fighters left the site during the day, forcing her to wash and cook when they were away. She told Amnesty International:

"At night they raped me. Every night... It was always... at least two or three people at a time, at the same place [the tree]... First when they started, I refused, I tried to fight back. They shot a bullet next to me. After that I got scared and didn't do anything."⁶⁷⁷

She described the indignity of her captivity, explaining that she was unable to leave the tree to use the toilet, bathe or change her clothes for the duration of her abduction, and that RSF fighters referred to her as *falangay*. She said she was raped by so many different men that she could not recount how many there were or distinguish among them.

As a result of the rape, *Ghalia* fell pregnant. In tears, she said, "I don't know what I am going to say to [the baby] when he asks who his father is."⁶⁷⁸ *Ghalia* eventually escaped with three other women and girls while being transported in a car with RSF fighters that came under attack. They later made their way to Chad, where *Ghalia* was reunited with her mother.

676. Interview in person with *Ghalia*, 30 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

677. Interview in person with *Ghalia*, 30 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

678. Interview in person with *Ghalia*, 30 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

Tasneem, a 13-year-old Zaghawa girl, was abducted in early April 2025 when RSF fighters attacked a village west of El Fasher.⁶⁷⁹ She explained that the RSF maintained a checkpoint near the city and regularly entered to seize livestock and other valuables. At the time of her abduction, *Tasneem* was herding the family's livestock with her father when RSF fighters approached them. After her father refused to surrender the animals, *Tasneem* watched as the fighters shot him dead. They then blindfolded her and transported her to El Daein (the capital of East Darfur state, about 350km south-east of El Fasher), leaving her unsure of what was happening throughout the journey.

"It took us two days to reach El Daen... I could only hear their voices... One I understand was saying, 'You Zaghawa people, the only thing that you deserve is to be burned. You falangayat, falangayat!'"

"When I was blindfolded, they slapped and hit me. When they raped me; they were saying, 'You Zaghawa. We will change your seeds. We will change your genes!'"...

"[The first time I was raped] it was by three people. I was blindfolded... They held me down... they raped me... They said this is happening to you because your boys fought us, boys of the falangayat. The second time, I could not tell how many [people were raping me]... The third time was in El Daein... They raped me [while I was blindfolded]."⁶⁸⁰

Tasneem explained that after the third assault, RSF fighters took her to a *feriq* – a nomadic camp typically used by pastoralist communities and located far from towns or services. The fighters then handed her over to a group of seven shepherds, who told her, "Our father brought you to us."⁶⁸¹ Members of the group then raped her, throughout the night, over an additional three-day period. *Tasneem* told Amnesty International, "They called me *falangayat*."

On the fourth day, a Zaghawa shepherd found *Tasneem* and took her to his home, where he fed her and helped nurse her back to health. His family also took her to see a health professional. She was eventually reunited with an uncle, who sent her to Chad. *Tasneem* described the joy she felt when she unexpectedly encountered her sister at the reception centre at the border.

RSF fighters also abducted women and girls during their attack on Zamzam IDP camp and held them captive for sex. Amnesty International interviewed *Afrah*, a 28-year-old Zaghawa woman from El Fasher, who had been displaced to Zamzam. During the April 2025 attack on the camp, she and four other women and girls – two of them aged 17 and 15 – were abducted. For the first three days, she said, RSF fighters beat the women and girls and forced them to cook and wash clothes for them. When they were not performing these tasks, they were tied to a tree. They were not allowed to use the toilet.

She described how RSF fighters tortured and taunted them during their captivity:

"[T]hey were filming us and they were dancing and laughing... they were saying, 'We captured Zamzam, we captured the falangayat'... On the fifth day they brought food and water. They mixed it with sand and ordered us to eat it... They were really drunk. We just drank the water and refused to eat that food... Then they beat us and tried to put the food in our mouths... they ripped our clothes off. And they started touching our bodies and they were laughing and dancing while doing this."⁶⁸²

679. Interview in person with *Tasneem*, 1 November 2025, Tiné, Chad.

680. Interview in person with *Tasneem*, 1 November 2025, Tiné, Chad.

681. Interview in person with *Tasneem*, 1 November 2025, Tiné, Chad.

682. Interview in person with *Afrah*, 30 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

Afrah told Amnesty International that six RSF fighters raped her behind a vehicle. She said she fought unsuccessfully to resist them:

"I pushed them. I started running... They pushed me inside [a] tree. It had sharp thorns... The blood was coming because of the trees. They left me there... I was unconscious in that place for like a day."⁶⁸³

Afrah showed Amnesty International scars across her body caused by the thorns of the tree, which remained visible months after the assault. RSF fighters later drove her back to the deserted Zamzam IDP camp and abandoned her there, naked.

ABDUCTION AND RAPE

Other women and girls were abducted during RSF attacks on villages, raped – often by multiple fighters – and then released or abandoned. While their captivity was shorter, typically lasting one or two days, the pattern was consistent: women and girls were seized during attacks, transported to secondary locations, and sexually abused before being discarded.

Amnesty International interviewed one girl and one woman who were abducted from or near their villages, then raped and abandoned. *Hala*, a 17-year-old Gimir girl who was orphaned during the war, described being abducted from a village west of El Fasher along with about 20 other women and girls. "[The RSF] searched the homes one by one and took lots of us," she said.⁶⁸⁴

Among those abducted were two of *Hala's* neighbours, one of whom was 15 years old. The women and girls were taken to a farm several hours away, where other women and girls were cooking and cleaning. RSF fighters divided themselves into pairs, with each pair taking one of the women or girls.

"They took us far away for a little bit, for two days. The men who took me were Arab Sudanese, from Darfur... [They said], 'You are the kids of abulda'. I was raped by [two] men at the same time. I was raped like six times. The last one, he threw me in a ditch... I couldn't even get up. I spent the day there."⁶⁸⁵

Tahani, a 21-year-old Zaghawa woman, told Amnesty International that RSF fighters attacked her small village near Goz Baina, approximately 25km south-east from El Fasher, in mid-2025, where she witnessed them killing her father and abducting her brother.⁶⁸⁶ She fled the village but later attempted to return to check on survivors. On the road, RSF fighters abducted three young women, including *Tahani*, and three girls, forced them into a vehicle, and drove them to a place approximately 1.5 hours away.

"I was raped too many times... they separated us. I don't remember where exactly. It was covered with valleys and trees... They called us falangayat... They kept us for two days... They left us there. I was bleeding. When we [the survivors] were together we said we can't go back like this. People will talk about us. So, we went to a friend... She is a doctor... She took us to the MSF hospital."⁶⁸⁷



© ↑ Photo of the type of tree Afrah said RSF fighters pushed her into. © Amnesty International

683. Interview in person with *Afrah*, 30 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

684. Interview in person with *Hala*, 30 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

685. Interview in person with *Hala*, 30 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

686. Interview in person with *Tahani*, 5 November 2025, Iriba, Chad.

687. Interview in person with *Tahani*, 5 November 2025, Iriba, Chad.

Tahani added that one of the girls, aged 17, died in the hospital soon after the attack.

Amnesty International also interviewed *Aziza*, a Zaghawa health professional from the same area around Goz Baina as *Tahani*, who described treating two girls aged 12 and 13 and one young woman aged 18 who were raped in early April at a nearby RSF base. She described the severe injuries sustained by one of the 13-year-old girls she treated:

“When they brought her... her womb was out. I had to clean it with some salt. I saw her injury, I gave her some tablets. She came with us to Zamzam and I handed her to the hospital there.”⁶⁸⁸

7.2 SEXUAL VIOLENCE DURING FLIGHT AND DISPLACEMENT

Women and girls were also assaulted while trying to flee violence along the roads leading out of El Fasher and its surrounding areas. A report by MSF found that more than 90% of survivors treated in its clinics in North Darfur between January 2024 and November 2025 were assaulted while travelling from RSF-controlled areas towards Tawila.⁶⁸⁹ MSF also reported that large-scale displacement during the attack on Zamzam IDP camp in April 2025, and again during the takeover of El Fasher in late October 2025, was accompanied by widespread sexual violence along these routes.⁶⁹⁰

Amnesty International interviewed four women and one girl who were raped in mid-April 2025, shortly after being displaced by the RSF attack on Zamzam IDP camp. *Amal*, a 14-year-old girl, described how on 13 April 2025, around 5pm, she and her mother encountered six RSF vehicles on the road.⁶⁹¹ She said:

“They told me, ‘You are the women of the talangayat’... When we [were fleeing] we had our goats with us, I was [herding] the goats. They asked me to bring the goats to them, and then they took me and raped me.”⁶⁹²

Amal’s mother *Ola* followed the RSF fighters when they took *Amal*, before being beaten unconscious by them.⁶⁹³ When she regained consciousness, she found herself in Tawila hospital. After being raped, *Amal* was left on the road, where she was later found by her grandmother. *Amal* and her mother were reunited nine days later, after independently arriving at a hospital in Tawila.

In another case, a few days after fleeing Zamzam IDP camp, *Bahriya*, a young woman aged between 18 and 20, and her cousin *Sakina*, approximately 20 years old, were abducted from the road by RSF fighters who raped them.⁶⁹⁴ Both women were married and had children, although *Sakina*’s husband had left her prior to the rape and *Bahriya*’s husband went missing when Zamzam was attacked.

688. Interview in person with *Aziza*, 29 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

689. MSF, “There is Something I want to Tell You...” *Surviving the Sexual Violence Crisis in Darfur* (previously cited), p. 4.

690. See also MSF, “There is Something I want to Tell You...” *Surviving the Sexual Violence Crisis in Darfur* (previously cited), pp. 5, 8-9.

691. Interview in person with *Amal* and her mother *Ola*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

692. Interview in person with *Amal* and her mother *Ola*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

693. Interview in person with *Amal* and her mother *Ola*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

694. Interview in person with *Bahriya*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad; and *Sakina*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

Bahriya described fleeing Zamzam IDP camp in a large group that included her entire family. One night, two uniformed RSF fighters stopped the group at gunpoint and demanded that they surrender everything they had, repeatedly saying, “*Jahiziya fog*” [RSF fighters are ready]. The fighters then took *Bahriya* away, raped her under a tree and beat her. She said: “They were insulting us. They said you’re all mothers of *falangayat*, where are your men? We are looking for your men.”⁶⁹⁵ Following the attack, *Bahriya* told Amnesty International, “My body is in great pain, I cannot stand too much, it’s like torture, I have only recovered a little bit.”⁶⁹⁶

Sakina described how RSF vehicles chased civilians and said that she and several other women were eventually caught – six in total, including herself and *Bahriya*. *Sakina* said:

“They shot in the air... I was raped by two people. It was two people at the same time. They took the girls [women] to other places to be raped.”⁶⁹⁷

At the time *Sakina* was interviewed by Amnesty International, she was several months pregnant as a result of the rape.

Amnesty International also documented 10 incidents of rape of women and girls fleeing El Fasher city. On 19 April 2025, in Shagra village, *Murra*, a 45-year-old woman of mixed Zaghawa, Beni Hussein and Gimir ethnicities, witnessed RSF members raping her two daughters, aged 12 and 14.⁶⁹⁸ Her 14-year-old daughter was raped by two men, and her 12-year-old daughter by one. When she tried to intervene, she was whipped on her back and legs. She also saw seven additional girls and two women being raped. *Murra* said that 30 to 40 other women and girls were taken “a little bit further” away and raped. Although she did not witness these assaults, she reported that when they returned, they were screaming and crying. She said the rapes were carried out by around 30 men.

Ibtisam, a Zaghawa woman, and her 14-year daughter were raped by RSF fighters on 27 October 2025. *Ibtisam* said:

“When we reached a place near Golo [dam], three RSF men... stopped us. One of them forced me to go with them, cut my jalabiya [a traditional robe] and raped me. When they left, my 14-year-old daughter came to me. I found that her clothes had blood and were cut into pieces... when she saw me crying and exhausted, she came to me and said, ‘Mum, they raped me too, but do not tell anyone.’”⁶⁹⁹

Ibtisam’s daughter died at the clinic in Tawila soon after. Another Zaghawa woman, *Makka*, who was with *Ibtisam* at the time, was also raped.⁷⁰⁰

Women of all ages were impacted. The oldest survivor interviewed by Amnesty International was *Ashosha*, a 58-year-old Berti woman. *Ashosha*, who witnessed the RSF carrying out mass executions at the berm, said that the fighters then forced her and a group of 10 women and five girls (aged about 14 and 15) to walk to a village called Tiktik. At a farm nearby, RSF fighters raped all of the women and girls in the group simultaneously over the course of about an hour. *Ashosha* said she could see the other women as they were attacked. “Every two of them [RSF fighters] will take one woman, and sometimes three [or four] would take

695. Interview in person with *Bahriya*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

696. Interview in person with *Bahriya*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

697. Interview in person with *Sakina*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

698. Interview by voice call with *Murra*, 13 March 2026.

699. Interview by voice call with *Ibtisam*, 10 November 2025.

700. Interview by voice call with *Makka*, 10 November 2025.

one woman,” she said. *Ashosha* herself was raped by two men. “I have pain and injuries [as a result of the rape],” she said.⁷⁰¹ During the rape she described one of the fighters telling her, “We will finish all your people.” When she later met one of the other women from the group, the woman told her that two 15-year-old girls had died from the injuries they suffered during the rape.

The roads outside El Fasher continued to be dangerous for several weeks after the city was taken. *Nafisa*, a 17-year-old Berti girl who fled with her family in early December 2025, told Amnesty International that on their way to Tawila she witnessed the RSF raping a group of girls and mothers.⁷⁰²

7.3 SEXUAL ASSAULT DURING SEARCHES

Many women and girls were subjected to sexual violence during aggressive searches conducted by RSF fighters. *Widad*, a 31-year-old Zaghawa survivor of one such incident, explained: “They could take advantage when they search you to assault you.”⁷⁰³

Amnesty International interviewed three girls and three women who described incidents of sexual assault while fleeing.

Rihaab, a 15-year-old girl, described to Amnesty International how she was forced to strip naked while fleeing from Zamzam IDP camp to Tawila, near Kouim village. She said:

“[The] RSF tortured us in the road because we are teenagers... They said that some of [us]... [were]... hiding things, they made us take [all] our clothes off. They separated us one by one to search us... I took my clothes off, and they took my small amount of money and my phone.”⁷⁰⁴

Manahil, a 17-year-old girl, lost both her parents within two days due to shelling during the April attack on Zamzam IDP camp.⁷⁰⁵ After fleeing to El Fasher and remaining there for nine days, *Manahil* – still reeling from the loss of her parents – decided to continue to Tawila with her 14-year-old sister and her aunt. Shortly after setting out, they encountered RSF fighters on the road:

“[The RSF] beat us... They did all these bad things to us... I had my own money... They made me get it from my underwear... They beat me and took all my clothes off, even my shoes. They beat me with a dipshik [butt of an AK-pattern rifle].”⁷⁰⁶

Zakia, a 16-year-old Zaghawa girl, also displaced from Zamzam IDP camp, recounted her harrowing experience of sexual assault: “[The RSF]... say they are going to search you, then they start assaulting you... It was not a search; they touched every part of our bodies.”⁷⁰⁷ Throughout *Zakia*’s ordeal, the RSF fighters continued to insult the young women and girls, accusing them of being relatives and supporters of the army.

701. Interview by voice call with *Ashosha*, 23 February 2026.

702. Interview by voice call with *Nafisa*, 8 December 2025.

703. Interview in person with *Widad*, 3 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

704. Interview in person with *Rihaab*, 24 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

705. Interview in person with *Manahil*, 28 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

706. Interview in person with *Manahil*, 28 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

707. Interview in person with *Zakia*, 5 November 2025, Tiné, Chad.

STIGMA AND FEAR

For many survivors, the pain and anguish of being raped were compounded by stigma, shame and rejection by family and community members. *Ola*, whose 14-year-old daughter *Amal* was raped while fleeing Zamzam IDP camp, told Amnesty International:

"My husband divorced me. He divorced me because of [Amal]. He has stopped sending me money. [Amal] is not able to go outside of the house [due to shame over the rape]."⁷⁰⁸

Amal added: "I feel shy around my friends because I think people are talking about me. I don't like to leave the house."⁷⁰⁹

Fawzia, a 24-year-old Zaghawa woman, told Amnesty International how members of her community treated her after a doctor disclosed to her husband's brother that she had been raped:

"I get sad. Sometimes I can't leave my house because I am afraid people are going to say something to me. So I just stay home. Some people talk behind my back [about the rape], like my husband's mother. They say, 'If you are a woman, you are not going to let the RSF rape you'... I don't get help from [his family]. I am afraid of people, that they may say something."⁷¹⁰

Sakina, a young woman who became pregnant as a result of rape by an RSF fighter, told Amnesty International that the most difficult part of her experience was the reaction of people in her community: "People talk about me... It's because of the pregnancy. I don't want them to do this; it gives me a bad feeling. I tell them not to talk about me. Or I try to ignore it."⁷¹¹

Rape not only violates women and girls physically but also tears apart families and communities. Without access to protection, medical care and psycho-social support, women and girls continue to suffer lasting consequences that extend well beyond the attack.

7.4 LACK OF ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE AND SUPPORT

According to UN Women, the number of people in need of sexual violence support has quadrupled since the start of the war, but many survivors, particularly in active conflict areas, continue to lack access to food, shelter or medical care.⁷¹² As of April 2026, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) had received only 29% of the funding needed to respond to sexual and reproductive health needs and gender-based violence in Sudan.⁷¹³ MSF has reported an absence of adequate protection services for survivors of sexual violence in Darfur, due in particular to the limited presence of organizations on the ground, weak coordination and lack of resources.⁷¹⁴ Sudanese-led women's organizations have been on the frontlines of providing support, but have

708. Interview in person with *Amal* and her mother *Ola*, 23 October, 2025, Iriba Chad.

709. Interview in person with *Amal* and her mother *Ola*, 23 October, 2025, Iriba, Chad.

710. Interview in person with *Fawzia*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

711. Interview in person with *Sakina*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

712. UN Women, "Sudan's war on women: The number of people in need of sexual violence support quadruples as abuse of women and girls becomes the blueprint of war, three years on", 14 April 2026, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2026/04/sudans-war-on-women-the-number-of-people-in-need-of-sexual-violence-support-quadruples-as-abuse-of-women-and-girls-becomes-the-blueprint-of-war-three-years-on>

713. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), *Situation Report, Sudan*, 29 May 2026, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/unfpa-sudan-situation-report-1-30-april-2026>, p. 5.

714. MSF, "There is Something I want to Tell You..." *Surviving the Sexual Violence Crisis in Darfur* (previously cited), p. 17.

also faced severe challenges due to funding shortages and insecurity.⁷¹⁵ Even in areas where clinics have been established, MSF has reported that stigma, ongoing attacks and transportation shortages have impeded survivors' access to care.⁷¹⁶

Before the war broke out in El Fasher, "Safe Corner" at Saudi Hospital was one of very few places in North Darfur providing healthcare and psycho-social support services for survivors of rape and other forms of sexual violence.⁷¹⁷ Safe Corner also referred incidents of rape and sexual violence to the police for further investigation.⁷¹⁸

Saudi Hospital also provided fistula surgery. Fistula is a common and severe internal injury when survivors of rape and sexual violence are unable to access timely medical care, and can result in continuous leakage of urine or faeces, chronic infections and pain, social rejection and profound psychological trauma.⁷¹⁹

Safe Corner was shelled during the war in 2024, forcing the unit to relocate and consolidate its operations into a single room with significantly reduced services.⁷²⁰ As described in Chapter 6, Saudi Hospital itself was repeatedly targeted, further limiting survivors' ability to access care for sexual violence. Two survivors interviewed by Amnesty International who received treatment at the hospital after being raped said they were present when the facility was shelled.

According to one NGO representative working in the Safe Corner, between the start of the war in 2023 and April 2025, the facility only received 22 rape cases.⁷²¹ These cases primarily involved survivors from attacks in rural areas around El Fasher and the RSF takeover of Zamzam IDP camp.⁷²² Among the cases, he said, four involved adults, while the remainder involved children.⁷²³

Many women and girls displaced from El Fasher and surrounding areas looked for medical care in the first town or village they reached after fleeing. However, even in larger towns such as Tawila, services were limited.⁷²⁴ As a result, along with stigma and other barriers, some of the women and girls interviewed did not seek care at all after fleeing, while others visited medical facilities but chose not to disclose that they had been raped.

Under Sudanese law, abortion in cases of rape is only permitted within 90 days of pregnancy and requires survivors to report the rape to the police and obtain a "Form 8," in which a medical practitioner documents evidence of injury.⁷²⁵ The form is then submitted to the prosecutor, who determines whether the abortion may proceed.⁷²⁶ According to the UN FFM, this onerous process, combined with the collapse of institutional and medical services, has made access to safe and legal abortion increasingly difficult.⁷²⁷

715. UN Women, "Sudan's war on women: The number of people in need of sexual violence support quadruples as abuse of women and girls becomes the blueprint of war, three years on" (previously cited); UNICEF, *Sudan's Child Rape and Sexual Violence Crisis*, March 2025, p.12.

716. MSF, "There is Something I want to Tell You..." *Surviving the Sexual Violence Crisis in Darfur* (previously cited), p. 17.

717. Interview by voice call with NGO representative, 22 August 2025.

718. Interview by voice call with NGO representative, 22 August 2025.

719. A fistula is an abnormal connection between two organs, such as the bladder and vagina. Cleveland Clinic, "Fistula", <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/fistula> (accessed 30 January 2025).

720. Interview by voice call with NGO representative, 22 August 2025.

721. Interview by voice call with NGO representative, 22 August 2025.

722. Interview by voice call with NGO representative, 22 August 2025.

723. Interview by voice call with NGO representative, 22 August 2025.

724. See also MSF, "There is Something I want to Tell You..." *Surviving the Sexual Violence Crisis in Darfur* (previously cited), p. 16.

725. Article 135 of the Criminal Act (1991); UN FFM, *Findings of the investigations conducted by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan into violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and related crimes, committed in the Sudan in the context of the conflict that erupted in mid-April 2023*, 23 October 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/57/CRP.6, para. 207; Human Rights Watch, "Khartoum is not safe for women! Sexual violence against women and girls in Sudan's capital, 28 July 2024", <https://www.hrw.org/report/2024/07/28/khartoum-not-safe-women/sexual-violence-against-women-and-girls-sudans-capital>, p. 27.

726. UN FFM, *Findings of the investigations conducted by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission* (previously cited), para. 207.

727. UN FFM, *Findings of the investigations conducted by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission* (previously cited), para. 207.

Even when women and girls received medical treatment for rape, many had lost all their possessions and were destitute, unable to meet basic needs such as food and shelter. After *Ghalia* escaped from captivity (see above), she faced severe hardship with little support.⁷²⁸ When she eventually reached Tawila, she looked for the medical care she urgently needed. However, after treatment, she was left homeless and resorted to begging for food.

“After I left the hospital, we [Ghalia and a niece and nephew she reunited with] sometimes sat in front of the hospital and I begged people [for something] to eat... for three months. I didn’t meet any family [in Tawila]. A man gave me [a scarf]. I used that at night to cover the children and me... Sometimes we slept in the market. Sometimes we slept in the safe house.”⁷²⁹

It was only through the assistance of a stranger that *Ghalia* was eventually able to travel to Chad.

Hala, another rape survivor (see above), said that even after reaching relative safety in Chad, one of her greatest challenges was accessing basic menstrual supplies.⁷³⁰ *Sakina*, who became pregnant after the RSF raped her (see above), told Amnesty International, “I have got nothing, not even a mat at home.”⁷³¹

Amnesty International found examples of survivors of rape and sexual violence coming together to support one another through the trauma of their experiences. *Hala* described how she told her story to a trusted health professional in the community and, through her, was able to connect with other survivors:

“I couldn’t speak to anyone. I met [the health professional] and I trusted her... I said I need to speak to her about something private. She invited me in the home... I told her everything... she took me back to the hospital and then they gave me medicine.”⁷³²

728. Interview in person with *Ghalia*, 30 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

729. Interview in person with *Ghalia*, 30 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

730. Interview in person with *Hala*, 30 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

731. Interview in person with *Sakina*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

732. Interview in person with *Hala*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

The background of the page features a faded, orange-tinted image showing the silhouettes of several people in what appears to be a conflict zone. Some individuals are standing, while others are in motion, possibly running or being carried. The overall atmosphere is somber and chaotic.

8. HOSTAGE-TAKING AND UNLAWFUL DETENTION

“One [of the RSF fighters] said, ‘Don’t kill the civilians, we can benefit from them.’”

Alsir, a 28-year-old man who was taken hostage for ransom while leaving El Fasher. His family paid SDG 15 million (about USD 4,400) for his release⁷³³

“Food [became] a secondary thing, we were just concerned with water... [We] lost consciousness. [The RSF] thought we had died so they just threw us out of the container. After a while they realized we were still alive. They tortured us again and took us [back] inside the container.”

Bilal was held for over two months in a shipping container at the RSF detention centre at Mina al-Bari in El Fasher⁷³⁴

Since the renewal of major violence in North Darfur in 2023, the RSF has captured civilians and held many of them hostage for ransom, often in horrific conditions. Amnesty International interviewed 45 people who were unlawfully detained between July 2024 and January 2026, at least 36 of whom were held hostage for ransom, including five children. Amnesty International also interviewed 20 people who witnessed the RSF unlawfully detaining others, including family members.

733. Interview by voice call with *Alsir*, 11 December 2025.

734. Interview in person with *Bilal*, 31 October 2025, Chad.



© ↑ Displaced people from El Fasher carrying belongings reclaimed in the city, entering Tawila, Sudan. Many people risked being unlawfully detained and taken hostage on the road from El Fasher. January 2026. © Private

After the attack on Zamzam camp and subsequent seizure of El Fasher, tens of thousands of people were forced to flee through RSF-controlled territory. Of the 70 survivors Amnesty International interviewed who fled El Fasher after the takeover of the city, 26 were unlawfully detained, most of them for ransom, and a further 10 were witnesses to the same. Other organizations have reported detentions on a massive scale during the RSF takeover of El Fasher.⁷³⁵

All the former detainees interviewed for this report said they were civilians. Thirty were men, nine were teenage boys, and six were women.

Detention conditions were abusive and degrading. Most interviewees, including boys as young as 13, said they were beaten and verbally abused using ethnic slurs by RSF soldiers while in captivity. They were usually fed extremely little and given a cup or two of water per day. They were kept in sweltering, overcrowded rooms.

735. MSF, "Sudan: Desperate conditions and accounts of mass violence in North Darfur, 26 November 2025, <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/sudan-desperate-conditions-and-accounts-mass-violence-north-darfur>; Al Jazeera, "The families forced to pay ransoms to free loved ones in Sudan's El-Fasher", 5 November 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2025/11/5/sudans-rsf-abducts-civilians-for-ransom-as-they-flee-el-fasher>. The Sudan Doctors Network, an association of medical professionals, claimed in December 2025 that more than 5,000 who had fled El Fasher in October were still being held in detention; see Sudan Doctors Network, X post: "RSF holding more than 19,000 people in 'Dagris' and 'Kober' prisons," 10 December 2025, <https://x.com/SDN154/status/1998719330993725697>; Darfur Network for Human Rights, "We Could Not Breathe Inside Those Containers" RSF's Systematic Detention, Torture and Extortion in North Darfur, 31 March 2026, <https://dnhr.org/2026/03/31/rsf-detention-torture-north-darfur-report/>; UN Security Council, "Letter dated 14 April 2025 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council" (previously cited), para. 36.

They were often not allowed out to use the toilet, forcing them to relieve themselves inside their rooms. Detainees witnessed the deaths of others, sometimes in the dozens, from suspected dehydration or illness; one man said he buried about 200 bodies of people he suspected had died from cholera at a detention site.⁷³⁶ The RSF reportedly failed to respond to requests to provide medical support in these cases.

Profit was the primary motive for hostage-taking. All former hostages said that the RSF demanded they pay exorbitant ransoms – typically SDG 5-20 million (about USD 1,470-5,880) – to be released. Torture and other ill-treatment were filmed and sent to family members to coerce them into paying ransom money. In several cases, people witnessed a person whose family had not paid ransom being executed. Of the 36 people who were ordered to pay ransom, only four were released without payment; another four people managed to escape captivity.

HOSTAGE-TAKING, CRUEL TREATMENT AND TORTURE

Arbitrarily detaining civilians is a violation of international humanitarian law and human rights law.⁷³⁷ Hostage-taking is the seizure or detention of civilians or other protected persons, with threats to harm or continue holding them, in order to force a state, organization or other party to act or refrain from acting; in armed conflict, it constitutes a war crime.⁷³⁸ Acts which cause severe physical and mental suffering amount to the war crime of cruel treatment.⁷³⁹ Where such abuse was carried out for purposes including extracting information, punishment, intimidation, or to compel payment from relatives, it constitutes the war crime of torture.⁷⁴⁰

Under the Rome Statute, where such acts are committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack, “imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law” can amount to crimes against humanity, as does torture.⁷⁴¹

The RSF committed the war crime of hostage-taking by detaining men, women and children – many of whom were civilians fleeing violence – and compelling their relatives to pay money in exchange for their safety or release. They also committed the war crimes of cruel treatment and torture for the mistreatment of individuals held in RSF custody. As highlighted in Chapter 11, these acts also amount to the crimes against humanity of imprisonment and torture.

736. Interview by voice call with *Shogar*, 15 January 2026.

737. Geneva Conventions, Common Article 3; Protocol II, Article 5, ICCPR, Article 9.

738. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(c)(iii); ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 135; ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(c)(iii)(1)-(4).

739. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(c)(i); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(c)(i)-3; ICRC Customary IHL, Rule 90.

740. Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(vi); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(e)(vi)-1; ICRC Customary IHL, Rule 90.

741. Rome Statute, Articles 7(1)(e), 7(1)(f) and 7(1)(k).

8.1 DETENTION AND HOSTAGE-TAKING BEFORE THE TAKEOVER OF EL FASHER

During attacks on rural villages and towns around El Fasher (see Chapter 4), the RSF took people, typically men and boys, from their homes or farms by force. They were either forced to pay ransom, subjected to forced labour, or both.

Rashid, a Zaghawa boy who was about 17 at the time, was walking home after playing football in his hometown of Goz Baina one evening in or around July 2024. He was with three friends when two men in RSF uniform and two men in civilian clothing travelling together in a car abducted him. He told Amnesty International:

“The sun was about to set and I was moving fast to make it [home] in time for prayer... They tied me up and blindfolded me and put me in the vehicle. For many days I didn’t know where I was because my eyes were covered.”⁷⁴²

Rashid was used by RSF fighters as a shepherd for about nine months until being released after ransom was paid (see further details in section 9.2). *Aziza*, a Zaghawa woman from the same village, reported that 19 people were abducted from the area, about 17 of whom were children. She said that residents of the village pooled together to pay ransom for 13 abductees; six were never located.⁷⁴³

When Zamzam was captured by the RSF, large groups of people fleeing the camp were taken hostage. *Sufyan*, a 13-year-old Zaghawa boy, was held with his extended family after fleeing Zamzam in April 2025. They were stopped by the RSF near the town of Kutum, about 100km north-west of Zamzam. “Before they stopped us, they opened random fire against our vehicle, they shot and killed one woman who was with us,” said *Sufyan*. “Then they pointed the gun at us and told us to lie on the ground... They beat me with the back of an AK-47.”⁷⁴⁴ At the time of interview, *Sufyan* still had scars on his lower back from the beating.

The men and boys from *Sufyan*’s family were kept in what he believed was a school; the women and younger children of the group were held in an open field. *Sufyan*’s older cousin, *Hawa*, said: “Small children went with the women, [those] up to seven or eight years [old]. But above that, they say, ‘You are able to carry a gun, so we can’t release you.’”⁷⁴⁵ “They counted us as men,” *Sufyan* said of himself and the other teenage boys in the group.⁷⁴⁶

Teenage boys were tortured and subjected to other ill-treatment while being detained. *Alhadi*, a 17-year-old Zaghawa boy, was detained during the RSF attack on Zamzam in April 2025. “I saw some guys running in front of me and I ran behind them, but more shells fell on those guys and killed them,” he said. He stopped running and hid along the wall of a house with another man.⁷⁴⁷ A pickup full of RSF fighters and manacled detainees drove up to them. *Alhadi* saw the RSF shoot the man who was sitting next to him in the leg. Then they dragged *Alhadi* onto the pickup:

742. Interview with *Rashid*, 1 November 2025, Tiné, Chad.

743. Interview in person with *Aziza*, 29 October 2025, Chad.

744. Interview with *Sufyan*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

745. Interview with *Hawa*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

746. Interview with *Sufyan*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

747. Interview with *Alhadi*, 28 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

“They punched me [in the mouth], my teeth are fake now... They were beating me with sticks, they were calling us falangayat. Then they blindfolded me... We were in the truck for a week, [we] didn’t get much to eat and [had] just water to drink. All the time we were blindfolded.”⁷⁴⁸

Based on what he could overhear of the conversation between RSF fighters, *Alhadi* believed he was brought to a prison in Nyala, the capital of South Darfur. He was held there for approximately two months and then released. As of October 2025, he had been unable to reconnect with his mother or siblings.

All the survivors of detention interviewed by Amnesty International stated that they were civilians. Despite this, the RSF often asserted, without evidence, that detainees were affiliated with the SAF or Joint Forces and that this justified their detention. *Osman*, a Zaghawa man in his 20s, said that when he was detained while fleeing Zamzam in April 2025, he and other men he was with tried to tell their RSF captors that they were civilians. The RSF beat them: “[They said], ‘You are lying. Anyone who left El Fasher or Zamzam is part of the Joint Forces.’”⁷⁴⁹

Most people who were detained were asked to pay ransom money to be released. *Abboud*, a 57-year-old Zaghawa man, was fleeing Zamzam via El Fasher with his family in April 2025 when they were stopped by the RSF outside Garni village. The RSF started beating members of the group.⁷⁵⁰ *Abboud* and some other men gathered whatever cash they had and handed it over to the RSF.

“[I] said please, please, take the money... When [the RSF] saw me doing this, they stopped beating people... One of them looked at me and [said], ‘Ok, thank you, then you can leave.’”⁷⁵¹

Abboud’s family encountered a second group of the RSF once they reached Garni. They searched *Abboud*’s bags and found his employee badge from Sudanese Airlines, where he had previously worked as a luggage handler. They accused him of being involved in the Sudanese military’s air forces. The RSF soldiers beat him with branches, saying they wanted SDG 10 million (about USD 2,940) for his release. “I didn’t have that kind of money,” he said. They eventually brought the ransom demand down to SDG 3 million (about USD 882). When *Abboud* still could not pay, the RSF made one last attempt to pressure him: “[The RSF] took me back to my family. [The chief] saw them crying earlier, he used that to press me [for the money].”⁷⁵² *Abboud* was able to call some relatives living abroad to send the funds. He and his family were released.

While detaining hostages, the RSF almost always used derogatory terms such as *falangay* or *abid*.⁷⁵³ *Majdi*, a 40-year-old Zaghawa man, was taken hostage with three men and a woman when they tried to flee El Fasher in August 2025:

“They tied us up with rope and they beat us with sticks and sometimes... with the butt of their guns... At some point I lost consciousness... They insulted us. They said that you are a falangay, you are just a slave, you are not human beings.”⁷⁵⁴

748. Interview with *Alhadi*, 28 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

749. Interview with *Osman*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

750. Interview with *Abboud*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

751. Interview with *Abboud*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

752. Interview with *Abboud*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

753. Both of these terms connote slavery or servitude, and are derogatory terms used to denigrate people of non-Arab descent. For more information see Chapter 3.

754. Interview by voice call with *Majdi*, 15 September 2025.

8.2 DETENTION AND HOSTAGE-TAKING AFTER THE TAKEOVER OF EL FASHER

After the takeover of El Fasher in October 2025, with tens of thousands of people fleeing the city, the RSF detained large numbers of people and took many of them hostage. Witnesses reported seeing hundreds of people being detained at one time; they were often relocated to massive, overcrowded detention facilities until their family members paid ransom for their release. Women, girls and younger children were also swept up in this detention dragnet.

Amnesty International interviewed seven people who said that Garni village, about 17km north-west of El Fasher, was a major hub for the detention and relocation of people fleeing El Fasher.⁷⁵⁵ Saeed, a 35-year-old man of Gimir ethnicity, left El Fasher with his wife and children on 26 October. They first encountered the RSF in Hillet el Sheikh, a village closer to the city; Saeed was beaten with sticks and forced to make the sounds of goats and donkeys.⁷⁵⁶ He was released, but at the next stop in Garni, he was detained and separated from his family:

"[The RSF] put us in a line again and started searching us, even the women they asked to take their clothes off... [They] took us to Garni school. After that they separated men and women, they asked all of us men to ride on a truck. They had three big trucks. We were thinking that they were taking us to Tawila but unfortunately they [took us back to]... El Fasher."⁷⁵⁷

Other witnesses described a similar mass detention operation in Garni, with trucks transporting hundreds, if not thousands, of men back to El Fasher or to detention facilities elsewhere. Abdelmoniem, 28, said:

"[The RSF brought] six trucks... They put the men in the trucks. I am not sure how many people [were] in one truck, there were many people, we were on top of each other, there was no space for us... [We] found ourselves back in El Fasher."⁷⁵⁸

Saeed and Abdelmoniem, as well as a third witness, were transported from Garni to the former Specialized Children's Hospital in El Fasher, which was converted into a prison (see below).⁷⁵⁹ Batool, a 35-year-old Zaghawa woman, also witnessed in Garni the RSF taking away men and boys in the group she was travelling with: "[They were taken] in two big trucks – around 300 boys [and men]," she said.⁷⁶⁰

Sabi, a 30-year-old Zaghawa man, was detained in what he believed was a civilian house in Garni seized by the RSF. He said that about 30 people were there, including about five women and their 12 to 13 children:

"The conditions were very bad, we had injured people and there was no medical treatment or support, there was no food... In front of everybody, they beat the whole group, they didn't differentiate between [men], women or children. They were terrorizing people by shooting in the air and some [RSF] used sticks and whips."⁷⁶¹

A 20-year-old Fur woman was held at an RSF detention facility in Garni on 26 October with her 17-day-old baby, her brother and her sister for over three months. The RSF demanded a ransom they could not pay.

755. Other organizations have also reported mass detentions in Garni. See MSF, "People who escaped El Fasher are struggling to survive one month after RSF takeover", 26 November 2025, <https://www.msf.org/people-who-escaped-el-fasher-are-struggling-survive-one-month-after-rsf-takeover>

756. Interview by voice call with Saeed, 11 December 2025.

757. Interview by voice call with Saeed, 11 December 2025.

758. Interview by voice call with Abdelmoniem, 3 December 2025.

759. Interviews by voice call with Abdelmoniem, 3 December 2025; Saeed, 11 December 2025; and Imad, 14 December 2025.

760. Interview by voice call with Batool, 1 December 2025.

761. Interview by voice call with Sabi, 8 January 2026.

The woman saw the RSF shoot a man in detention because he could not afford the ransom. The woman was ultimately released without paying the ransom.⁷⁶²

Women who were taken hostage faced the additional threat of sexual violence. *Nada*, a 25-year-old doctor of Fur ethnicity, was attempting to flee the city when she was stopped by the RSF in El Fasher university. While leaving home, she had grabbed her iPad, smartphone and about USD 800 in cash:

“One of the RSF commanders was interrogating me and around him were about six to seven soldiers. They opened my bag and found the dollars... They kept making bad jokes... One said, ‘I will take you to Nyala’, another said, ‘You will be my wife’. I was terrified... I was threatened with rape.”⁷⁶³

Again, the financial motive for detention was clear from the start. *Alsir*, who is of Manasir ethnicity (an Arab tribe), witnessed the execution of five soldiers and one civilian he was fleeing with. He said the RSF spared him and the remaining civilians in the group so they could take them hostage: “One [of the RSF fighters] said, ‘Don’t kill the civilians, we can benefit from them.’”⁷⁶⁴

8.3 TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT IN DETENTION

After being taken hostage, most people were held in detention for anything from a few days to six months or more. People were often released when their relatives paid ransom for them; but getting in touch with relatives and organizing payment could take weeks and sometimes months. In detention, prisoners, including boys as young as 13, faced torture and other inhuman treatment. They were barely fed, given minimal water, and lived in unsanitary conditions that resulted in disease and death. These abuses, some of which can be linked to specific RSF commanders in charge of detention facilities at the time, are documented below.

MINA AL-BARI DETENTION CENTRE

Amnesty International interviewed nine men who were imprisoned at Mina al-Bari detention centre between mid-2024 and January 2026. Eight were ordered to pay ransom (one was moved to another site, which is where he paid the ransom); one man was arbitrarily detained at Mina al-Bari but never asked to pay ransom and was released when he became very sick. The prison, a former bus station, is in the easternmost neighbourhood of El Fasher and was taken over by the RSF in April 2023.⁷⁶⁵ The RSF detained a mix of SAF and Joint Forces members, civilians, and RSF members held for infractions.

The nine interviewees were civilians. One man spent only a few days at the detention centre; the rest were held there for between two and five months.⁷⁶⁶ All witnesses were kept in shipping containers that were extremely hot, overcrowded and unhygienic. They were beaten with sticks, whips and the butts of rifles; denied food and water until they fainted; had boiling water poured on them; and were verbally and

762. Interview by voice call with anonymous, 20 February 2026.

763. Interview by voice call with *Nada*, 17 December 2025.

764. Interview by voice call with *Alsir*, 11 December 2025.

765. Conversation with a human rights defender in Sudan, January 2026.

766. Interviews, September 2025 – April 2026.

psychologically abused. Six witnessed the deaths of others while in detention; one man, who was detained at Mina al-Bari after the RSF captured El Fasher, said he buried more than 200 bodies there.⁷⁶⁷ Three witnesses said they were detained with teenagers, including three RSF recruits aged approximately 14 or 15.⁷⁶⁸

All interviewees said they were kept inside shipping containers with dozens of other men.⁷⁶⁹ Standard shipping containers are not designed for human occupancy and provide only minimal ventilation through small vent openings, typically a few centimetres wide. Mass suffocations have been reported of people detained in shipping containers.⁷⁷⁰ Witnesses said the containers were kept closed most of the time, causing many to faint from the heat or lack of air. *Osman*, a Zaghawa man in his 20s, who was held at the prison for about two months, said:

"You cannot stretch your legs... You cannot sleep long... A lot of people fainted... You just lean on the person sitting next to you, and he does the same... [I fainted] two times... [The RSF] told me, 'We don't care if you die.'"⁷⁷¹

Bilal, who is in his forties, was held in a shipping container with about 65 to 70 other men and teenage boys. They were fed once per day, and three dishes had to be divided between all detainees.⁷⁷² They were given very little water:

"Food [became] a secondary thing, we were just concerned with water. My body was [drying out] completely, [we] lost consciousness. [The RSF] thought we had died so they just threw us out of the container. After a while they realized we were still alive. They tortured us again and took us [back] inside the container..."

"We [were] not allowed to go to the toilet. They just brought the jerrycan and asked us to pass water. There was stool everywhere."⁷⁷³

All interviewees said that the RSF regularly came and took people out of the containers to interrogate or torture them. One Zaghawa man in his thirties, *Hassan*, said that six RSF soldiers took him out of the container one night and whipped him with tree branches for about four hours, demanding that he give them access to the banking apps on his phone.⁷⁷⁴ Six interviewees said they witnessed people dying at the prison – sometimes from starvation and dehydration or illness, and sometimes as the result of torture. *Bilal* said:

"[The RSF] took some people outside of the container and they shot them... I never saw them [being shot], but when they took them out they didn't bring them back we heard the gunshot outside..."

"Some [people] they passed [away] inside. We used to sit with our knees to our chest the whole time – sometimes [I] just found somebody sitting like that [after] they had passed away."⁷⁷⁵

One man, who was held at Mina al-Bari for five months, said at one point he became severely weakened and ill, having lost too much weight. The RSF put him in what they called "The Dead People's Container" with three other men who were sick or injured. Two of the men died within days.⁷⁷⁶

767. Interview by voice call with *Shogar*, 15 January 2026.

768. Interview by voice call with *Muaz*, 23 September 2025; interview in person with *Osman*, 2 November 2025, Chad.

769. Interviews, September 2025 – April 2026.

770. Amnesty International has documented mass killings by suffocation for people held in shipping containers in South Sudan, see: Amnesty International, 'Their Voices Stopped': Mass killing in a shipping container in Leer (Index: AFR 65/3598/2016), 10 March 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr65/3598/2016/en/>

771. Interview in person with *Osman*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

772. Interview in person with *Bilal*, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

773. Interview in person with *Bilal*, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

774. Interview by voice call with *Hassan*, 26 March 2026.

775. Interview in person with *Bilal*, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

776. Interview by voice call with *Abdulkareem*, 10 April 2026.



©↑ Major General Gedo Hamdan Ahmed Mohamed, known as “Abu Shouk”

Five witnesses held at Mina al-Bari said that the most senior RSF official who visited the detention centre was General Abu Shouk, the nickname of Gedo Hamdan Ahmed Mohamed, Regional Commander for North Darfur Section, Brigadier General of the RSF.⁷⁷⁷ Many were taken to meet Abu Shouk when they first arrived at the prison, and said that he frequented the prison regularly afterwards. They said Abu Shouk was introduced to them by that name; given his seniority, most of them recognized him from media appearances, as he was well known to people in the El Fasher area. Two men said that they had personally met Abu Shouk in his role as an RSF commander before 2023.⁷⁷⁸ More detailed information regarding interactions between Abu Shouk and former detainees is being withheld out of concern for their security.

Three men said they personally experienced ill-treatment, including being beaten, kicked and threatened with execution, at the hands of General Abu Shouk.⁷⁷⁹ Two men said they saw Abu Shouk participating in the torture of others.⁷⁸⁰ *Osman* said he was personally questioned by General Abu Shouk, who then directed other soldiers to torture him:

“After Abu Shouk asked me [a lot of] questions, he asked [the other RSF soldiers] to take me somewhere to beat me. And they beat me. They brought me back to Abu Shouk. He said, ‘The next time, you are not coming back here again. I’ll just kill you and throw you somewhere.’”⁷⁸¹

Five witnesses identified Lieutenant Colonel Abbas Khater Bakhit as the RSF commander overseeing the detention site on a daily basis.⁷⁸² Several of the men, who were themselves of Zaghawa ethnicity, said they knew Abbas Khater, who is Zaghawa, personally through family ties.⁷⁸³ One man said he did not know Abbas Khater from before, but that he was frequently referred to by name at the prison.⁷⁸⁴ A sixth witness, who was not detained at the prison but who organized ransom payments for relatives, said that his main point of contact at the RSF identified himself as Abbas Khater.⁷⁸⁵

One man saw Abbas Khater directly participating in torture; other interviewees said that they saw him ordering the torture of detainees. *Muaz*, a Zaghawa man, said: “[Abbas Khater] gave orders to his soldiers to torture prisoners... He told [another soldier] that [I had] money in my account on my phone, he said, ‘You should take him and beat him until he opens it for you’... They threatened to shoot me, finally they managed to get money out of my account... He also told [RSF soldiers] to pour boiling water [on us] while we were in the container. Some people died because of that.”⁷⁸⁶ As the most senior RSF official managing the detention centre, Abbas Khater would have been aware of the dire conditions, including death from disease, starvation or dehydration.

777. Interviews in-person with *Bilal*, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad; and *Osman*, 2 November 2025, Oure Cassoni, Chad. Interviews by voice call with *Hassan*, 26 March 2026; *Sharif*, 7 April 2026; and *Abdulkareem*, 10 April 2026.

778. Interviews by voice call with *Hassan*, 26 March 2026; and *Sharif*, 7 April 2026.

779. Interview in person with *Osman*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad. Interviews by voice call with *Hassan*, 26 March 2026; and *Sharif*, 7 April 2026.

780. Interview in person with *Bilal*, 31 October 2025, Tine, Chad. Interview by voice call with *Abdulkareem*, 10 April 2026.

781. Interview in person with *Osman*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad.

782. Interview in person with *Osman*, 2 November 2025, Ouré Cassoni, Chad. Interviews by voice call with *Muaz*, 23 September 2025 and 16 March 2026; *Hassan*, 26 March 2026; *Sharif*, 7 April 2026; and *Abdulkareem*, 10 April 2026.

783. Interviews by voice call with *Muaz*, 23 September 2025 and 16 March 2026; *Hassan*, 26 March 2026; and *Sharif*, 7 April 2026.

784. Interview by voice call with *Abdulkareem*, 10 April 2026.

785. Interview by voice call with *Kamal*, 17 September 2025.

786. Interviews by voice call with *Muaz*, 23 September 2025 and 16 March 2026.

In March 2026, the Darfur Network for Human Rights published an investigation into Mina al-Bari, corroborating the widespread use of torture there. The report identified Abbas Khater as the general supervisor of the detention centre.⁷⁸⁷

These individuals should be investigated and, where relevant, prosecuted, for crimes committed under international law, including through international and domestic mechanisms. According to information received by Amnesty International, Abbas Khater is currently in RSF detention. The RSF should surrender him to a competent, independent judicial authority capable of conducting fair and effective proceedings. The findings in this report must not be used by the RSF as a pretext to pursue its own proceedings against him, particularly where such proceedings could result in the death penalty or otherwise fail to meet international fair trial standards.

Mina al-Bari continued to operate after the RSF seized El Fasher in October 2025. Amnesty International interviewed three men who were detained and brought to Mina al-Bari at that time and held for between two days and three months. *Shogar*, a Zaghawa man, who was kept in a shipping container with at least 45 men for about two months, said: “[The RSF] called people randomly and beat them at night. This happened to me... They called me *falangayat*... they beat me many times... I had [bruises] all over my body. They whipped us.”⁷⁸⁸

As before, conditions were unhygienic and disease spread rapidly in the shipping containers. *Shogar* said that people were dying from what he believed was cholera:

“I got one meal per day. I would go to the toilet inside the container. It was very crowded... People were suffering severe diarrhoea... There were people who died from the heat, and [the RSF] didn’t open [the door]... Around 20 people died [inside the container while I was there]. They would take them out and bring new people.”⁷⁸⁹

Shogar said that one day, the RSF ordered him to leave the container so that he could help bury people who had died at the prison. He said that they used a bulldozer to transfer bodies to a location about 10 minutes away, on the road to El Kuma. “I buried around 200 people,” he said.⁷⁹⁰



👁️ ↑ A photo of Lieutenant Colonel Abbas Khater that has circulated on Facebook

787. Darfur Network for Human Rights, “We Could Not Breathe Inside Those Containers” (previously cited).

788. Interview by voice call with *Shogar*, 15 January 2026.

789. Interview by voice call with *Shogar*, 15 January 2026.

790. Interview by voice call with *Shogar*, 15 January 2026.

NYALA

Nyala, which has been under RSF control since October 2023,⁷⁹¹ has reportedly become a major hub for the detention of both military personnel and civilians. In December 2025, the Sudan Doctors Network, an association of medical professionals that often reports human rights abuses, said that 19,000 people – including 5,000 civilians, among them 73 medical professionals – were being held in the Digres and Kober prisons in Nyala.⁷⁹² The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies stated that about 13,000 were being held in Digres prison alone as of March 2026.⁷⁹³

Amnesty International interviewed three people, including two boys aged 13 and 17, who were taken from North Darfur and held in detention centres in Nyala between April and June 2025. While they did not know exactly which facility they were being held in, their treatment speaks to the inhumane conditions of RSF-run detention centres in the city.

Sami, 13, was displaced from his village near Zamzam in March 2025, and then forced to flee again during the large-scale attack on Zamzam in April. He reached Tawila, but his family was concerned about the security risks for young men and boys. Together with an aunt and four male cousins, he fled towards Chad.⁷⁹⁴ Near Zalingei, the capital of Central Darfur, RSF soldiers stopped their vehicle. While *Sami's* aunt was released, he and his cousins were taken to a detention centre in Zalingei:

“[At the detention centre] they gave us very small amounts of food and porridge. There was not enough water and they were beating us. They were saying, ‘You are all falangayat and abulda’... They beat me with an electric cable and a stick. Sometimes they tortured us in a group and sometimes individually.”⁷⁹⁵

After 15 days, the RSF told *Sami* and his cousins that they would be transferred to a detention facility in Nyala, the name of which they never told them.⁷⁹⁶ In Nyala, *Sami* and his 25-year-old cousin *Nasser* said they were packed into a room that was about 8x4m and held more than 100 men and boys. There was not enough room to sleep so the detainees would take turns lying down. They were taken outside to use the toilet only once every few days and otherwise used a jerrycan inside the room. Many of the men were sick with watery diarrhoea and other symptoms. According to *Sami* and *Nasser*, seven of them died.⁷⁹⁷ *Nasser* described the fear he felt during interactions with the RSF:

“If you face any of them they just beat you randomly. Sometimes we didn’t even want to [be taken out] to the toilet because we expected them to torture us... I was just thinking I would die there.”⁷⁹⁸

Sami became seriously ill. “I had a headache and if I stood up, I fell down,” he said. “My cousins asked [the RSF] to help but they said there was no medicine.”⁷⁹⁹ “[The RSF] said, ‘Let him die,’” *Nasser* said.⁸⁰⁰ Eventually, *Nasser* said, he and his cousins convinced the RSF to bring some medication for *Sami* by

791. BBC, “Sudan conflict: RSF takes control of Nyala in Darfur”, 26 October 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-67226076>.

792. Sudan Tribune, “Sudanese doctors say RSF holding 19,000 in Darfur prisons”, 10 December 2025, <https://sudantribune.com/article/308004>; Sudan Doctors Network, X post, “RSF holding more than 19,000 people in ‘Dagris’ and ‘Kober’ prisons” (previously cited).

793. The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS), “South Darfur: Approximately 13,000 People Arbitrarily Detained in RSF-Operated Digres Prison”, 30 March 2026, <https://www.acjps.org/publications/south-darfur-approximately-13-000-people-arbitrarily-detained-in-rsf-operated-digres-prison>

794. Interview with *Sami*, 11 November 2025, Iriba, Chad.

795. Interview with *Sami*, 11 November 2025, Iriba, Chad.

796. Interview with *Nasser*, 11 November 2025, Iriba, Chad.

797. Interviews with *Sami* and *Nasser*, 11 November 2025, Iriba, Chad.

798. Interview with *Sami*, 11 November 2025, Iriba, Chad.

799. Interview with *Sami*, 11 November 2025, Iriba, Chad.

800. Interview with *Nasser*, 11 November 2025, Iriba, Chad.

exchanging them for blankets. After 15 days in Nyala, about a month in captivity in total, the cousins were released after their relatives paid a ransom of SDG 12 million (about USD 3,529).

Alhadi, a 17-year-old Zaghawa boy whose detention is described above, was also kept at a detention centre in Nyala, the name of which he didn't know. He said that the RSF gave him one cup of water a day and only *ambaz* to eat. He said the room was small and overcrowded. "Every two days they will take you to the toilet," he said. "You were lucky if you got one minute, sometimes you got less. If you take longer they beat you. They would beat us and call us *falangayat*."⁸⁰¹ *Alhadi* also became seriously ill:

"I got a stomach ache, if I walked [even] a short distance I felt out of breath, I had a pain in my stomach... My mouth was very dry, my tongue also, I spit a lot and had a huge headache."⁸⁰²

While he was sick, the RSF released *Alhadi*. Given his family did not pay his ransom, it is unclear if he was released because he was so ill or for some other reason. He said he was barely conscious during the drive from Nyala to Saraf Omra, a town in North Darfur where the RSF dropped him off. A restaurant owner took *Alhadi* in, giving him a mat to sleep on and some food, and helped him make his way to Chad.

SPECIALIZED CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF EL FASHER

Amnesty International interviewed three men, all civilians, who were detained after fleeing El Fasher during the RSF takeover and brought to a building that was formerly the Specialized Children's Hospital, on the eastern outskirts of the city. The witnesses said that they were forced to register their names and information when they arrived at the facility, and that the RSF told them that over 4,000 men were present.⁸⁰³

Abdelmoniem, a doctor who was detained at the detention centre, said that a cholera⁸⁰⁴ outbreak started soon after he arrived at the detention centre:

"At 10pm [on the first day of our detention] they brought some water. It was not enough for us. The second day we were asking for water again until about 11pm. And we said [to the RSF], 'Let us go around and look, maybe we can find a source of water in the hospital.' We found a pond, we were thirsty so we just drank the water. After we realized it was sewage water..."

"From the fifth day the symptoms of cholera started: watery diarrhoea and signs of dehydration. There were about 30 medical staff... we said that we need to support these people, the people who were injured and infected. We told [the RSF] we just need the equipment and then we can support them. [The RSF] said, 'No, there is no cholera, it is just because of the type of food you were eating that you have diarrhoea'..."

"[The water they gave us], it was not enough. They would provide around five to six barrels per day... We could have only one cup per person and the rest we needed to drink waste water."⁸⁰⁵

801. Interview with *Alhadi*, 28 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

802. Interview with *Alhadi*, 28 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

803. Interviews by voice call with *Abdelmoniem*, 3 December 2025; *Imad*, 4 December 2025; and *Saeed*, 11 December 2025.

804. Cholera is a disease caused by drinking water or eating food contaminated with bacteria and can result in severe diarrhoea and death if not treated quickly. World Health Organization, "Cholera", <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cholera> (accessed 8 February 2026).

805. Interview by voice call with *Abdelmoniem*, 3 December 2025.



☺ ↑ Satellite imagery shows the Specialized Children's Hospital on the 26 October 2025, 30 October, 1 and 6 November. On 30 October, probable people and objects are visible in the compound. Vehicles are visible parked outside. A new area of disturbed earth is visible 25m east of the compound. On 1 November, imagery shows people lined by the entrance and holes are apparent in the disturbed earth east of the compound. By 6 November, imagery shows little activity and the holes in the disturbed earth have been covered.

After seven days at the children's hospital, *Abdelmoniem* was transferred to another detention site.⁸⁰⁶ *Imad*, a medical professional who was detained at the hospital for over 20 days, attempted to treat other detainees. He told Amnesty International that large numbers of people suffering from cholera died in detention:

806. Interview by voice call with *Abdelmoniem*, 3 December 2025.

“We finished treating people at about 8pm, and in the morning [the next day] we came back and found 51 people had passed away in one night... The number kept going up and up.

“I witnessed bad things, especially while distributing water... [We were] very thirsty so we were... trying to get water... The teenagers [soldiers] of the RSF, they used to beat us with their AK-47s. When we fell down they [walked on] us with their boots.”⁸⁰⁷

Imad and a third witness, *Saeed*, said that they saw up to 250 bodies of people who had died due to the cholera outbreak.⁸⁰⁸ They believed that the vast majority of detainees, and therefore victims of cholera, were adult men, although *Abdelmoniem*, the doctor who left the hospital after seven days, said he had provided medical care to two young boys, aged around eight and 10.⁸⁰⁹

Eventually, the witnesses said, the RSF allowed clean water and some medication into the facility, and the cholera outbreak came under control. Afterwards, *Saeed* said: “They started separating people into groups, civilians on one side and military on another... Later on, we found that [the other prisoners] were taken to another detention centre in Nyala, I don’t know the name.”⁸¹⁰ All three men were eventually released.

Satellite imagery was reviewed over the children’s hospital area between late October and mid-November to document changes in the area. Imagery captured on 30 October 2025 shows a significant increase in activity in the compound of the hospital, with several vehicles parked outside. A new area of disturbed earth is visible 25m east of the compound. On 1 November 2025, many people are visible. In the area with disturbed earth, holes approximately 2m in length are visible, suggesting possible graves. The holes appear covered up by 6 November.

EL FASHER AIRPORT AND AL-RASHID DORMITORY

Amnesty International interviewed two civilians, *Mahir* and *Ehsaan*, who were detained at El Fasher airport and subsequently at Al-Rashid dormitory in the days after the RSF had completed its takeover of the city. The dormitory was formerly part of El Fasher university. Both witnessed the execution, torture and inhuman treatment of other detainees.

The RSF detained *Mahir*, a 30-year-old man of Habanniya ethnicity (an Arab tribe), at a berm on the outskirts of El Fasher. They brought him, his brother and two friends to a concrete building just west of El Fasher airport. Men and women were separated and around 170 men and boys, including at least five under the age of 18, were held in a small room.

Mahir saw the bodies of nine men, including his friend, aged 30, who died from suffocation or as a result of the beatings they experienced that night: “My friend was not showing any symptoms when we left [El Fasher], but before we entered the room we were beaten and tortured a lot.”⁸¹¹ When the RSF finally opened the doors the next morning, *Mahir* and some other detainees were forced to bury the bodies.

807. Interview by voice call with *Imad*, 4 December 2025.

808. Interviews by voice call with *Imad*, 4 December 2025; and *Saeed*, 11 December 2025.

809. Interviews by voice call with *Imad*, 4 December 2025; *Saeed*, 11 December 2025; and *Abdelmoniem*, 3 December 2025.

810. Interview by voice call with *Saeed*, 11 December 2025.

811. Interview by voice call with *Mahir*, 5 December 2025.

Ehsaan, a 19-year-old woman of Shuweihat ethnicity, was held at El Fasher airport at the same time as *Mahir*. She said:

“The men were inside the rooms, [the RSF] were beating them and torturing them. They kept intimidating the girls, saying we will marry you and [using] bad words. At midnight they provided us with water and food, but they did not provide the men with anything, and they kept beating and torturing them. In the morning they took nine bodies out of the room [with] the men.”⁸¹²

After the night at the airport, *Ehsaan* and *Mahir* were both forced – whether separately or in the same group was unclear – to go to Al-Rashid dormitory. Both spent about five days there. *Mahir* said he was kept in a small room with about 10 other men but was allowed to sleep outside at night.⁸¹³ *Ehsaan* said she and other women were outside all the time, under a tree.⁸¹⁴

Mahir said: “We were beaten and tortured. They called us names like *falangayat*. If somebody went to the bathroom without their permission, all [the men] would be taken outside and beaten at the same time.”⁸¹⁵ *Mahir* said he saw one man being executed when the RSF found a banking app on his phone:

“They said they need [him] to transfer [them] money. He said, ‘I have no money in this bank account,’ and they asked him again. Then they shot him five times and he died.”⁸¹⁶

OTHER DETENTION SITES

Amnesty International interviewed people who were detained at several other sites in rural areas, the names of some of which they did not know. Three men were held at Um Jalbakh in a place one man described as a cave surrounded by destroyed vehicles, to which 40 or 50 men were tied while others were kept inside the cave.⁸¹⁷ Other areas mentioned included Zamzam camp, Kolgey and Tanjoniya village.⁸¹⁸

8.4 RANSOM DEMANDS

The RSF’s primary motivation for detaining civilians appeared to be financial. Of the 45 people in this report who were detained, 36 were told to pay ransoms for their release. These payments could be exorbitant: 15 people said they paid SDG 10-20 million (about USD 2,940-5,880) and five people paid more than SDG 20 million (about USD 5,880). This was a massive financial burden to families in a country where the average GDP per capita is USD 984.⁸¹⁹

Physical and psychological violence was used to press detainees and their relatives into paying large amounts. *Alsir* said:

812. Interview by voice call with *Ehsaan*, 18 December 2025.

813. Interview by voice call with *Mahir*, 5 December 2025.

814. Interview by voice call with *Ehsaan*, 18 December 2025.

815. Interview by voice call with *Mahir*, 5 December 2025.

816. Interview by voice call with *Mahir*, 5 December 2025.

817. Interview by voice call with *Alsir*, 11 December 2025.

818. Interviews by voice call with *Abdulmomen*, 15 December 2025; *Tigani*, 13 November 2025; *Nada*, 17 December 2025; and *Waffa*, 17 December 2025.

819. World Bank, “GDP per capita (current US\$) – Sudan”, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=SD> (accessed 10 February 2026).

“First they negotiated with us, they asked for 50 million, after [that] they beat us and negotiated [more], we agreed to 15 million. And then you call one of your relatives, they demand the money you agreed [to], and they have to pay... They had Starlink connected to their cars, they would give you their phone, you need to contact one of your relatives or check who is online on Facebook Messenger... and ask for money.”⁸²⁰

Tigani, a 26-year-old Borgo man, said: “[The RSF] called our relatives in a video [call] and wanted to show them that they are torturing us so that they [will] pay the ransom. They beat us with [a plastic hose and the butt of their guns].”⁸²¹

People who could not pay were at risk of being executed. *Tigani*, whose family ultimately paid more than SDG 20 million (about USD 5,880) for his release, said he witnessed an RSF soldier filming the execution of one man during a call with the man’s relatives. The man was one of three detained brothers whose family had not yet paid a ransom for their release:

“They shot one in the head on camera, and told [his relatives]: ‘Look, if you don’t send the money as soon as possible, the other two will be killed and you won’t even be told that they have been killed.’”⁸²²

In most cases, relatives of hostages paid for ransoms using online banking apps, although several payments were conducted in person.

Often relatives of people taken hostage were desperate to pay the ransom but could not afford to. *Najlaa*, whose 15-year-old son was abducted while trying to flee El Fasher to Tawila in August 2025, received voice messages from both the RSF and her son while he was in captivity. “They needed 5 million [for him] to be released.” Her family had discussed trying to find money for the ransom but did not have it. “Our heart is breaking,” she said.⁸²³

Shadia, a 28-year-old Berti woman and mother of three who was living in El Fasher during the siege, said that her husband was taken hostage by the RSF after the attack on Zamzam in April 2025. She described the last phone call she had had from him:

“The RSF took the phone from him. [They said], ‘He is with us now; if you pay 20 million, we are going to release him. And if you don’t, we will kill him’... I said we have no money, we have nothing... They said, ‘You do something [to get the money].’ I said, ‘I can’t, I have children, I am pregnant, I don’t have anything.’ That’s when they cut the line... I have tried the number but it doesn’t go through... I don’t know whether he is alive or dead.”⁸²⁴

820. Interview by voice call with *Alsir*, 11 December 2025.

821. Interview by voice call with *Tigani*, 13 November 2025.

822. Interview by voice call with *Tigani*, 13 November 2025.

823. Interview by voice call with *Najlaa*, 26 September 2025.

824. Interview by voice call with *Shadia*, 11 September 2025.



9. RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILDREN

“They gave me a uniform and a gun and took me to El Fasher twice... They asked me to shoot... I was so scared... I dream bad dreams. Lots of them.”

Abdelraouf, a 15-year-old Zaghawa boy, reflects on the impact of his abduction by the RSF and being forced to fight alongside the group’s members in El Fasher⁸²⁵

Amnesty International documented multiple patterns of child recruitment and use by the RSF, carried out through coercion, abduction and community-based mobilization. Boys were recruited from RSF-aligned tribal groups – often with the involvement or acquiescence of tribal leaders – or abducted during attacks on villages and displacement camps as families fled for safety. Once under RSF control, children were deployed as fighters, forced to herd livestock, or compelled to gather intelligence. Girls captured as sex slaves were sometimes also forced to cook and clean for RSF members.

Children who were abducted were typically released only after a ransom was paid or after they escaped. In some cases, the RSF released children after they completed a specific task. Even after leaving the RSF, boys and young men remained at risk of being targeted by the SAF.⁸²⁶

825. Interview in person with *Abdelraouf*, 29 October 2025, Chad.

826. See, for example, Amnesty International, “Sudan: Civilians at imminent risk of reprisal attacks as fighting rages in Khartoum and Darfur”, 7 February 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/02/civilian-activists-human-rights-defenders-medical-workers-and-humanitarian-workers-are-at-imminent-risk-of-deadly-reprisal-attacks/>

Amnesty International interviewed six boys between the ages of 15 and 17 who had been recruited or used by the RSF between July 2024 and mid-2025. As described in section 7.1, Amnesty International also interviewed a young Zaghawa woman, *Ghalia*, who was 17 at the time of her abduction and who, while held as a sex slave by the RSF, was also forced to perform domestic labour, including cooking and cleaning at an RSF base.

Further interviews with six individuals provided direct insight into recruitment and use of children by the RSF. These included two individuals detained alongside two children recruited by the RSF; a woman whose son was abducted and forced to tend livestock; a man who was present with a group of boys taken to tend livestock; and two men who described recruitment drives carried out by the RSF in their villages. Several other witnesses reported seeing recruits who were obviously under 18 within the ranks of the RSF. Four individuals from Arab groups were interviewed regarding recruitment practices within their communities. Amnesty International also interviewed an RSF member about the recruitment of children into his unit, and the former spokesperson for the Joint Forces about the group's recruitment practices and treatment of children affiliated with the RSF.

Amnesty International also analysed a video posted on social media, which has since been removed, depicting a boy dressed in a beige uniform who appears to be driving an armed vehicle alongside RSF fighters.⁸²⁷ In another video first posted on X on 27 October 2025, a boy wearing a beige vest is armed and standing in an open area alongside a man in beige clothing with a visible RSF patch and another man in civilian clothing.⁸²⁸ They appear to be collecting items from the ground, possibly belongings dropped by people fleeing violence. The boy then shoots the man in civilian clothing before collecting additional items. In two further videos that appear to have been released by the SAF, officials claim that boys are among the detained RSF members.⁸²⁹ Amnesty International was unable to independently verify the ages of the boys in these videos or to confirm whether they had been abducted or had participated in hostilities. The videos first appeared online on 3 August 2023 and 1 January 2026. Amnesty International was unable to confirm when or where the incidents took place.

Other human rights organizations and media outlets have reported similar practices of recruitment and use of children in the areas surrounding El Fasher and elsewhere in Sudan.⁸³⁰ Within months of the outbreak of the conflict, the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children (now known as the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery and trafficking in persons), raised concerns with the government of Sudan and the military head of the RSF, Muhammad Hamdan Dagalo Musa ("Hemedti") regarding credible allegations of recruitment and use by the RSF for the purpose of participation

827. On file with Amnesty International. Amnesty International has only included a video or photograph in its analysis where there were reasonable grounds to determine that the individual was under the age of 18, based on visual indicators of physical development, including age-appropriate characteristics such as height, build and facial features. Further digital evidence of child recruitment is available on Sudan Human Rights Hub and Ayin, "Child soldiers in Sudan: The future at stake" (previously cited).

828. On file with Amnesty International. Amnesty International has withheld the links of videos where the identity of children is discernible, for privacy and security reasons.

829. On file with Amnesty International. Amnesty International has withheld the links of videos where the identity of children is discernible, for privacy and security reasons.

830. OHCHR, "They were shooting us like animals": RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (24-30 October 2025) (previously cited), paras 68-72; ACJPS, "Zalingi, Central Darfur: Urgent call to RSF to end the recruitment of child soldiers", 12 January 2024, <https://www.acjps.org/publications/zalingi-central-darfur-urgent-call-to-rsf-to-end-the-recruitment-of-child-soldiers>, p. 1; Sudan Human Rights Hub and Ayin, "Child soldiers in Sudan: The future at stake" (previously cited); Ayin Network, "Child soldiers: widespread participation in Sudan's war", 10 August 2025, <https://3ayin.com/en/childsoldiers/>; The New Arab, "Are the RSF recruiting children to fight in Sudan's war?", 12 May 2025, <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/are-rsf-recruiting-children-fight-sudans-war>; ACJPS, "Stolen innocence: Children forcefully recruited into armed conflict in Sudan", 16 November 2023, <https://web.acjps.org/stolen-innocence-children-forcefully-recruited-into-armed-conflict-in-sudan/>; CNN, "Enlist or die: Fear, looming famine and a deadly ultimatum swell the ranks of Sudan's paramilitary forces", 21 March 2024, <https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/18/africa/sudan-hunger-forcible-recruitment-jazira-intl-cmd/index.html>



©↑ A Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) soldier walks past dead donkeys on the outskirts of a remote village, North Darfur. © Giles Clarke/Avaaz via Getty Images

in hostilities.⁸³¹ She specifically identified children living in poverty on the outskirts of Khartoum, as well as children from Arab tribes in Darfur and West Kordofan, as being targeted for recruitment.⁸³² The UN has also documented the recruitment and use of children by multiple actors during the escalation of violence beginning on 15 April 2023.⁸³³

Bellingcat, an investigative journalism group, found young boys affiliated with both parties to the conflict gaining viral fame on TikTok.⁸³⁴ The group raised concerns that the popularity of the online content could lead to the recruitment of more young people.⁸³⁵

831. Siobhán Mullally, Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Ref.: AL SDN 3/2023, 12 October 2023, <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?glid=28540>; Siobhán Mullally, Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Ref.: AL OTH 130/2023, 12 October 2023, <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?glid=28541>.

832. Siobhán Mullally, Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Ref.: AL SDN 3/2023 (previously cited), p. 1; Siobhán Mullally, Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Ref.: AL OTH 130/2023 (previously cited), p. 1.

833. In his 2024 Annual Report on *Children and Armed Conflict*, the Secretary-General reported the recruitment and use of 209 children, including 87 by the RSF and one by the Joint Forces for Darfur; see UNSG, *Children and Armed Conflict*, 3 June 2024 (previously cited) para. 190. In his 2025 Annual Report, the Secretary-General further reported the recruitment and use of 25 children, including 16 by the RSF; see UNSG, *Children and Armed Conflict*, 17 June 2025 (previously cited) para. 187. In his 2206 Annual Report, the Secretary-General reported the recruitment and use of 63 children, including 28 by the RSF; see UNSG, *Children and Armed Conflict*, 17 June 2026 (previously cited), para. 185. The RSF was listed in both reports' annual "list of shame" for this practice; see UNSG, *Children and Armed Conflict*, 17 June 2026 (previously cited), Annex I; UNSG, *Children and Armed Conflict*, 17 June 2025 (previously cited), Annex I; UNSG, *Children and Armed Conflict*, 3 June 2024 (previously cited), Annex I.

834. Bellingcat, "Viral Child Soldiers on TikTok: The 'Disney Stars' of Sudan's Civil War", 20 February 2026, <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/2026/02/20/viral-child-soldiers-on-tiktok-the-disney-stars-of-sudans-civil-war/>.

835. Bellingcat, "Viral Child Soldiers on TikTok: The 'Disney Stars' of Sudan's Civil War" (previously cited).

RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILDREN

International humanitarian law and international criminal law prohibit the recruitment of children under the age of 15 and their use in hostilities by both state and non-state actors.⁸³⁶ In addition, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, which Sudan has ratified, goes further: it provides that “armed groups that are distinct from the armed forces of a State should not, under any circumstances, recruit or use in hostilities persons under the age of 18 years”, and requires states parties to “take all feasible measures to prevent such recruitment and use.”⁸³⁷ These standards are directly relevant to the RSF as a non-state armed group. International anti-trafficking legislation also applies where children are used for purposes of exploitation.⁸³⁸

Separately, Sudan remains bound by its human rights obligations to prevent, prohibit and respond to the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, including by non-state armed groups operating in its territory.⁸³⁹

The RSF have violated international human rights law by recruiting and using children between the ages of 14 and 17 in armed conflict. Where children under 15 were recruited or used, those responsible should be investigated for committing the war crime of conscripting, enlisting or using children in armed conflict. These acts also amount to the crime of trafficking in persons and, in some cases, the war crimes of cruel treatment and torture. Some of the boys abducted by the RSF were eventually released for ransom. They are victims of the war crime of hostage-taking, which is detailed in Chapter 8. When these acts and related treatment were committed in the context of the widespread and systematic attack directed against the civilian population, they amount, in some cases, to the crimes against humanity of enslavement and torture, as detailed in Chapter 11.⁸⁴⁰

9.1 RECRUITMENT AND USE BY THE RAPID SUPPORT FORCES

RECRUITMENT FROM RSF-ALIGNED VILLAGES

The RSF recruited children under the age of 18 from allied, predominantly Arab tribal communities. The General Secretary of the National Council for the Protection of Childhood characterized this pattern as reflecting the traditional concept of *faza’a*, whereby tribes mobilize allied groups for collective defence

836. Protocol II, Article 4(3)(c); ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law, Rules 136 and 137; Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(vii).

837. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, adopted on 25 May 2000, Articles 4(1)-(2); “Status of Ratification Interactive Dashboard”, Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, <https://indicators.ohchr.org/> (accessed 4 February 2026).

838. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol) states in Article 3(a) that trafficking in persons: “shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation”. The Palermo Protocol was adopted 15 November 2000, by General Assembly resolution 55/25, Article 3(a). The Protocol further provides in Article 3(c), “The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered trafficking in persons even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a).” According to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG CAAC), under this definition, any act aimed at having a child linked to a group or hostilities is child trafficking. OSRSG CAAC, *Child Trafficking and Armed Conflict*, October 2024, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Child-trafficking-and-armed-conflict-web.pdf>, p. 14.

839. See, for example, CRC, Article 38; International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labour), Articles 3(a); African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Article 22(2).

840. Rome Statute, Articles 7(1)(c) and 7(1)(f).

or retaliatory violence.⁸⁴¹ Recruitment in this context often followed tribal lines, with extended family and community networks mobilized in support of the RSF.

Amnesty International interviewed four individuals: one man of mixed Rizeigat and Habbaniya (an Arab community in South Darfur) background; two Habbaniya men; and one man from the Misseriya (an Arab community primarily based in West Kordofan). All described how the RSF had recruited friends, relatives and acquaintances from their respective communities. In two cases, the men personally knew children who had been recruited. Local leaders, including *sheikhs*, *omdas* and *nazir*, were repeatedly identified as key intermediaries. As one man explained, “If the *nazir*... says something, people must abide,”⁸⁴² underscoring the coercive weight such authority can carry.

Secondary reporting corroborates these accounts. According to the Sudan Human Rights Hub, a coordination and resource centre, and Ayin, a news and information outlet, local leaders “act at the request of the chiefs of local RSF sections or militias allied to the RSF and facilitate recruitment out of loyalty to the tribe, to protect their community and/or to receive money for their personal or collective use.”⁸⁴³ These sources further reported that recruited children were sometimes provided incentives such as money, weapons, motorcycles or vehicles.⁸⁴⁴

An active RSF fighter told Amnesty International that approximately 40% of his unit consisted of boys and young men between the ages of 14 and 20.⁸⁴⁵

“We don’t ask or discuss anything, we take [who] we want. If we want 10 or five, we just take them. We already have permission from the highest leaders in the tribe to take what we want. This battle is for life or death, so we do what we want.”⁸⁴⁶

The same RSF fighter described some recruits originating from across the region:

“They are from Arab tribes. [Some non-Arabs] come from Niger, Mali, Chad and South Sudan... We don’t give them money; we just take them. We have a camp. Children in Darfur know how to use weapons. We have a camp in Sudan and send some people to Libya when we want to train them more. But the government knows about the camps [in Sudan] and strikes them. So, we started to send new recruits to Libya.”⁸⁴⁷

One detainee, *Muaz*, a Zaghawa man, who, as described in section 8.3 above, was held at Mina al-Bari detention facility, described being detained alongside two RSF recruits who told him they were from Chad and whom he estimated were aged between 14 and 15.⁸⁴⁸ According to *Muaz*, the boys had been detained after being accused of stealing money from one of their commanders.

841. The New Arab, “Are the RSF recruiting children to fight in Sudan’s war?”, 12 May 2025, <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/are-rsf-recruiting-children-fight-sudans-war>; see also UN FFM, *Findings of the investigations conducted by the Independent International Fact Finding Mission* (previously cited), para. 231.

842. Interview by voice call with a member of both the Habbaniya and Rizeigat communities, 9 March 2026.

843. Sudan Human Rights Hub and Ayin, “Child soldiers in Sudan: The future at stake” (previously cited). See also, Ayin Network, “Child soldiers: widespread participation in Sudan’s war”, 10 August 2025, <https://3ayin.com/en/childsoldiers/>; UN FFM, *Findings of the investigations conducted by the Independent International Fact Finding Mission* (previously cited), para. 231.

844. Sudan Human Rights Hub and Ayin, “Child soldiers in Sudan: The future at stake” (previously cited); see also UN FFM, *Findings of the investigations conducted by the Independent International Fact Finding Mission* (previously cited), para. 231.

845. Interviewed in 2025.

846. Interviewed in 2025.

847. Interviewed in 2025.

848. Interview by voice call with *Muaz*, 23 September 2025.

RSF ABDUCTIONS AND RECRUITMENT IN VILLAGES UNDER THEIR CONTROL

Amnesty International documented six cases of boys abducted either from their villages or IDP camps during attacks, or while fleeing in search of safety, who were then pressured to join the RSF or used to carry out different tasks. The organization also documented the abduction of one boy while he was travelling between villages who was forced to join the RSF. All of the abducted boys were from the Zaghawa ethnic group. Amnesty International also documented two incidents in which the RSF recruited non-Arab men and boys from towns under its control.

Reuters reported on the abduction of children during attacks on towns and villages in Darfur, including following the RSF's takeover of El Fasher, and their use in forced labour such as herding livestock.⁸⁴⁹ The report stated that, in some cases, parents were killed before the RSF abducted the children.⁸⁵⁰

Amnesty International documented two cases of boys abducted from Zamzam IDP camp during the April 2025 attack, whom the RSF forced to fight with the group. One of them, *Abdelraouf*, approximately 15 years old, was abducted while collecting water from a well inside the camp.⁸⁵¹

"The RSF came to the well. They captured me there. There were around seven people [taken]... There were around five teenagers... This happened on the first day of the attack around 9am. They beat us and tied us up. They hit us with the dipshik [butt of an AK-pattern rifle]... They kicked us with their boots... One car came to get us... It had about six people... We tried to run but they stopped us... They tied us and said, 'Falangayat, where is your gun?'"⁸⁵²

Another boy, *Younis* – whose hospital records indicate he was 17 at the time of Amnesty International's interview, though he may have been slightly older – also described being abducted from Zamzam IDP camp during the April 2025 attack.⁸⁵³ *Younis*, who had grown up in the camp, witnessed the killing of his father and infant brother when a rocket struck the yard of their home during the attack on Zamzam IDP camp in April 2025.⁸⁵⁴ Immediately afterwards, RSF members abducted him and a brother and took them to Sag el Naam:

"They brought a vehicle in front of the gate of our house and they asked us to ride in the vehicle... There was no way to defend ourselves. Our hands were tied. We were not able to do anything."⁸⁵⁵

During his abduction, *Younis* was tortured and deprived of food. He said:

"I remember it was winter, and it was very cold. They threw water on me and after that they started beating me. I was alone. Every one of them, they came and took a stick and started hitting me... They told me I was a soldier in Zamzam and that I should fight with them. I have no relation with any military group. I said I will never join you at all, it is better to kill me... They said, 'If you don't want to join us as a fighter, we are not going to shoot you with a gun. We will keep beating you like this until you die'... I told them that it is better to kill me... They tortured me too much."⁸⁵⁶

Younis was later transported to Mellit and then to Libya, where the RSF abandoned him in a market while he was critically ill and unable to walk. Libyan forces later found him and took him to a hospital.

849. Reuters, "Sudanese paramilitary force abducting children in Darfur, witnesses say", 30 January 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/sudanese-paramilitary-force-abducting-children-darfur-witnesses-say-2026-01-30/>

850. Reuters, "Sudanese paramilitary force abducting children in Darfur, witnesses say" (previously cited).

851. Interview in person with *Abdelraouf*, 29 October 2025, Chad.

852. Interview in person with *Abdelraouf*, 29 October 2025, Chad.

853. Interview in person with *Younis*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad. *Younis* was unsure of his age and whether the age on his hospital records was accurate.

854. Interview in person with *Younis*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

855. Interview in person with *Younis*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

856. Interview in person with *Younis*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

Amnesty International also documented cases of boys abducted after fleeing Zamzam IDP camp and forced to herd livestock. *Aziza*, a Zaghawa woman, described how, after fleeing Zamzam with her family, they encountered the RSF in Hillet el Sheikh village while travelling towards Garni.⁸⁵⁷ After RSF members detained her husband, her nine-year-old son ran screaming towards him and was seized. When *Aziza* ran after them, the RSF shot her in the leg and blindfolded her; eventually she lost consciousness.

The RSF demanded SDG 15 million (approximately USD 4,400) for the release of her husband and son. When the family was only able to pay half, they released her son but continued to detain her husband. Upon his release, her son had a broken finger and a cut under his eye. She said he told her what had happened:

***“After 10 days [the RSF] came and told my son and his father, ‘We are going to take your son to farm.’ But in reality, they took him to be used as a shepherd... for like 45 days. Then they brought him back to his father.”*⁸⁵⁸**

In another case, a community leader who fled Zamzam IDP camp during the April attack reported witnessing RSF members forcibly gathering boys and young men aged between 15 and 35, who also fled the IDP camp, and ordering them to escort livestock to an Arab village called Um Sayala, north of El Fasher, where the RSF maintain a base:

***“[The RSF] gathered all the livestock and they started ordering the young people to come to escort those sheep. One of the guys refused and they shot him there... There were four boys [and young men]... Late at night [they] returned. When we asked them, [the boys and young men] told us... [t]hey took the livestock to that village and [the RSF] let them go. [They] were between 15 and 35 years [old].”*⁸⁵⁹**

In addition to abductions during attacks, Amnesty International documented the abduction of a boy while travelling between villages. *Malik*, 16, described being abducted in early 2025 while travelling from Garni to Malah in search of work. He was taken to an RSF base in Zurug and accused of being a spy affiliated with the SAF:

***“When we were arrested in Zurug, while we were there, we heard that ‘these people should be recruited.’ [The RSF] talked to us, they told us, ‘You should register your name, you are going to be trained as RSF soldiers.’ I registered my name.”*⁸⁶⁰**

Malik said he, his 16-year-old friend and his adult cousin enlisted. Twelve days later, when the Joint Forces attacked the RSF base, *Malik* fled with his friend and cousin.

Once villages came under RSF control, residents of those villages, including older boys, were sometimes also forced to fight with the RSF.

Yassin, a 27-year-old Zaghawa civilian from Khazan Jedid, a historically predominantly Zaghawa village approximately 170km from El Fasher and under RSF control, described a recruitment drive in his village:

857. Interview in person with *Aziza*, 29 October 2025, Chad.

858. Interview in person with *Aziza*, 29 October 2025, Chad.

859. Interview in person with *Abdelsattar*, 5 November 2025, Chad.

860. Interview in person with *Malik*, 30 October 2025, Chad.

“There was a time when they were forcing people [from the village] to join the RSF. They even took some young people and children by force... At that time, we fled Khazan. They came through the traditional rulers. People told the traditional rulers they were reluctant [to fight]. They didn’t want to join any fighting forces. Then they came and abducted some youth, including taking them by force. This was in May [2025]... They came to [the] town then left... [They] started arresting people; we ran out.”⁸⁶¹

Similarly, *Altahir*, a 27-year-old Fur man, said that while he was living in Tabit, RSF members threatened the local *omda*, a Fur community leader, and told him they needed fighters.⁸⁶² *Altahir* said this happened before the RSF takeover of El Fasher. He gave Amnesty International the first names of four young men he had grown up with, aged between about 17 and 20, who he said were recruited by the RSF.

9.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Boys interviewed by Amnesty International described three primary roles they were made to perform within the ranks of the RSF: participation as fighters; forced labour as shepherds herding livestock; and providing intelligence related to the SAF and Joint Forces.

As described above, *Abdelraouf* was abducted by the RSF in Zamzam IDP camp. He was taken to an area formerly used by the Joint Forces inside Zamzam IDP camp, which had been seized by the RSF, and was held there for four days. RSF members then forced him to participate in fighting:

“They gave me a uniform and a gun and took me to El Fasher twice... They gave me... a Kalashnikov... They asked me to shoot... One of them came and held me and showed me how to shoot. I shot... I went back to the car and hid... I was so scared.”⁸⁶³

Abdelraouf was subsequently returned to the base in Zamzam IDP camp, where he was held for an additional four days:

“They found a walkie talkie. It belonged to the Joint Forces. They were speaking in Zaghawa. They called me to interpret what they were saying. They were talking like come this way – giving instructions on where to go and what to do.”⁸⁶⁴

Abdelraouf was later transferred to Nyala, where he was released after a ransom of SDG 10 million (approximately USD 2,950) was paid. He was eventually reunited with his family in Tina.

Media reporting indicates that Colombian private security contractors associated with the RSF have trained children within the group’s ranks to fight.⁸⁶⁵ In an interview with a Colombian recruit, he stated that among the thousands of individuals present in a training camp, most were children who had previously never handled a weapon.⁸⁶⁶

861. Interview by voice call with *Yassin*, 30 September 2025.

862. Interview by voice call with *Altahir*, 13 April 2026.

863. Interview in person with *Abdelraouf*, 29 October 2025, Chad.

864. Interview in person with *Abdelraouf*, 29 October 2025, Chad.

865. La Silla Vacía, “Mercenarios colombianos entrenan a niños soldado en Sudán”, 3 August 2025, <https://www.lasillavacia.com/silla-nacional/mercenarios-colombianos-entrenan-a-ninos-soldado-en-sudan/>; The Guardian, “‘War is a business’: the Colombian mercenaries training Sudan’s child fighters to ‘go and get killed’”, 8 October 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/oct/08/colombian-mercenaries-sudan-war>

866. La Silla Vacía, “Mercenarios colombianos entrenan a niños soldado en Sudán” (previously cited); The Guardian, “‘War is a business’: the Colombian mercenaries training Sudan’s child fighters to ‘go and get killed’” (previously cited).

Rashid, a Zaghawa boy, who, as described in Chapter 8, was abducted from his village near Goz Baina around July 2024, told Amnesty International about his experience of being forced to herd livestock for the RSF over a nine-month period.⁸⁶⁷ He reported being guarded by three armed boys, themselves RSF recruits, who subjected him and others to humiliation, beatings and deprivation of food and water:

***“[The RSF] sent three armed boys to guard me while I was herding the goats. They would watch me, and if I tried to rest they would open random fire on me... They were not human beings... They were beating me while I was blindfolded... They beat me all over my body, they didn’t care whether it was my stomach, my back, my legs, everything... I don’t know their age but they were small, they were younger than me. They were brothers... When they were filming they would call us falangayat from El Fasher, they called us SAF soldiers.”*⁸⁶⁸**

Rashid further recalled that, in an extreme act of cruelty, he saw one of the boys shoot and kill another abducted person, a man who had been herding goats with him, after the man failed to hear an order.

Amnesty International documented two cases of boys abducted from Dar el Naim and forced to provide intelligence about their village.⁸⁶⁹ *Abdulhalim*, a 17-year-old Zaghawa boy, described being interrogated by the RSF and compelled to identify the homes of Joint Forces members and civilians who possessed Starlink satellite internet equipment.⁸⁷⁰ *Majid*, a 16-year-old Zaghawa boy, also described being used by the RSF to identify households with Starlink connections.⁸⁷¹ He explained that RSF members took him around the village in a car and later encouraged him to join the group: “They said if I just showed them the houses of rich people, whenever they get money from looting, we will divide it.”⁸⁷²

Even where children were not directly participating in hostilities, their use by the RSF associated them with the group and exposed them to serious risk. As *Majid* explained, while he was being driven around the village to identify Starlink connections, he was seen by women who knew him: “I was afraid maybe people would accuse me of being a spy,”⁸⁷³ he said.

9.3 RELEASE AND RISK OF DETENTION

For children who were abducted from non-Arab communities, the only way they were able to leave was if they escaped or paid ransom. In some cases, boys and young men were used for a limited period to carry out specific tasks – such as providing intelligence on particular locations or escorting livestock to designated villages – after which they were released.

Children and young men associated with the RSF, including those who later left the group, faced an ongoing risk of detention by the SAF or Joint Forces.⁸⁷⁴ Media reports indicated that in September 2025, the

867. Interview in person with *Rashid*, 1 November 2025, Chad.

868. Interview in person with *Rashid*, 1 November 2025, Chad.

869. For more on the abductions in Dar el Naim, see Chapter 4.

870. Interview in person with *Abdulhalim*, 25 October 2025, Chad.

871. Interview in person with *Majid*, 5 November 2025, Chad.

872. Interview in person with *Majid*, 5 November 2025, Chad.

873. Interview in person with *Majid*, 5 November 2025, Chad.

874. In 2018, the government of Sudan signed a handover protocol with the UN committing to transfer children with actual or suspected association with armed forces or armed groups to civilian child protection actors for rehabilitation and reintegration. Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *A Path to Reintegration: The Role of Handover Protocols in Protecting the Rights of Children Formerly Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, December 2020, https://watchlist.org/wp-content/uploads/2416-watchlist-policy-note-dec-2020_final.pdf

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) facilitated the release of 30 children who had been held in SAF custody.⁸⁷⁵ SAF officials were reported as saying that these children had been “detained while they were fighting within the ranks of the dissolved Rapid Support Forces (RSF) militia during previous battles.”⁸⁷⁶

Colonel Ahmed Hussein Mustafa, a former spokesperson for the Joint Forces who was killed during the RSF capture of El Fasher,⁸⁷⁷ told Amnesty International that the Joint Forces did not systematically detain children affiliated with the RSF:

“If we capture a child who is less than 18, we don’t keep them, we just release them... because we don’t have the Red Crescent or Red Cross, we don’t have anybody to hand [the children] over to... To keep them is a problem, we can’t feed them... [The] maximum [we detain them is] a week.”⁸⁷⁸

For the small number of children who managed to leave the RSF, psycho-social support and structured reintegration assistance were largely absent. Formerly abducted children described enduring trauma, anger and a profound sense of injustice. *Younis*, a Zaghawa boy, told Amnesty International: “I will never forget, and I will never forgive. I am not sure we can ever reach justice. They cannot survive.”⁸⁷⁹ Similarly, *Majid* expressed deep frustration when asked about accountability: “I will take revenge – either they will kill us or we will kill them. But otherwise, I hope the UN intervenes and that there is justice.”⁸⁸⁰ He also told Amnesty International, “I dream of finding a way of continuing my education. Our future depends on that. If not, we must go back and fight for our land.”⁸⁸¹

In the absence of effective rehabilitation, education and reintegration programmes, the failure to support children formerly associated with armed groups risks entrenching cycles of trauma, revenge and violence.

875. ICRC, “Chad/Sudan: ICRC facilitates release of 30 children previously detained in relation to conflict; ICRC president visits eastern Chad”, 15 September 2023, <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/chad-sudan-icrc-facilitates-release-30-children-previously-detained>

876. Darfur 24, “Sudanese army hands over 30 minor prisoners of war from RSF to ICRC”, 16 September 2023, <https://www.darfur24.com/en/2023/09/16/sudanese-army-hands-over-30-minor-prisoners-of-war-from-rsf-to-icrc/>; Xinhua, “Sudanese army hands over 30 minor prisoners of war from paramilitary forces to ICRC”, 16 September 2023, <https://english.news.cn/africa/20230916/078ef7f41bc241aca51e5a596f81cd9e/c.html>

877. Sudan Tribune, “Spokesman for Sudan’s joint military force killed in El Fasher”, 27 October 2025, <https://sudantribune.com/article/306484>

878. Interview by voice call with Colonel Ahmed Hussein Mustafa, Former Spokesperson for the Joint Forces, 15 October 2025.

879. Interview in person with *Younis*, 25 October 2025, Chad.

880. Interview in person with *Majid*, 5 November 2025, Chad.

881. Interview in person with *Majid*, 5 November 2025, Chad.



10. IMPACT ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, OLDER PEOPLE

“When I saw the dead people, my head started spinning. I was at home with my grandmother eating when they started the attack and we fled. My grandmother carried me on her back. We ran outside, far away. I thought: I am dead. That’s it.”

Makawi, a 15-year-old boy with a speech impairment and limited mobility, describing an attack on his village in early 2025⁸⁸²

Armed conflict does not affect all civilians equally: children and adults with disabilities as well as older people, many of whom have chronic health conditions, are often at heightened risk. Amnesty International interviewed eight people with disabilities, including four children, and 11 parents or caretakers of children or adults with disabilities. These cases included people with physical, psycho-social and intellectual disabilities. Amnesty International also interviewed 24 people aged over 55, several of whom had chronic health conditions.

Amnesty International documented several cases in which the RSF deliberately targeted people with disabilities. In particular, the RSF often characterized men and older boys whose disabilities were the result of war-related injuries of having fought for the SAF or Joint Forces. Amnesty International also documented the execution of other people with disabilities, including three older men and a man with an intellectual disability.

Even when they were not deliberate targets, people with disabilities and older people faced enormous difficulties fleeing attacks. The RSF routinely stole donkeys or carts from civilians, making fleeing on foot the only option for most. Almost none of the people with disabilities interviewed for this report had access to assistive devices – items people need to move, communicate, access services, or carry out daily activities,

⁸⁸². Interview in person with *Zahra* and *Makawi*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.



©↑ Hundreds of injured people from El Fasher, mostly men but also women and children, succeeded in reaching Tawila, Sudan by themselves. They were wounded by bullets, shelling or drone bombings, whether in El Fasher or during their escape. January 2026. © Private

such as wheelchairs – that would have enabled them to flee. Most were forced to rely on others to carry them out of danger. They moved slowly as a result, exposing them to greater risks on the road. Some were left behind: in a report, Human Rights Watch found that some people with disabilities were abandoned as people tried to flee El Fasher.⁸⁸³

Wartime conditions, from the prolonged siege of Zamzam IDP camp and El Fasher to arduous journeys without food or water, compounded existing health problems for people with disabilities and older people. With limited supplies of even the most basic medications, such as diabetes and blood pressure medicine, many suffered. When people were fleeing violence, the RSF often stole any food or water they had, exposing those with vulnerable health to particularly difficult journeys, and sometimes even death.

Once living in displacement, people with disabilities and older people continued to face discrimination and exclusion. Assistive devices remained out of reach for many, and children with disabilities were often unable to access education. People with disabilities and older adults often could not get the medications or medical

883. Human Rights Watch, “Sudan: People with disabilities targeted in North Darfur”, 24 February 2025, <http://hrw.org/news/2026/02/24/sudan-people-with-disabilities-targeted-in-north-darfur>

treatment they needed, whether for conditions acquired during the conflict or for chronic health issues. Data collection on people with disabilities and older people in displacement settings in Sudan and Chad was sporadic or non-existent, further compounding their exclusion.

People with disabilities constitute approximately 15% of the population in need in Sudan – around 4.6 million people.⁸⁸⁴ Surveys from conflict-affected areas have shown that disability incidence is higher, as many people – including some interviewed for this report – acquired disabilities from conflict-related injuries.⁸⁸⁵ The Norwegian Refugee Council, for example, said that as of June 2025, 22% of people in four displacement camps in Tawila had disabilities, and 40% of families had at least one member with a disability.⁸⁸⁶

As of January 2025, the Humanitarian Cluster on Camp Management (CCCM) estimated that 12% of the people living in displacement camps in Sudan were older people, greater than their share in the population of pre-conflict Sudan.⁸⁸⁷

RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE

International humanitarian law provides special protections for persons with disabilities and older persons.⁸⁸⁸ They must be protected from pillage and ill-treatment and, wherever possible, be evacuated from besieged or encircled areas.⁸⁸⁹

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), to which Sudan and Chad – a host country for many Darfuri refugees – are parties, further protects the rights of persons with disabilities in times of armed conflict.⁸⁹⁰ Article 11 calls on states to take “all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters.”⁸⁹¹ UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2475 calls on parties to any armed conflict to protect people with disabilities against violence and abuse.⁸⁹²

The CRPD also guarantees the rights of persons with disabilities to equality and non-discrimination.⁸⁹³ People with disabilities have a right to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, which means making their physical environment accessible to them.⁸⁹⁴ Children with disabilities have the right to access education on an equal basis with others.⁸⁹⁵

Given the crimes committed against people with disabilities and older people in Sudan, it is essential that any international justice mechanism be fully inclusive and accessible, in line with international law and UNSC Resolution 2475.⁸⁹⁶

884. OCHA, Sudan, *Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, Executive Summary*, December 2024, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-2025-executive-summary-december-2024-enar>

885. Humanity & Inclusion, “Sudan: people with disabilities among the hardest hit by unbearable violence”, 11 November 2025, <https://www.humanity-inclusion.org.uk/en/sudan-people-with-disabilities-among-the-hardest-hit-by-unbearable-violence>

886. Norwegian Refugee Council, “Sudan: Tawila New Camps Overview (June 2025)”, 13 July 2025, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-tawila-new-camps-overview-june-2025>

887. UNHCR, CCCM Cluster, *Sudan Site Multi-Sectoral Needs (January 2025)*, 10 April 2025, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-site-multi-sectoral-needs-january-2025>. According to the World Bank, approximately 3% of Sudan’s population is made up of people over the age of 65. See The World Bank, “Population ages 65 and above (% of total population) – Sudan”, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.65UP.TQ.ZS?locations=SD> (accessed on 7 February 2026).

888. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 138.

889. ICRC, Customary IHL, Rule 138.

890. UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies, “Ratification Status for CRPD - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”, https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?Treaty=CRPD (accessed on 8 April 2026).

891. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Article 11.

892. UNSC, Resolution 2475 (2019), adopted on 20 June 2019, UN Doc. S/RES/2475.

893. CRPD, Article 5.

894. CRPD, Article 9.

895. CRPD, Article 24.

896. CRPD, Article 13. See also: UNSC Resolution 2475 (previously cited), para. 2.

10.1 EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE

TARGETED ATTACKS

Many people with disabilities, including those who had acquired disabilities during the war, faced brutal violence at the hands of the RSF. In several cases, children and adults with disabilities appeared to have been deliberately targeted, particularly when these disabilities were the result of war-related injuries. Such treatment was not uniform, however. One witness reported an incident where the RSF declined to take hostage individuals who were visibly injured or disabled.⁸⁹⁷

The RSF often asserted that men and older boys had sustained their injuries while fighting. Amnesty International documented the case of a 17-year-old boy whose mother, *Buthaina*, said the RSF shot him in the head while they were fleeing Zamzam after noting that he had a shrapnel injury (see section 4.3).⁸⁹⁸ *Mutawakil*, a 17-year-old Berti boy, was targeted for execution while fleeing El Fasher for similar reasons, and only narrowly managed to escape (see section 6.2).⁸⁹⁹

Hamza, a 16-year-old Berti boy, was severely injured by shelling during an attack on Zamzam IDP camp in early 2025, leaving him unable to walk without assistance. After Zamzam was captured by the RSF, *Hamza* spent several months in El Fasher, sheltering in an underground water tank.⁹⁰⁰ He wanted to leave El Fasher but was afraid he would be targeted: “The RSF can arrest you. At that time, they were arresting everybody who was injured [believing they are soldiers].”⁹⁰¹

When *Hamza* finally left El Fasher, he said that RSF fighters detained him when he reached Mellit. “They took me in the car, and they kicked me with their boots, they threw me from the vehicle and broke my leg again.”⁹⁰² At the time of the interview, he was relying on crutches that caused him significant pain.

In some cases, the RSF took younger, able-bodied men but shot and killed those who were injured, older or had disabilities. *Tigani*, a 26-year-old Borgo man, described the execution of his uncle, a man in his fifties with a gunshot wound in his leg, and two other older men with injuries. The group fled El Fasher during the RSF takeover but were captured by the RSF in Shagra, approximately 20km west of El Fasher. *Tigani* said that RSF fighters bound their hands and told the younger men to get into the back of their pickup truck, while the three older men remained on the ground:



📷 ↑ Photo of *Hamza*'s leg injured by shelling during an attack on Zamzam IDP camp in early 2025. © Amnesty International

897. Interview by voice call with *Batool*, 1 December 2025.

898. Interview in person with *Buthaina*, 1 November 2025, Tiné, Chad.

899. Interview by voice call with *Mutawakil*, 19 December 2025.

900. Interview in person with *Hamza*, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

901. Interview in person with *Hamza*, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

902. Interview in person with *Hamza*, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

“[The RSF] were consulting [among themselves]... They could see that these people are elderly, that they will need to be picked up and put in the pickup... They thought that they were wasting their time... One of them who had an automatic machine gun, he got down [from the truck] and... opened fire. He killed [the three older men], and then he killed the donkeys... [the RSF] were enjoying it, they were laughing.”⁹⁰³

Amnesty International documented one case in which two men with intellectual disabilities were shot in Grawit Basham village (see section 4.2). An RSF fighter shot one as he was getting out of a car; the other, a 70-year-old man who could not speak and frequented the local market to beg, was executed at close range. “They asked him to lie down, to get on the ground, and he couldn’t understand them,” said *Abdalmajeed*, who witnessed the events. “That’s why they shot him.”⁹⁰⁴

Human Rights Watch has also found that the RSF fighters targeted and killed people on the basis of their disabilities in North Darfur.⁹⁰⁵

CHALLENGES FLEEING VIOLENCE

People with disabilities and older adults often experienced violence because they could not easily flee. In rural parts of North Darfur, access to assistive devices was extremely limited or absent even before 2023, meaning that children and adults with disabilities often had no means of fleeing and had to be carried or transported in wheelbarrows. The RSF routinely looted donkeys and carts, forcing almost everyone, including people with disabilities, to flee on foot. They often moved slowly, increasing the risks of further attack.

Jaleela and *Shimaa*, both Fur women, witnessed the execution of their parents, who were in their sixties or seventies and had limited mobility.⁹⁰⁶ The family was living at the Sheikh Farah Mosque and School in Zamzam IDP camp, where Amnesty International previously documented executions by the RSF.⁹⁰⁷ On 11 April 2025, the sisters said they heard shelling and gunfire. *Shimaa* said that soon afterwards a large group of RSF soldiers surrounded the school with their vehicles:

“Most people ran away but [our family] was not able to run because we could not leave our parents... They killed my mother and father first because they tried to stand in between the RSF and my two brothers... then they killed my two brothers.”⁹⁰⁸

Hinda, 35, described how when the RSF raided her neighbourhood in El Fasher in August 2024, they deliberately shot her 70-year-old father, who was sick and could not leave his bed:

“They went to the other room and I saw them pulling my dad from the bed. One of them shot him and the other one turned around and shot him too.”⁹⁰⁹

Hinda said her father survived but had limited function in one of his hands as a result of the assault. She added that the RSF soldiers beat one of her brothers, who had a physical and intellectual disability and was therefore unable to flee with her other brothers, while at the house.⁹¹⁰

903. Interview by voice call with *Tigani*, 13 November 2025.

904. Interview by voice call with *Abdalmajeed*, 18 March 2026.

905. Human Rights Watch, “Sudan: People with disabilities targeted in North Darfur” (previously cited).

906. Interviews in person with *Jaleela* and *Shimaa*, 24 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

907. Amnesty International, *A Refuge Destroyed* (previously cited).

908. Interview in person with *Shimaa*, 24 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

909. Interview by voice call with *Hinda*, 9 September 2025.

910. Interview by voice call with *Hinda*, 9 September 2025.

Yagoub, a 17-year-old Zaghawa boy who was shot in the leg in late 2024 (see section 4.1), described trying to flee Zamzam IDP camp a few months later, when the RSF attacked in April 2025. He said his relatives used a “wheelbarrow to push me from place to place... I consider myself lucky because at least someone was helping me. Other people who were injured were left for dead.”⁹¹¹

The parents of many children with disabilities were killed in attacks, leaving them with even less support to flee. *Zeena*, a mother of 12- and 14-year-old boys with a genetic condition that hindered their growth, witnessed the execution of her husband, who was carrying one of the boys while fleeing Torundi.⁹¹² The rest of the journey was extremely difficult, she said: “It was hard to walk because I was carrying my children,” she said.⁹¹³

Displacement into unfamiliar and chaotic environments further heightened risks for people with disabilities, putting them and their families at greater risk. The need to seek shelter quickly and the constant threat of aerial attacks proved especially difficult for some. *Mawada*, a Fur woman whose 16-year-old son has an intellectual disability, explained:

“[My son] refuses to go to the shelter [during attacks]. He will even fight you. He will happily move under the drones. Sometimes when there is a drone strike, we are hiding under the bed and he is leaving the house and going outside. If we go with him we risk being hit too.”⁹¹⁴

PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TOLL OF THE CONFLICT

Living under siege and bombardment for months had a devastating impact on many people’s health, but particularly on people with disabilities and older people, many of whom required medical care either for conflict-related injuries or chronic conditions. The experience of fleeing, often on foot and with little food or water, was also extremely arduous for these groups.

People with disabilities who required medical treatment during the siege of El Fasher, including due to injuries sustained during bombardments, said there was no way to receive proper care. *Samah*, whose 14-year-old son *Jaber* lost his sight, said: “The doctor says this issue won’t be solved here, he needs to be taken abroad and of course we can’t do that.”⁹¹⁵ Another woman, *Rasha*, whose 12-year-old son was paralysed following a strike on their shelter (see section 5.1), said:

“The doctor recommended [we]... go to Omdurman or Khartoum because the child needs a joint hip replacement... we [also] need to... scan his head... all these requested medications, [they are] not available in El Fasher... but there is no door out.”⁹¹⁶

Even those who needed less intensive care could often not access medications for chronic conditions that were widely available before the siege. *Asim*, an 83-year-old Zaghawa man, said he went several weeks without blood pressure and diabetes medication due to the siege on Zamzam IDP camp. By the time he fled in April 2025, his health had deteriorated significantly: “My health was bad, my [blood] sugar [levels] were very high and I was barely able to talk... [On the road] I was very sick, even sometimes I could not recognize people.”⁹¹⁷

911. Interview in person with *Yagoub*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

912. Interview in person with *Zeena*, 24 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

913. Interview in person with *Zeena*, 24 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

914. Interview in person with *Mawada*, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

915. Interview by voice call with *Samah*, 28 August 2025.

916. Interview by voice call with *Rasha*, 10 September 2025.

917. Interview in person with *Asim*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

Fleeing on foot for long distances put extra strain on at-risk individuals. *Asmahan*, a Zaghawa woman in her sixties, described fleeing her village in the Abu Zerega area (see section 4.1) in late 2024: “I had an operation on my stomach [recently]. I couldn’t run [properly],” she said. “I ran barefoot. There were no people to help me,” she said.⁹¹⁸

The RSF frequently stole the limited water or food that people brought with them while fleeing, leading some older people in particular to suffer extreme dehydration, in one case leading to death.⁹¹⁹ *Mukhtar*, a 60-year-old man, described fainting while fleeing Zamzam with a group of men after the RSF attack in April 2025:

“We had nothing on us, we just ran. All the water stations [on the way] were destroyed, none [was] working... We ran out of food and water. I was getting weaker but I decided to keep walking. I kept walking until I fell down. Five days we were without water... I felt my head spinning.”⁹²⁰

When he woke up, *Mukhtar* had lost his eyesight. He was rescued and brought to Tawila, where he was hospitalized. His sight has still not recovered. It was unclear if *Mukhtar*’s blindness was linked to dehydration, although studies have shown that heat stroke can cause cardiovascular events like an ischemic stroke, which in turn can be linked to blindness.⁹²¹ Older adults and people with existing health conditions are particularly vulnerable to extreme heat and dehydration.⁹²²

The conflict has also had a devastating impact on the mental health of many, resulting in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), severe depression and other conditions. Research shows that exposure to prolonged violence and other emergencies not only generates new mental health conditions but also exacerbates pre-existing ones.⁹²³ Children are particularly at risk.⁹²⁴

Mawada, whose 16-year-old son has an intellectual disability, said he had been particularly traumatized after witnessing the death of his older brother while fleeing Zamzam. This, combined with the lack of appropriate medications in the refugee camp where they lived in Chad, had caused his mental health to deteriorate: “His condition is more complicated because of what he saw during the war,” *Mawada* said. “Sometimes he just touches me and calls out the name of his brother.”⁹²⁵

In displacement sites in Chad, psycho-social support was highly limited. While some organizations were providing such care, these services remained inadequate relative to the scale and severity of the need. States are obligated “to take all necessary measures” to protect children from the harmful effects of armed violence and to ensure that they “have access to adequate health and social services, including psycho-social recovery and social reintegration.”⁹²⁶

918. Interview in person with *Asmahan*, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

919. Interview by voice call with *Badr*, 11 November 2025.

920. Interview in person with *Mukhtar*, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

921. Harvard Health Publishing, “Hot weather tied to increased odds of stroke”, 1 June 2024, <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/hot-weather-tied-to-increased-odds-of-stroke>. See also Cleveland Clinic, “Eye Stroke” (updated 7 September 2022), <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/24127-eye-stroke> (accessed on 7 February 2025).

922. Mayo Clinic, “Heatstroke”, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heat-stroke/symptoms-causes/syc-20353581> (accessed 9 April 2025).

923. The WHO maintains that more than one in five people living in settings of large-scale violence have a mental health condition. UN News, “One-in-five suffers mental health condition in conflict zones, new UN figures reveal”, 12 June 2019, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/06/1040281>; Fiona Charlson and others, “New WHO prevalence estimates of mental disorders in conflict settings: a systematic review and meta-analysis”, *The Lancet*, 11 June 2019, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(19\)30934-1/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(19)30934-1/fulltext)

924. UNICEF, “Protecting children’s mental health in emergency settings”, 4 May 2023, <https://www.unicef.org/eca/stories/protecting-childrens-mental-health-emergency-settings>; Save the Children, “5 ways conflict impacts children’s mental health”, <http://savethechildren.org/us/what-we-do/protection/mental-health/ways-conflict-impacts-childrens-mental-health>

925. Interview in person with *Mawada*, 29 October, Tiné, Chad.

926. Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment 9: The Rights of Children with Disabilities, 27 February 2007, UN Doc. CRC/C/GC/9, para. 55.

MAKAWI'S STORY: FLEEING WAR AS A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY

Makawi, a 15-year-old boy with a speech impairment and limited mobility, described his experience of war as a child with a disability, one that underscores the unique and often disproportionate challenges faced by children like him when fleeing violence and attempting to survive in displacement. Amnesty International met *Makawi* and his grandmother, *Zahra*, in a refugee camp in Chad.

Zahra has been *Makawi's* primary caregiver for most of his life. Their close and tender bond was immediately evident: they finished each other's sentences and laughed at each other's jokes. *Makawi's* family had fled their village near Mellit about two weeks before he was displaced. He refused to travel with them because *Zahra* had chosen to stay behind and he did not want to leave her. "Since I was little, she is the only person I know. She plays videos games on my phone, we watch videos together," he explained.⁹²⁷

Makawi is exceptionally bright. Although he was unable to attend school, he taught himself to read, learning from online videos and from his siblings when they returned from school, as well as to write using his foot. "I want to get better. I want to work in technology, I am smart," he said.⁹²⁸

Makawi has limited mobility. He can move slowly by dragging one foot or by crawling using one arm and one foot. Like many children with disabilities from rural areas around El Fasher, he has never had access to a wheelchair. At the time Amnesty International interviewed him, his foot was cut and swollen, and he was barely able to move independently.

The RSF attacked his village near Mellit in early 2025, sparking panic and chaos. *Makawi* recalled the attack in striking detail, even pulling up a photo on Facebook of the type of weapon he had seen. "When I saw the dead people, my head started spinning. I was at home with my grandmother eating when they started the attack and we fled. My grandmother carried me on her back. We ran outside, far away. I thought: I am dead. That's it."⁹²⁹

He was visibly shaken as he described the experience: "I was feeling scared. My head was spinning all the time, I was dizzy from being scared. It was my first time to see something like this, I have never seen people killed."⁹³⁰

Zahra, who is nearly the same size as *Makawi*, carried him for hours as they fled:

"For two hours I carried him on my back. It would get tired and hold him on the front. Then I would fall again. Then I would keep running and falling, over and over again... When you are in shock you can do anything."⁹³¹

At times, *Makawi* was forced to move on his own. "I used to walk a little bit. I had no other choice. There are rocks... I would walk slowly. It made me scared," he explained.⁹³²

They eventually reached Zamzam IDP camp around the time of the RSF attack in April and later made their way to Chad. Although now physically safe, *Makawi* continues to face severe challenges in displacement. He still does not have a wheelchair, making even basic mobility extremely difficult. There is no toilet or shower near their tent. "If I need to go at night, it is almost impossible," he said.⁹³³ He must walk to nearby trees to relieve himself and his grandmother washes him in a basin inside their tent.

927. Interview in person with *Zahra* and *Makawi*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

928. Interview in person with *Zahra* and *Makawi*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

929. Interview in person with *Zahra* and *Makawi*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

930. Interview in person with *Zahra* and *Makawi*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

931. Interview in person with *Zahra* and *Makawi*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

932. Interview in person with *Zahra* and *Makawi*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

933. Interview in person with *Zahra* and *Makawi*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

Makawi dreams of going to school. “I don’t want to stay here and do nothing... but who will bring me to school? My grandmother leaves to get water... When she is not there, I rent a wheelbarrow. I pay people to move me around. But it is not possible [to go to school]... I need to pay them money.”⁹³⁴

10.2 INADEQUATE RESOURCES IN DISPLACEMENT SITES

As noted in Chapter 3, the humanitarian situation in Sudan is one of the most severe in the world, and both Sudan and neighbouring countries like Chad have struggled to meet the needs of displaced families, particularly amidst severe funding cuts. For people with disabilities and older people, the limited humanitarian response has compounded existing discrimination, making it even harder to exercise their fundamental rights. This neglect has been further exacerbated by the lack of data collection regarding people with disabilities or older people in displacement settings.

People with disabilities and older people in refugee camps in Chad faced many challenges accessing rehabilitation or healthcare, education and livelihood support in displacement. Camps and informal settlements were largely physically inaccessible, making basic tasks – such as accessing the toilet or food collection – impossible for many people with disabilities.

At refugee camps in Chad, interviewees said that only basic treatment for communicable diseases was widely available.⁹³⁵ Surgeries or rehabilitation services were either unavailable in the area or prohibitively expensive, meaning that many people with disabilities were unable to access treatment that could have improved their mobility or overall health. *Yagoub*, 17, who was shot in the leg, explained that to walk fully again, he would need surgery to remove shrapnel still lodged in his body. But the surgery was unaffordable: “[The medical staff] referred me to an advanced hospital... to do [an] x-ray and ultrasound... I need a lot of money... According to my previous consultation, surgery costs about SDG 5 million [about USD 1,470].”⁹³⁶

Access to medication was extremely limited. This impacted all groups, but had a unique impact on some people with disabilities who required medication to manage certain conditions. *Mawada*, whose 16-year-old son has an intellectual disability and also experiences seizures, said his condition had worsened in Chad, in part because he did not have access to medication:

“He needs to take [the medication] twice daily... If he is taking medications, his fits are small. If not, he can sometimes even lose control of his bladder and wet himself. He shakes very loudly and screams so loudly that the camp administrator comes to check on us.”⁹³⁷

Mawada said that before the war, national health insurance in El Fasher covered her son’s medication, which cost up to SDG 100,000 (approximately USD 30) every 10 days. In displacement, the medication was not readily available or affordable.

Dalal, who cares for her approximately 60-year-old brother *Mukhtar* (see above), described how they were unable to afford further treatment: “The challenge is that he can’t do anything alone, and we are not able to send him to the hospital because money has run out.”⁹³⁸ *Dalal* also described how difficult it was for her to

934. Interview in person with *Zamzam* and *Makawi*, 25 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

935. Interviews, October–November 2025.

936. Interview in person with *Yagoub*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

937. Interview in person with *Mawada*, 29 October, Tiné, Chad.

938. Interview in person with *Mukhtar* and *Dalal*, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

manage her brother's care, together with that of her seven children and two adopted children, who she was now forced to live separately from:

"[H]e needs help to go to the toilet and the bathroom, I have to prepare water and clothes for him... I even have to dress him. Before I was able to go and work daily, now I don't have time for that... Really now I am in darkness, I can't leave him alone, but I can't leave my children, I am so confused."⁹³⁹

In the refugee camps in Chad, families frequently lived far from latrines, with no accessible sanitation facilities for people with disabilities. Without assistive devices, parents and children improvised solutions near their shelters.

Access to education was already limited for children with disabilities prior to displacement. This continued to be a challenge for children with physical disabilities in refugee camps in Chad as they usually had no means of transport to reach the schools and they struggled to walk across the uneven terrain of the camp.

Zeena, whose 12- and 14-year-old boys have disabilities, said that her children could not enrol in school in Chad because she was unable to carry them there each day.⁹⁴⁰ Yagoub similarly reported that he had not enrolled in school because it was located 10 to 20 minutes away and he was unable to walk that distance.⁹⁴¹

While Amnesty International was unable to visit Sudan, reporting from other organizations suggests that conditions are similarly challenging there for people with disabilities. According to an investigation by the Sudan Tribune, less than 10% of those registered as having a disability at displacement sites in Tawila had access to assistive devices or specialized medical care.⁹⁴² In September 2025, Amnesty International interviewed a community volunteer in Tawila, who was working to support people with disabilities. He said: "[There is] no advanced hospital in Tawila to manage their cases... nobody provides medication to them. [They have] no wheelchair or assistance to move at all."⁹⁴³ Medical professionals have warned that the lack of specialized treatment and rehabilitation is turning otherwise treatable injuries into permanent impairments.⁹⁴⁴

The Sudan Tribune further noted that the absence of an official census in the Tawila area has hindered appropriate funding allocations, including for prosthetic limbs, hearing aids and accessible infrastructure.⁹⁴⁵ Limited mobility also prevented some people with disabilities from independently accessing food distributions, forcing them to share their rations with able-bodied individuals in exchange for assistance transporting supplies to their shelters.⁹⁴⁶

The UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement state that displaced persons have the right to an adequate standard of living.⁹⁴⁷ According to the guidelines, "ensuring access to health-related habilitation and rehabilitation services, as well as assistive devices and technologies, is a State obligation and responsibility that cannot be handed over to non-profit organizations and charities."⁹⁴⁸ Host states must also ensure that refugees with disabilities can enjoy an adequate standard of living, including access to food and housing.⁹⁴⁹

939. Interview in person with Mukhtar and Dalal, 29 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

940. Interview in person with Zeena, 24 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

941. Interview in person with Yagoub, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

942. Sudan Tribune, "Sudan's disabled displaced face starvation and neglect as aid fails", 17 February 2026, <https://sudantribune.com/article/310777>; see also Human Rights Watch, "Sudan: People with disabilities targeted in North Darfur" (previously cited).

943. Interview by voice call with community volunteer, 17 September 2025.

944. Sudan Tribune, "Sudan's disabled displaced face starvation and neglect as aid fails" (previously cited).

945. Sudan Tribune, "Sudan's disabled displaced face starvation and neglect as aid fails" (previously cited).

946. Sudan Tribune, "Sudan's disabled displaced face starvation and neglect as aid fails" (previously cited).

947. UN Principles on Internal Displacement, Principle 18. See also Principle 19 (on medical care), Principle 23 (on education).

948. UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, 16 July 2018, UN Doc. A/73/161, para. 52.

949. CRPD, Article 28.

Humanitarian actors, including UN agencies, donors and international and local NGOs, also have commitments regarding inclusion and non-discrimination.⁹⁵⁰ The UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, which guide humanitarian responses, call for the removal of barriers that deprive people with disabilities access to shelter, education, healthcare and other essential services.⁹⁵¹

Finally, social security measures were inadequate to meet the needs of many people living in displacement, but this issue was particularly acute for older people. Most older people in Sudan do not receive a pension.⁹⁵² Instead, particularly for people from rural areas, their wealth was largely accumulated in their land, crops and livestock, all of which were destroyed or stolen from them in displacement.⁹⁵³

Asmahan, a woman in her sixties who was living in a refugee camp in Chad, described the economic impact of losing her farmland, where she had a small flock of sheep and a stockpile of wheat:

"At the end of the farming season my house was full of wheat... I lost everything when [the RSF] entered [my village]. They took everything... Most of our money had been used to buy the wheat. The rest was left... in a box at home. We don't deal with banks... I left with only the top that I am wearing."⁹⁵⁴

Dalia, 70, who was also living in a refugee camp in Chad, said: "I don't even have a blanket. During the war they attacked us suddenly and left us with nothing. They took my livestock, my clothes... I had eight cows, 75 goats... They took everything."⁹⁵⁵ *Dalia* had four adult sons, all of whom were killed in the armed conflict. "They all sent me money until they died," she said.⁹⁵⁶

950. See, for example, Sphere, *The Sphere Handbook: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response* (Fourth Edition), 6 November 2018, <https://www.spherestandards.org/handbook/>; UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), Guidelines: Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, July 2019, <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-guidelines-on-inclusion-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-humanitarian-action-2019>

951. IASC, Guidelines: Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action (previously cited).

952. Approximately 10% of older people who are of statutory pensionable age receive a pension in Sudan, according to UN Women. See UN Women, *Sudan*, <https://data.unwomen.org/country/sudan> (accessed 10 February 2026).

953. This reflects a widespread trend, in which the armed conflict has devastated the rural economy: a UNDP survey conducted within the first year of the armed conflict, from November 2023 to January 2024, found that 21% of rural households in Sudan reported losing their income entirely, while 60% said their income had declined. Given the ongoing devastation and displacement wrought by the conflict since, this economic dislocation must have deepened. For more information, see UNDP, *Livelihoods in Sudan Amid Armed Conflict: Evidence from a National Rural Household Survey*, 2023, https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2024-04/sudan_2023_rural_household_survey_report.pdf, p. 20.

954. Interview in person with *Asmahan*, 31 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

955. Interview in person with *Dalia*, 28 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

956. Interview in person with *Dalia*, 28 October 2025, Tiné, Chad.

11. LEGAL ANALYSIS

Evidence collected by Amnesty International supports the conclusion that the conduct of RSF forces in El Fasher and surrounding areas between mid-2024 and late 2025 constituted serious violations of international humanitarian law and amount to the war crimes of attacking a civilian population, murder, pillage, destruction of the property of an adversary, forcible displacement, starvation, attacks against protected civilian objects, rape, sexual slavery, other sexual violence, cruel treatment, torture, outrages upon personal dignity and hostage-taking. There are also reasonable grounds to investigate the RSF commanders for the war crime of conscripting, enlisting or using children under the age of 15 to participate in hostilities. The RSF further committed the crime of trafficking in persons.

As detailed below, the violations committed by the RSF amount to crimes against humanity under international law. They include murder, forcible transfer, imprisonment, torture, rape, sexual slavery, other forms of sexual violence, enslavement, extermination and persecution on the basis of gender and ethnicity. Independent, impartial and effective criminal investigations are needed to establish individual responsibility for these crimes.

11.1 CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY COMMITTED BY THE RAPID SUPPORT FORCES

Crimes against humanity are offences committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population pursuant to, or in furtherance of, a state or organizational policy.⁹⁵⁷ Crimes against humanity are among the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. They are prohibited during war and peace.

957. Rome Statute, Article 7.

The Rome Statute, the treaty that established the International Criminal Court (ICC), contains articles that define crimes against humanity in a manner widely accepted as generally reflecting customary international law. Article 7(1) of the Statute enumerates 11 underlying acts that may constitute crimes against humanity when those contextual requirements are met.⁹⁵⁸ These acts are crimes under international law, and as such, are criminal wherever they are committed, whether or not they are criminal under domestic law, and whether or not the state concerned has ratified the Rome Statute.⁹⁵⁹

Four legal requirements are common to all crimes against humanity:

- the underlying offence must be committed as part of a “widespread or systematic attack”;
- the attack must be “directed against the civilian population”;
- the underlying offence must be carried out with knowledge of the attack; and
- the attack must be carried out as part of state or organizational policy.

These general requirements establish the context in which specific prohibited acts must take place for them to be considered crimes against humanity. In addition, each specific crime against humanity requires proof of additional elements related to the specific underlying offence.

“Widespread” can be demonstrated by the number of victims or the magnitude of the acts, as well as the geographical reach of those acts.⁹⁶⁰ “Systematic” has been held to “signif[y] the organized nature of the acts of violence and the improbability of their random occurrence.”⁹⁶¹ Courts have commonly held the “systematic” threshold to be met when there are “[p]atterns of crimes – that is the nonaccidental repetition of similar criminal conduct on a regular basis.”⁹⁶²

The RSF carried out several attacks against the civilian population in a manner that was both widespread and systematic, although either threshold is sufficient under international law. These attacks included assaults on rural villages surrounding El Fasher, the 15 April 2025 attack on Zamzam IDP camp, which unlawfully displaced hundreds of thousands of people, and the attacks targeting the civilian population during the siege and eventual takeover of El Fasher on 26 October 2025. As documented throughout this report, and by the UN, these operations resulted in widespread unlawful killings.⁹⁶³

958. Rome Statute, Articles 7(1)(a)-(k): “(a) Murder; (b) Extermination; (c) Enslavement; (d) Deportation or forcible transfer of population; (e) Imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law; (f) Torture; (g) Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity; (h) Persecution against any identifiable group or collectively on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender... or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, in connection with any act referred to in this paragraph or any crime within the jurisdiction of the Court; (i) Enforced disappearance of persons; (j) The crime of apartheid; (k) Other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health.” It should be noted that other international criminal tribunals have used slightly different categorizations and lists of crimes under their jurisdiction, but the Rome Statute is now seen as an authoritative codification of existing international criminal law.

959. For a description of customary international law on crimes against humanity, see *Report of the International Law Commission: Sixty-seventh session* (4 May-5 June and 6 July-7 August 2015), Chapter 7: Crimes against Humanity, UN Doc. A/70/10, p. 54 (“The characterization of crimes against humanity as ‘crimes under international law’ indicates that they exist as crimes whether or not the conduct has been criminalized under national law.”)

960. See ICTR, *Prosecutor v. Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4-T, Trial Chamber judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 579; and ICTY, *Kordić & Čerkez*, Case IT-95-14/2, Trial Chamber judgment, 26 February 2001, para. 179. The ICC has held that an assessment of the quantitative and geographic facts will depend on the facts of each case. See *Situation in the Republic of Kenya*, Case No. ICC-01/09, Decision pursuant to Article 15 of the Rome Statute on the authorization of an investigation into the situation in the Republic of Kenya, 31 March 2010, Pre-Trial Chamber II, para. 95. See also *Prosecutor v. Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo*, Case No. ICC-01/05-01/08, Judgment pursuant to Article 74 of the Statute, 21 March 2016, Trial Chamber III, para. 163.

961. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Kunarac et al.*, Case IT-96-23-T & IT-96-23/1-T, Trial Chamber judgment, 22 February 2001, para. 429. See also ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Blaškić*, Case IT-95-14, Trial Chamber judgment, 3 March 2000, para. 203; and ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Akayesu*, Trial Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 580.

962. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Kunarac et al.*, Trial Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 429. See also ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Tadić*, Case IT-94-1, Trial Chamber Opinion and Judgment, 7 May 1997, para. 648.

963. See UN FFM, *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher* (previously cited), paras 43-71; OHCHR, “*They were shooting us like animals*”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (previously cited), paras 39-59.

“Attack directed against any civilian population” is defined in Article 7(2)(a) of the Rome Statute as “a course of conduct involving the multiple commission of acts referred to in [Article 7(1)] against any civilian population, pursuant to or in furtherance of a state or organizational policy to commit such attack.”⁹⁶⁴

Under ICC jurisprudence, a “civilian population” is a population that is predominantly civilian in character; it need not be exclusively civilian.⁹⁶⁵ The presence of some combatants does not deprive the population of its civilian character.⁹⁶⁶ The attack must be directed primarily against civilians, assessed contextually by examining the nature of the victims, the means and methods employed and the overall pattern of violence.⁹⁶⁷

The populations of attacked rural villages described above were predominantly civilian. Residents reported limited or no SAF or Joint Forces were present in the areas where Amnesty International documented attacks at the relevant times.

Although El Fasher housed SAF bases and members of the Joint Forces, substantial numbers of civilians remained in the city. The RSF cannot avoid liability for crimes against humanity by asserting that it was fighting opposing forces where the pattern of violence demonstrates that civilians were targeted or treated as expendable. Indicators that the attacks were directed against the civilian population include the targeting of men and boys during the takeover of El Fasher (Chapter 6); the denial of humanitarian assistance (Chapter 5); restrictions on the movement of civilians and goods into El Fasher as part of the prolonged siege, which created conditions of starvation (Chapter 5); indiscriminate killings (Chapter 6); and the mass detention of people fleeing the city (Chapter 8), with little or no apparent effort to distinguish civilians from fighters.

Furthermore, the existence of an RSF organizational policy to attack the civilian population can be inferred from the widespread and systematic nature of its attacks on El Fasher and the surrounding areas.⁹⁶⁸ As documented in this report, the attacks involved repeated patterns of killings, sexual violence, hostage-taking and destruction across multiple locations over an extended period of time. The scale, coordination and geographic spread of these acts support the conclusion that they were not isolated or spontaneous incidents. In addition, several attacks involved senior RSF commanders, according to witness testimony and other credible information, indicating direction or endorsement at higher levels. The logistical coordination required to carry out prolonged sieges and large-scale assaults further support the inference of an organizational policy.

Individuals are criminally responsible for crimes against humanity when they commit any of the underlying offences, as long as they have a degree of knowledge about the contextual elements of the crime. Notably, perpetrators must have known that their actions were part of a widespread or systematic attack.⁹⁶⁹ However, an individual does not need to be personally responsible for the actual widespread or systematic attack to be found guilty; a single act can be sufficient if it is carried out in the context of a broader attack of which the perpetrator was aware.⁹⁷⁰ Individuals, whether civilian or military, can be held criminally responsible for crimes

964. Rome Statute, Article 7(2)(a).

965. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Judgment pursuant to Article 74 (previously cited), paras 109–110; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Tadić*, Trial judgment (previously cited), paras 638–644.

966. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Judgment pursuant to Article 74 (previously cited), para. 110; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Kunarac et al.*, Case IT-96-23-T& IT-96-23/1-T, Appeals Chamber judgment, 12 June 2002, paras 90–92.

967. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Judgment (previously cited), paras 149–152; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Kunarac et al.*, Appeals judgment (previously cited), para. 91.

968. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Tadić*, Judgment (previously cited), para. 653 (“a policy need not be formalized and can be deduced from the way in which the acts occur. Notably, if the acts occur on a widespread or systematic basis that demonstrates a policy to commit those acts...”).

969. Rome Statute, Article 7(1). See also ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Kupreskic et al.*, Case IT-95-16-T, Trial Chamber judgment, 14 January 2000, para. 556 (“[T]he requisite mens rea for crimes against humanity appears to be comprised by (1) the intent to commit the underlying offence, combined with (2) knowledge of the broader context in which that offence occurs.”). See also ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Tadić*, Case IT-94-1, Appeal Chamber judgment, 15 July 1999, para. 271; ICTR, *Prosecutor v. Kayishema et al.*, Case No. ICTR-95-1-T, Trial Chamber judgment, 21 May 1999, paras 133–34.

970. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7, Introduction, para. 2.

against humanity for committing, co-perpetrating, indirectly perpetrating, planning, ordering, or aiding and abetting these crimes, as well as for command responsibility.⁹⁷¹

The RSF have committed the following crimes against humanity:

- **Murder (Article 7(1)(a)).** The crime against humanity of murder requires the killing of one or more persons.⁹⁷² The RSF have committed this crime for the killing of people during offensives in villages surrounding El Fasher and in attacks on civilians fleeing Zamzam IDP camp, and during the takeover of El Fasher – particularly through the targeted killing of men and older boys, including persons hors de combat.⁹⁷³ The UN has also found widespread evidence of murder in and around El Fasher.⁹⁷⁴
- **Deportation or forcible transfer of population (Article 7(1)(d)).** The crime against humanity of forcible transfer requires that the RSF forcibly transferred one or more persons to another location, by coercive acts, without grounds permitted under international law.⁹⁷⁵ Such persons must have been lawfully present in the area from which they were deported.⁹⁷⁶ Under the Rome Statute, “deported or forcibly transferred” is interchangeable with “forcibly displaced”.⁹⁷⁷ The RSF have committed the crime against humanity of forcible transfer by burning and destroying villages surrounding El Fasher, forcing civilians to flee their homes. They have also committed this crime by imposing siege conditions that severely restricted access to food in El Fasher city and the surrounding IDP camps, culminating in a final assault on the city that forced large segments of the civilian population to flee their homes. The UN has also found widespread forced displacement in areas surrounding El Fasher and in El Fasher city.⁹⁷⁸
- **Imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty (Article 7(1)(e)).** The crime against humanity of imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty requires that the RSF imprisoned one or more persons, in violation of fundamental rules of international law.⁹⁷⁹ According to ICC jurisprudence, “imprisonment” encompasses “unlawful captivity of a person in an enclosed environment, such as a prison”.⁹⁸⁰ The Rome Statute does not require the imprisonment or the deprivation of liberty to be for a prolonged period.⁹⁸¹ The RSF have committed the crime against humanity of imprisonment for the mass detention of civilians. Individuals were abducted during attacks on villages surrounding El Fasher and subsequently detained, including in circumstances where they were raped, subjected to forced labour or otherwise exploited. Following the takeover of Zamzam IDP camp and during the final assault on El Fasher city, thousands of individuals fleeing violence were detained without a legal basis. The UN and other entities have also found widespread imprisonment before and after the seizure of El Fasher.⁹⁸²

971. Rome Statute, Article 25, Article 28.

972. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(a)(1).

973. Rome Statute, Article 7(1)(a); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(a).

974. See UN FFM, *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher* (previously cited), paras 43-71; OHCHR, “*They were shooting us like animals*”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (previously cited), paras 39-59.

975. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(d)(1).

976. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(d)(2).

977. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(d), footnote 13.

978. See UN FFM, *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher* (previously cited), paras 22, 117; OHCHR, “*They were shooting us like animals*”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (previously cited), paras 20-26, 114.

979. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(e)(1)-(2).

980. ICC, *Situation in the Republic of Burundi*, Public Redacted Version of “Decision Pursuant to Article 15 of the Rome Statute on the Authorization of an Investigation into the Situation in the Republic of Burundi,” ICC-01/17-X-9-US-Exp, 25 October 2017, ICC-01/17-9- Red, 9 November 2017, para. 68.

981. ICC, *Situation in the Republic of Burundi*, Public Redacted Version of “Decision Pursuant to Article 15 of the Rome Statute on the Authorization of an Investigation into the Situation in the Republic of Burundi,” ICC-01/17-X-9-US-Exp, 25 October 2017, ICC-01/17-9- Red, 9 November 2017, para. 68.

982. See UN FFM, *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher* (previously cited), paras 87-94; OHCHR, “*They were shooting us like animals*”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (previously cited), paras 78-86; Darfur Network for Human Rights, “*We Could Not Breathe Inside Those Containers*”: RSF’s Systematic Detention, Torture and Extortion in North Darfur (previously cited) UN Security Council, letter dated 14 April 2025 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council (previously cited), para. 36.

- **Torture (Article 7(1)(f)).** The crime against humanity of torture requires that the RSF inflicted severe mental or physical pain on one or more persons in their custody, or under their control, and that such pain did not arise from, and was not inherent in or incidental to, lawful sanctions.⁹⁸³ The RSF have committed the crime against humanity of torture for the beatings and deprivation of food and water inflicted on civilians held in detention or compelled to fight or herd livestock. Acts of rape and other sexual violence committed against women and girls abducted during attacks on villages, Zamzam IDP camp and El Fasher, which caused severe physical and mental suffering, also amount to the crime against humanity of torture. The UN and other organizations have also found widespread evidence of torture.⁹⁸⁴
- **Rape, sexual slavery and other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity (Article 7(1)(g)).** The crimes against humanity of rape, sexual slavery and other sexual violence require the same acts as the war crimes of rape, sexual slavery and sexual violence.⁹⁸⁵

As described in Chapter 7, Amnesty International documented 20 incidents of rape that took place as part of abductions during attacks on villages and Zamzam IDP camp and in the aftermath of assaults on these areas and the 26 October attack on El Fasher. Among the women and girls who were raped, three – a woman, a girl and a young woman raped when she was 17 – were also held captive as sex slaves. Amnesty International also interviewed six women and girls who were aggressively searched by RSF fighters, during which they were sexually assaulted and at times, forced to strip naked. These assaults took place as the women and girls fled violence. The UN and other organizations have also found widespread evidence of rape and sexual violence in El Fasher and surrounding areas.⁹⁸⁶

Because all the cases of rape, sexual slavery and other sexual violence took place in the context of the widespread and systematic attack directed against the civilian population, they also amount to crimes against humanity under Article 7(1)(g) of the Rome Statute.

- **Enslavement (Article 7(1)(c)).** The crime against humanity of enslavement requires that the RSF exercised any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, including by depriving them of their liberty.⁹⁸⁷ The multiple instances of abduction of children under the age of 18, described in Chapter 9, where boys were forcibly taken and compelled to herd livestock or participate in fighting, demonstrate the exercise of such powers. These acts, committed in the context of the broader, widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population, amount to the crime against humanity of enslavement.
- **Extermination (Article 7(1)(b)).** The crime against humanity of extermination requires that the RSF killed one or more persons, including by inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the destruction of part of a population.⁹⁸⁸ The methods of killing can be direct or indirect, such as deliberately depriving civilians of food, water or medical care in circumstances where such deprivation is intended to result in death.⁹⁸⁹ The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) has found that the elements

983. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(f)(1)-(3).

984. See UN FFM, *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher* (previously cited), paras 90-92; OHCHR, “They were shooting us like animals”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (previously cited), paras 87-91; Darfur Network for Human Rights, “We Could Not Breathe Inside Those Containers”: RSF’s Systematic Detention, Torture and Extortion in North Darfur (previously cited).

985. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Articles 7(1)(g)(1)-(2), 7(1)(g)-2(1)-(2) and 7(1)(g)-6(1)-(2); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Articles 8(2)(e)(vi)-1(2), 8(2)(e)(vi)-2(1)-(2) and 8(2)(e)(vi)-6(1)-(2).

986. See UN FFM, *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher* (previously cited), paras 72-83; OHCHR, “They were shooting us like animals”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (previously cited), paras 60-66; MSF, “There is Something I want to Tell You...” *Surviving the Sexual Violence Crisis in Darfur* (previously cited); MSF, *Besieged, Attacked, Starved* (previously cited), pp. 20, 36-37.

987. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(c)(1), footnote 11.

988. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(b).

989. See ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(b), footnotes 8 and 9.

of extermination as a crime against humanity are: “a) act or omission that results in the death of persons on a massive scale (*actus reus*); and b) the intent to kill persons on a massive scale, or to inflict serious bodily injury or create conditions of life that lead to death in the reasonable knowledge that such act or omission is likely to cause the death of a large number of persons (*mens rea*).”⁹⁹⁰

The evidence indicates that members of the RSF committed the crime against humanity of extermination through both the deliberate imposition of life-threatening conditions during the siege of El Fasher and the targeted killing of civilians, primarily men and boys, during and after the town’s takeover. The acts set out below amount to extermination when assessed individually, where the scale of killing meets the required threshold, and in any event cumulatively, as part of a broader course of conduct that resulted in the deaths of a large number of civilians:

❑ **Siege of El Fasher and surrounding areas.** By imposing and maintaining severe restrictions on the delivery of humanitarian resources as part of its siege of El Fasher, the RSF deliberately exacerbated an already precarious humanitarian situation. As documented in this report and by the UN and other organizations,⁹⁹¹ residents of El Fasher, many of whom were heavily reliant on food aid, saw their access to food steadily diminish as the siege tightened, pushing an already vulnerable population towards life-threatening deprivation. As described in Chapter 5, the RSF refused to facilitate humanitarian access and repeatedly targeted individuals attempting to bring food into the city over a prolonged period. Chapter 4 also documents attacks on farming communities, likely reducing local food production. In July 2024, the IPC Famine Review Committee confirmed the presence of famine (IPC Phase 5) conditions in Zamzam IDP camp and highlighted the likelihood that similar conditions existed in the nearby Abu Shouk and Al Salam camps, which were also under siege.⁹⁹² By September 2025, the Committee determined that famine conditions had extended into El Fasher itself.⁹⁹³

Many people were left with little to consume beyond *ambaz*, animal feed with virtually no nutritional value. Amnesty International documented four children who, according to the accounts of their parents, died from malnutrition and related conditions. Other reports similarly indicate the deaths of children due to malnutrition.⁹⁹⁴ Even in the absence of comprehensive mortality data, experts note that when a child dies from disease in such conditions, malnutrition is often a contributing factor.⁹⁹⁵ The siege not only resulted in civilian deaths, but those responsible for enforcing it knew, or should have known, that deliberately imposing and maintaining such conditions of life would likely cause the deaths of a significant number of people.

❑ **Targeting of men and boys fleeing El Fasher.** As described in Chapter 6, during the RSF takeover of El Fasher, RSF forces targeted men and boys attempting to flee the city. Men and older boys were frequently separated from women and younger children. Many of those separated were unarmed, wearing civilian clothing, and were accused of affiliation with the SAF or Joint Forces. Witnesses described executions of men and older boys, including relatives.

990. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Blagojević & Jokić*, Case No. IT-02-60-T, Trial Chamber judgment, 17 January 2005, para. 572.

991. See UN FFM, *Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher* (previously cited), paras 95-96, 99; OHCHR, “*They were shooting us like animals*”: RSF final offensive and capture of besieged El Fasher (previously cited), para. 26; MSF, *Besieged, Attacked, Starved* (previously cited), pp. 29-33.

992. IPC, *Famine Review Committee: Combined Review of: (i) The Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) IPC Compatible Analysis for IDP Camps in El Fasher, North Darfur and (ii) the IPC Sudan Technical Working Group Analysis of Zamzam Camp (North Darfur) Sudan, Conclusions and Recommendations* (previously cited).

993. IPC, *Famine Review Committee: Sudan, October 2025, Conclusions and Recommendations* (previously cited).

994. See Anadolu Agency, “3 children die every day in Sudan’s El-Fasher amid worsening malnutrition: Medics” (previously cited).

995. See Chapter 5.2 for further information.

By October 2025, a 57km network of earthen berms and barriers controlled by the RSF encircled most of the city, with checkpoints controlling the roads leading out. As civilians tried to escape, many attempted to climb over the berms and keep running, but RSF fighters patrolling the tops of the berms intercepted them. Amnesty International verified 13 videos from one large-scale killing at the berm on 27 October 2025. Digital evidence indicates that there were around 100 bodies among the casualties, predominantly adult men.

❑ **Killings at Saudi Hospital.** At Saudi Hospital, witnesses described the intentional killing of civilians and soldiers hors de combat, including patients receiving treatment, as detailed in Chapter 6. Amnesty International confirmed the names of 10 individuals killed as well as two additional individuals whose relatives identified their bodies shortly after the attack. The organization also received credible accounts of dozens of other victims whose names remain unknown.

- **Persecution (Article 7(1)(h)).** The crime against humanity of persecution requires proof that the RSF severely deprived one or more persons of fundamental rights and intentionally targeted such person or persons on the basis of their membership in a particular group.⁹⁹⁶ The discriminatory grounds must be political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious or gender-based (as defined in Article 7(3) of the Statute), or based on other grounds universally recognized as impermissible under international law.⁹⁹⁷ The conduct must also have been committed in connection with any act referred to in Article 7 constituting a crime against humanity.⁹⁹⁸

The RSF has committed the crime against humanity of persecution on the basis of gender and ethnicity. In many instances, the persecution was intersectional, with victims targeted simultaneously on both gendered and ethnic grounds.

❑ **Persecution on the basis of gender.** Throughout the siege of El Fasher and surrounding areas, culminating in the RSF's takeover of the city, the RSF subjected civilians to severe deprivations of fundamental rights on the basis of gender. Women and girls were singled out for rape and other forms of sexual violence, while men and boys were consistently targeted for murder and imprisonment (all crimes against humanity described above).

As detailed in Chapter 7, the RSF targeted women and girls for sexual violence on the basis of gender, treating them as bodies over which fighters could exercise power and control. Men and boys were also targeted because of gendered assumptions about their affiliation with opposing forces. As detailed in Chapters 4 and 6, when civilians fled villages, Zamzam IDP camp, and El Fasher, men and older boys were frequently characterized as affiliated with the military and targeted for killing and detention.

❑ **Persecution on the basis of ethnicity.** Throughout the siege and takeover of El Fasher, the RSF targeted Zaghawa civilians, and non-Arab communities in Darfur more broadly. These violations were carried out in connection with other crimes against humanity and involved severe deprivations of the fundamental rights to life, liberty, dignity and bodily integrity.

996. Rome Statute, Articles 7(1)(h), 7(2)(g); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(h).

997. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(h)(3).

998. ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(h)(4).

RSF members characterized people of Zaghawa ethnicity as linked to the Joint Forces, either directly or through relatives or community ties.⁹⁹⁹ Rather than assessing individual participation in hostilities, RSF members frequently targeted Zaghawa civilians as enemy affiliates on the basis of ethnicity. Many Zaghawa civilians told Amnesty International that they sometimes concealed their ethnic identity where possible, out of fear of being targeted.

This pattern extended beyond individual targeting to community-level attacks. Amnesty International documented attacks on predominantly Zaghawa villages in Abu Zerega, south of El Fasher, where RSF forces carried out killings, looting and other abuses. Residents were forcibly displaced from their homes, destroying a significant community stronghold for the Zaghawa population.

Targeting was not limited to Zaghawa communities. As noted above, the RSF repeatedly used derogatory and dehumanizing language to refer more broadly to anyone of non-Arab ethnicity in Darfur. The ethnic slurs commonly included *falangay* which can imply a connection to the military and its allies, even though non-Arab civilians were often targeted irrespective of any demonstrated affiliation. These terms were used against non-Arab civilians during the attack on Saudi Hospital, during rape and sexual violence and when men and boys were detained.

11.2 ETHNIC CLEANSING

The term “ethnic cleansing” does not constitute a distinct crime under international law and has no formal legal definition. However, a UN Commission of Experts defined it as a “purposeful policy designed by one ethnic or religious group to remove by violent and terror-inspiring means the civilian population of another... from certain geographic areas,” where “the purpose appears to be the occupation of territory to the exclusion of the targeted group.”¹⁰⁰⁰ This definition contains three core elements: a purposeful policy, the removal of a civilian population on ethnic or religious grounds, and the use of violent or terror-inspiring means.

Evidence documented by Amnesty International indicates that attacks by the RSF and allied militias against villages in the Abu Zerega area, populated primarily by Zaghawa communities along with smaller numbers of other non-Arab ethnic groups, in December 2024 and March 2025 meet these elements.

Similar patterns may also have occurred more broadly, including in El Fasher and surrounding areas. As documented in Chapters 4-6, the RSF killed and forcibly displaced tens of thousands of civilians from El Fasher and surrounding areas through siege tactics and a violent takeover. As outlined in the section above on persecution, Zaghawa and other non-Arab communities were disproportionately affected. However, determining whether these acts amount to ethnic cleansing in the broader El Fasher context would require further investigation, particularly into whether Zaghawa and other non-Arab communities were more systematically displaced and prevented from returning. Such evidence would be important to establishing whether the violence was also intended to alter the area’s ethnic composition.

999. While some Zaghawa members of the RSF fought with the group in North Darfur, this does not alter the finding that RSF operations in the areas documented in this report specifically targeted Zaghawa civilians. The pattern of attacks, the language used by perpetrators, and the disproportionate impact on Zaghawa communities all point to ethnically directed violence regardless of the internal composition of the attacking force.

1000. UNSC, *Report of the United Nations Commission of Experts Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 780 (1992)*, 27 May 1994, UN Doc. S/1994/674, para. 130.

PURPOSEFUL POLICY AND THE USE OF VIOLENT OR TERROR-INSPIRING MEANS

The available evidence supports the conclusion that RSF attacks on villages and towns in the Abu Zerega area were carried out pursuant to a coordinated policy of removal, rather than as isolated acts or legitimate military operations.

As described in Chapter 4, during two waves of attacks in December 2024 and March 2025, the RSF attacked towns, killed and beat civilians as they attempted to flee, looted markets, livestock and crops, and abducted civilians of all ages. The violence caused the large-scale, unlawful displacement of Zaghawa civilians from the area, as well as smaller numbers of other non-Arab ethnic minorities, indicating a broader pattern of targeting non-Arab communities in Darfur.

This removal has been reinforced by deliberate destruction. Satellite imagery documents burning that continued after residents had fled and while areas remained under RSF control. In cases where villages were largely razed, the pattern suggests an intent to render them uninhabitable. RSF forces, and potentially allied militias, have since maintained control over affected areas, preventing displaced persons, fearful of being targeted, from coming back.

Together, the pattern of attacks, displacement, sustained control of the areas, and continued destruction supports the conclusion that these acts were carried out pursuant to a coordinated policy to permanently remove the Zaghawa population, within a broader pattern of targeting non-Arab communities in Darfur from the area, rather than as part of legitimate military operations.

REMOVAL OF A CIVILIAN POPULATION ON ETHNIC GROUNDS

As described in Chapter 4, while Abu Zerega is not part of Dar Zaghawa, it has long been inhabited by Zaghawa communities. The 38 people interviewed by Amnesty International from the Abu Zerega area were of Zaghawa ethnicity.¹⁰⁰¹ They said the area was predominantly Zaghawa, but also contained other non-Arab ethnic groups, including Berti, Gimir and Tunjur people, and a small number ethnically Arab people.¹⁰⁰²

Witnesses reported RSF fighters using derogatory ethnic slurs, including terms such as *falangay* or *falangayat*, during attacks. For example, a woman recounted that RSF fighters referred to her as “the wife of a slave” while burning her home;¹⁰⁰³ in another case, a man was shot after being called “the child of a *falangay*.”¹⁰⁰⁴ This supports the conclusion that civilians were displaced, at least in part, on the basis of their ethnicity.

This conclusion is reinforced by the historical context. During previous phases of the Darfur conflict, government forces and allied militias repeatedly conflated Zaghawa identity in the Abu Zerega area with affiliation with armed opposition groups, and targeted Zaghawa communities on that basis.

1001. Four people were not asked about their ethnicity. For more on the history of the Zaghawa in this area, see the textbox below entitled “Historical Patterns of Targeting in Abu Zerega and Surrounding Areas”.

1002. Interviews, January-April 2026.

1003. Interview in person with *Maha*, 23 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

1004. Interview in person with *Yagoub*, 26 October 2025, Iriba, Chad.

GENOCIDE

Genocide under international law requires proof of a specific intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group as such.¹⁰⁰⁵ This specific intent distinguishes genocide from other international crimes. The crime may be committed through acts such as killing members of a group, causing serious bodily or mental harm, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the group's physical destruction, imposing measures intended to prevent births, or forcibly transferring children.¹⁰⁰⁶ The destruction must target at least a substantial part of a protected group including within a limited geographic area.¹⁰⁰⁷

Various international actors have accused the RSF of genocide in Darfur, including the United States government and House of Representatives.¹⁰⁰⁸ The UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan found “hallmarks of genocide in El Fasher”.¹⁰⁰⁹ In addition, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has warned of genocide risks in Darfur and the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide has cautioned that the situation “bears all the marks of risk of genocide, with strong allegations that this crime has already been committed”.¹⁰¹⁰

Amnesty International believes that acts documented in this report, as well as other suspected crimes under parallel investigation, may be relevant to the crime of genocide. Its investigation into this conduct is ongoing at the time of publication.

11.3 INDIVIDUAL CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY, INCLUDING COMMAND OR OTHER SUPERIOR RESPONSIBILITY

Individuals, whether civilians or military and regardless of rank, can be held criminally responsible for crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law. Commanders may be responsible for crimes under international law under a number of modes of liability, including committing, co-perpetration, indirect perpetration, planning, ordering, aiding and abetting, as well as command responsibility.

Command responsibility is a mode of individual criminal responsibility under international law by which a military commander or a civilian superior in a similar capacity can be held responsible for the acts of his or her subordinates if he or she knew or should have known of the crimes and failed to prevent or stop the crimes or to punish those responsible.¹⁰¹¹

1005. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Article II; Rome Statute, Article 6.

1006. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Article II; Rome Statute, Article 6.

1007. ICTY, Prosecutor v. Krstic, Case No. IT-98-33, Trial Chamber judgement, 2 August 2001, <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/krstic/acjug/en/>, para. 634; ICTY, Prosecutor v. Jelisic, Case No. IT-95-10, Trial Chamber judgment, 14 December 1999, paras 82-83.

1008. U.S. Department of State, “Genocide determination in Sudan and imposing accountability measures”, 7 January 2025, <http://2021-2025.state.gov/genocide-determination-in-sudan-and-imposing-accountability-measures/>; Congress.gov, “H.Res.1328 - Recognizing the actions of the Rapid Support Forces and allied militias in the Darfur region of Sudan against non-Arab ethnic communities as acts of genocide”, 20 November 2024, <https://www.congress.gov/bills/118th-congress/house-resolution/1328>

1009. See UN FFM, Sudan: Hallmarks of Genocide in El Fasher (previously cited).

1010. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “Museum warns of risk of genocide in Darfur”, 29 June 2023, <https://www.ushmm.org/information/press/press-releases/museum-warns-risk-of-genocide-in-darfur>; Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Alice Wairimu Nderitu, “Briefing to the Security Council”, 21 May 2024, https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/Briefing_Security_Council_Special_Adviser_Prevention_Genocide_Sudan_21_May_2024.pdf

1011. Command responsibility is part of customary international law and conventional international law, and has been included as a mode of responsibility both in ad hoc tribunals and in the ICC. See, for example, the Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Article 7(3); Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Article 6(3); and Rome Statute, Article 28. For the ICRC's iteration of command responsibility as defined in customary international law, see ICRC, Jean Marie Henckaerts and Louise Doswald-Beck, eds, *Customary International Humanitarian Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), Rule 153, pp. 558-563. The ICRC definition applies to responsibility for war crimes rather than crimes against humanity, but the rule is very similar, if not identical, in the two cases. Thus, the provisions for command responsibility in the Statutes of the International Tribunals for Rwanda and for the former Yugoslavia cover both types of crimes. For additional information, see Amnesty International, *The International Criminal Court: Checklist for effective implementation* (Index: IOR 40/11/00), July 2000, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/ior400112000en.pdf>; and G. Mettraux, *The Law of Command Responsibility* (2009), p. 21.

As described in Chapter 8, Amnesty International identified two senior commanders of the RSF operating at Mina al-Bari detention facility. Five witnesses stated that Major General Gedo Hamdan Ahmed Mohamed (“Abu Shouk”) was the most senior RSF official to visit the facility. Three men said they experienced ill-treatment, including being beaten and kicked and threatened, at the hands of Abu Shouk. Two men saw Abu Shouk participating in the torture of others.

Five witnesses identified Lieutenant Colonel Abbas Khater Bakhit as the commander responsible for the day-to-day management of the facility. Witnesses reported that Bakhit both participated in and ordered acts of torture.

These accounts indicate that both Abu Shouk and Khater Bakhit bear individual criminal responsibility for crimes committed at Mina al-Bari detention centre, including through direct participation and ordering. The reported frequency of Abu Shouk’s visits to the facility, together with Khater Bakhit’s role in supervising its daily operations, strongly indicates that they knew or should have known of repeated and visible abuses at the facility, including severe beatings, torture, deprivation of food, air and water, and deaths linked to detention conditions. The scale and persistence of these violations, together with the apparent failure to prevent, stop, punish or refer them for investigation, suggest that they may also bear responsibility under command or superior responsibility.

As described in Chapter 6, Amnesty International verified nine videos showing RSF Commander Al-Fateh Abdullah Idris (“Abu Lulu”) executing captives in civilian clothing during a massacre on 27 October 2025, 12km from the berm. *Zubeida*, a 15-year-old girl, told Amnesty International she had witnessed Abu Lulu directing a massacre at the berm shortly after the takeover of El Fasher. She said he introduced himself by name, directed operations at the berm, shot men and boys, and killed women.¹⁰¹² The videos, supported by testimony, provide clear evidence that Abu Lulu is responsible for the war crime of murder.¹⁰¹³

Recent sanctions by the UN, UK and USA assert that senior RSF Commanders Gedo Hamdan Ahmed Mohamed (“Abu Shouk”), Tijani Ibrahim Moussa Mohamed (“Al Zeir Salem”) and Abdul Rahim Hamdan Dagalo were present in El Fasher at the time of the takeover and were involved in RSF operations during which serious violations were committed.¹⁰¹⁴ The scale, duration and pattern of abuses, in public view, raise concerns that all three knew, or should have known, of violations committed by forces under their command, potentially engaging responsibility under the doctrine of command responsibility.

1012. See also Al Jazeera, “Arrest of ‘Abu Lulu’ does little to distance RSF from Sudan massacre”, 4 November 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2025/11/4/arrest-of-abu-lulu-does-little-to-distance-rsf-from-sudan-massacre>; Reuters, “Death in Darfur: 3 days of horror caught on camera, Reuters Visual Investigation” (previously cited). Following Abu Lulu’s arrest by the RSF, Reuters published a report indicating he had been released from prison and returned to the battlefield. Reuters, “Commander who was filmed killing civilians in Sudan is back in combat, sources say”, 18 May 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/investigations/commander-who-was-filmed-killing-civilians-sudan-is-back-combat-sources-say-2026-05-18/>.

1013. Rome Statute, 8(2)(c)(i), ICC Elements of Crimes, Article 8(2)(c)(i)-1.

1014. UN Security Council, “Tijani Ibrahim Moussa Mohamed”, <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/tijani-ibrahim-moussa-mohamed> (accessed 25 March 2026); UN Security Council, “Gedo Hamdan Ahmed”, <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/gedo-hamdan-ahmed> (accessed 25 March 2026); UN Security Council, “Abdul Rahim Hamdan Dagalo”, <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/abdul-rahim-hamdan-dagalo> (accessed 28 May 2026); UK Government, “UK sanctions commanders responsible for Sudan atrocities and pledges additional humanitarian support as Cooper says atrocities must not go unpunished”, 12 December 2025, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-sanctions-commanders-responsible-for-sudan-atrocities-and-pledges-additional-humanitarian-support-as-cooper-says-atrocities-must-not-go-unpunished>; U.S. Department of the Treasury, “Treasury sanctions Sudanese paramilitary commanders for atrocities in El-Fasher” 19 February 2026, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sb0399>. The USA did not sanction Abdul Rahim Hamdan Dagalo for his actions in El Fasher, though he was previously sanctioned by the US government in September 2023 for his leadership of the RSF. U.S. Department of Treasury, “Treasury sanctions Sudanese paramilitary leader”, 6 September 2023, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/y1712>. For further information on these and other RSF commanders present in El Fasher at the time of the takeover, see Reuters, “Death in Darfur: 3 days of horror caught on camera, Reuters Visual Investigation” (previously cited).

The UN, UK and USA have also sanctioned RSF Commander Al-Fateh Abdullah Idris (“Abu Lulu”) in connection with atrocities he filmed himself committing.¹⁰¹⁵ In April 2026, the UN also sanctioned Al-Goney Hamdan Dagalo for arming the RSF and “contribut[ing] to the RSF’s ongoing siege of El Fasher.”¹⁰¹⁶ These individuals should be investigated and, where relevant, prosecuted for crimes committed under international law, including through international and domestic mechanisms.

1015. UN Security Council, “Al-Fateh Abdullah Idris”, <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/al-fateh-abdullah-idris> (accessed 28 May 2026); UK Government, “UK sanctions commanders responsible for Sudan atrocities and pledges additional humanitarian support as Cooper says atrocities must not go unpunished” (previously cited); U.S. Department of the Treasury, “Treasury sanctions Sudanese paramilitary commanders for atrocities in El-Fasher” (previously cited).

1016. UN Security Council, “Al-Goney Hamdan Dagalo”, <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/al-goney-hamdan-dagalo> (accessed 28 May 2026).



12. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report documents how El Fasher and the surrounding areas, once a refuge for those displaced by two decades of violence in Darfur, became the site of a systematic campaign of attack, siege and takeover that devastated civilians.

The assault began in the surrounding towns, villages and displacement camps. Rural communities were raided, homes looted and burned, livestock stolen and civilians shot at close range. Entire areas were emptied. Satellite imagery confirms burning while some villages were attacked, but also after residents had been displaced.

The siege that followed turned deprivation into a weapon. Routes out of and into the city were blocked. Food was prevented from entering. Those who attempted to bring supplies risked being killed. Families survived on *ambaz*, animal feed unfit for human consumption. Famine conditions were declared in Zamzam IDP camp and later in El Fasher itself. Parents watched their children waste away from hunger and untreated illness, powerless to help them.

When the RSF seized the city in October 2025, the violence escalated. Civilians attempting to flee were separated, detained or shot. At the berm surrounding the city, men and older boys were singled out and executed. Mass killings were carried out; ethnic identity sometimes determined who was spared and who was killed. Ethnic slurs and collective accusations were directed at Zaghawa and other non-Arab communities, reinforcing patterns of discrimination that ran throughout the assault. Women and girls were abducted, raped and subjected to sexual slavery. Thousands of people were unlawfully detained. Many were beaten, humiliated and deprived of food and water.

Children were not incidental victims of this violence; they were at its centre. They were killed during village raids and while fleeing the city. Boys were forcibly recruited or compelled to work. Girls were raped and abused sexually in other ways. Children were detained, beaten, starved and killed. Hospitals were attacked.

Aid was obstructed. Every stage of the assault on El Fasher carried distinct and lasting consequences for children, including malnutrition, that will shape their health and development for years to come. Many were left deeply traumatized, with little or no access to psycho-social support or other essential care.

Deep cuts to humanitarian funding have compounded the crisis and worsened health risks. At the time of this report's publication, Sudan's 2026 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan was still only 27% funded.

Without urgent international action, the patterns of egregious abuses documented in this report will continue. The international community must move beyond statements of concern and take concrete steps to protect civilians and break the cycle of impunity. This includes deploying an independent and adequately resourced international protection force with a clear mandate to prevent further atrocities; and disrupting the flow of weapons into the country. It also includes strengthening existing accountability mechanisms; and supporting child protection at every level of response, including the immediate release and reintegration of children associated with armed actors and sustained funding for child-focused services. Parties to the conflict, particularly the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), should urgently sign an action plan with the UN to end and prevent grave violations against children. For the children and people of El Fasher and North Darfur, every delay costs lives.

■ TO THE RAPID SUPPORT FORCES AND ALLIED GROUPS

- Immediately agree to and implement a nationwide ceasefire accompanied by a sustainable framework for longer-term security and stability, human rights protection, justice and accountability.
- Regardless of a ceasefire, immediately end all attacks against civilians and civilian objects, including in and around El Fasher, and end all violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.
- Allow and facilitate safe, rapid, sustained and unhindered humanitarian access to all civilians in areas under your control, including towns and IDP camps.
- Immediately release all civilians who have been arbitrarily deprived of their liberty, including those detained during and after the attacks and takeover of El Fasher.
- Establish conditions for the safe, voluntary and sustainable return of internally displaced persons.
- Sign and implement, without delay, a time-bound action plan with the UN to end and prevent all grave violations against children.
- Immediately end the recruitment and use of children and demobilize everyone under the age of 18 from your ranks, in coordination with child protection actors; and ensure that children associated with opposing armed forces or groups are not held in military custody and are promptly transferred to civilian child protection actors for rehabilitation and reintegration.
- Issue clear instructions to all combatants under your command or control prohibiting rape and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls, and publicly affirm that such violence is unacceptable.

- Ensure the full respect of rules of international humanitarian law. Where violations of such rules are committed, ensure that those suspected of war crimes or other serious violations and international crimes, including the commanders named in this report – Major General Gedo Hamdan Ahmed Mohamed (“Abu Shouk”), Lieutenant Colonel Abbas Khater Bakhit and commander Al-Fateh Abdullah Idris (“Abu Lulu”) – are removed from their active roles and surrender them to competent, independent authorities to be investigated and prosecuted in fair trials without recourse to the death penalty.
- If, as reported to Amnesty International, Abbas Khater Bakhit is currently in RSF detention, the RSF must not use the findings in this report as a pretext for its own proceedings against him, particularly if such proceedings could result in the death penalty, or other violations of international fair trial standards.
- Cooperate and support all ongoing accountability efforts including the work of both the UN Human Rights Council and its mechanisms, and the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights’ (ACHPR’s) Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights Situation in the Republic of the Sudan, and support their access to the territories under your control.
- Publicly support and fully cooperate with the deployment of an Africa Union-led protection force to Sudan, including by guaranteeing its safe and unhindered access to areas under your control.

■ TO THE SUDANESE ARMED FORCES AND ALLIED GROUPS

- Immediately agree to and implement a nationwide ceasefire accompanied by a sustainable framework for longer-term security and stability, human rights protection, justice and accountability.
- Allow and facilitate safe, rapid, unrestricted and unhindered humanitarian access to all civilians across all areas under your control and refrain from imposing administrative, political or other restrictions that obstruct humanitarian access to areas outside your effective control.
- Sign and implement, without delay, a time-bound action plan with the UN to end and prevent all grave violations committed against children.
- Ensure that children associated with opposing armed forces or groups are not held in military custody and are promptly transferred to civilian child protection actors for rehabilitation and reintegration.
- Preserve all potential evidence of violations and cooperate fully with all ongoing accountability efforts, including the work of both the UN Human Rights Council and the ACHPR’s Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights Situation in the Republic of the Sudan and facilitate their access to the territories under your control, while refraining from any action that would obstruct their work.
- Support, consent to, and cooperate with the deployment of an Africa Union-led protection force to Sudan, including by guaranteeing its safe and unhindered access to areas under your control and refraining from any action that would obstruct its mandate.

■ TO THE GOVERNMENT OF SUDAN AND SUDANESE ARMED FORCES-ALIGNED AUTHORITIES

- Facilitate full and unhindered access for the UN Special Procedures, including by responding positively to pending visit requests from the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls. Additionally, invite the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, and the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery and trafficking in persons to conduct a country visit.

■ TO THE AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

- Apply sustained political pressure on the RSF, SAF and all other parties to the conflict in Sudan to immediately agree to and implement a nationwide ceasefire accompanied by a sustainable framework for longer-term security and stability, human rights protection, justice and accountability. Regardless of progress towards a ceasefire, use all available leverage to urge all parties to immediately end attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, ensure safe and unfettered humanitarian access into North Darfur, and urgently facilitate the scaling up of humanitarian funding and response commensurate with the scale of civilian need.
- In line with the recommendation of the ACHPR's Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights Situation in the Republic of the Sudan, and given the ongoing risk to civilians, urgently establish and deploy a protection force to Sudan with a mandate to protect and deter attacks against civilians, prevent atrocities, create the security conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and monitor and publicly report on attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure. Ensure the protection force is adequately resourced, equipped and supported to operate effectively, including through predictable and sustainable financing.
- Ensure that any protection mechanism supported by the African Union integrates strong human rights monitoring, child protection and gender components, including measures to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence.
- Mobilize African Union member states to provide political and material support for civilian protection efforts, including by joining and building on the momentum of the newly created coalition on atrocity prevention.
- Ensure the ACHPR's Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights Situation in the Republic of the Sudan is adequately resourced and empowered to continue investigating, publicly reporting on violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law across Sudan, including with expertise on sexual and gender-based violence and crimes against children, and in coordination with relevant accountability mechanisms.
- Use all available leverage to urge Sudanese authorities to grant access to the ACHPR's Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights Situation in the Republic of Sudan to undertake in-country investigations.

- Place the protection of children in Sudan on its formal agenda and request regular briefings on grave violations against children and broader child protection risks arising from the conflict.
- Utilize the Africa Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflict and the newly established Office of the Special Envoy for Children Affected by Armed Conflict to elevate high-level engagement aimed at ending and preventing grave violations against children in Sudan.
- Call on all African Union member states to respect and implement the UN Security Council's arms embargo on Darfur, including by refraining from transferring weapons and ammunition to the parties to the conflict, and work with the UN Security Council to expand the arms embargo that currently applies only to Darfur to cover the rest of the country.
- Ensure child protection advisers and expertise are integrated into any African Union-led mediation, monitoring or ceasefire mechanisms concerning Sudan.

■ TO THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

- Renew the mandate of the Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights Situation in the Republic of the Sudan to enable it to continue to publicly report on violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law across Sudan, including with expertise on sexual and gender-based violence and crimes against children, and in coordination with relevant accountability mechanisms.
- Reiterate your call on the African Union Commission and the African Union Peace and Security Council to implement the key recommendations on accountability and protection on civilians in its October 2025 report.
- Continue to publicly call on all parties to end attacks on civilians and ensure unrestricted humanitarian access.
- Urgently call for more humanitarian funding for an inclusive response in Sudan and in refugee camps in Chad and other neighbouring countries, including child protection services, psycho-social support, education and support for survivors of sexual violence.
- Follow up on commitments made by Sudanese delegations at the African Union Commission's sessions regarding the granting of access to the Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights Situation in the Republic of the Sudan to undertake in-country investigations in Sudan.
- Continue to collaborate with the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan, building on the Banjul Joint Declaration on Sudan of 12 May 2026 and within the framework of the Addis Ababa Roadmap.

■ **TO THE AFRICA PLATFORM ON CHILDREN AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT, AND THE AFRICAN UNION SPECIAL ENVOY FOR CHILDREN AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT**

- Prioritize Sudan in your advocacy and use your high-level platform to press all parties to the conflict to end and prevent grave violations against children, and to secure the release and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups.
- Strengthen coordination with the African Union Peace and Security Council and UN child protection actors to enhance monitoring, accountability and mobilization of resources.

■ **TO THE AFRICAN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD**

- Publicly call on all parties to the conflict to end and prevent grave violations against children in Sudan, and to secure the release and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups.
- Call on the African Union Peace and Security Council to place the protection of children in Sudan on its formal agenda and to invite the Committee to provide regular briefings on grave violations against children and broader child protection risks arising from the conflict.
- Request Sudanese authorities to grant you access to undertake in-country investigations into grave violations against children.

■ **TO THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL**

- Apply sustained political pressure on the RSF, SAF and all other parties to the conflict to agree to and implement an immediate ceasefire accompanied by a sustainable framework for longer-term security and stability, human rights protection, justice and accountability. Regardless of progress towards a ceasefire, use all available leverage to urge all parties to immediately end attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, ensure safe and unfettered humanitarian access into North Darfur, and facilitate the urgent scaling up of humanitarian funding and response commensurate with the scale of civilian need.
- Ensure that any monitoring mechanism established in relation to a ceasefire, truce, humanitarian pause, or other negotiated arrangement is independent, adequately resourced, and capable of monitoring, verifying, and publicly reporting on violations. It should include a strong on-the-ground presence and must not be limited to passive observation.
- Given the ongoing risks to civilians, authorize and support the deployment of an African Union-led, or otherwise appropriate international or regional, protection force to Sudan, mandated to protect civilians, deter attacks, prevent atrocities, facilitate safe humanitarian access, and monitor and publicly report on attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure. Any authorizing resolution should act under Chapter

VII of the UN Charter and authorize the use of all necessary means, including force, to protect civilians, in full compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law. This protection presence must integrate strong human rights monitoring, child protection, disability and gender components, including measures to prevent and respond to sexual violence.

- Call for prompt, independent investigations and prosecutions of named commanders and other suspects identified in the report, including through international and domestic mechanisms.
- Impose targeted sanctions under the Sudan sanctions regime, including asset freezes and travel bans, against individuals credibly implicated in the serious violations documented in this report who have not already been sanctioned. Such sanctions should be time-bound, subject to regular review, and accompanied by an effective monitoring mechanism to assess compliance, impact and effectiveness.
- Call for the establishment of a functioning MARA (monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements) in line with UN Security Council resolution 1960 (2009) to ensure systematic gathering of information on conflict-related sexual violence in Sudan and to enable the UN Security Council to hear and respond to updates on the sexual and gender-based violence crisis in the country. In addition, consider updating the current UN Security Council sanctions regime for Sudan to include sexual and gender-based violence as a stand-alone listing criterion.
- Call for all states to respect the UN Security Council's arms embargo on Darfur by refraining from transferring weapons and ammunition to the parties to the conflict.
- Expand and fully enforce the UN arms embargo to cover the entirety of Sudan, in light of the significant escalation of violence and its impact on civilians, and ensure adequate resourcing of the Panel of Experts to report on illicit arms transfers.
- Provide strong political support for ongoing International Criminal Court (ICC) investigations, urge all states to cooperate fully with and provide adequate resources to the ICC, and expand the Darfur referral to encompass crimes under international law committed throughout Sudan, including those arising from the current conflict.

■ TO THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

- Renew the mandate of the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan. Ensure that it, like other accountability mandates, is adequately resourced. Ensure the mission is empowered to continue investigating, publicly reporting on and preserving evidence of violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law across Sudan, including with expertise on sexual and gender-based violence and crimes against children, and in coordination with relevant accountability mechanisms.

■ TO THE OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT

- Prioritize Sudan as a situation of urgent concern and intensify your engagement with all parties to secure and implement time-bound action plans aimed at ending and preventing grave violations against children, including the safe release and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups.
- Mobilize international political attention and resources for child protection and reintegration efforts, including psycho-social support, family reunification, education access and community-based protection initiatives for children affected by armed conflict in Sudan.

■ TO THE OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT

- Prioritize Sudan as a situation of urgent concern by intensifying high-level engagement to secure time-bound commitments to end and prevent conflict-related sexual violence; strengthen monitoring and public reporting; and advocate for survivor-centred services and accountability in line with relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

■ TO THE STATES PARTIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

- Provide adequate political and financial support to enable investigations and prosecutions of crimes under international law committed in Sudan.
- Give full political backing for the ICC's work and oppose the sanctions imposed on the ICC by the USA, which affect all the Court's investigations, including in Darfur. Call on the UN Security Council to expand the referral of the situation in Darfur to cover crimes under international law committed in Sudan.

■ TO SUDAN'S INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

- Use all available diplomatic, political and economic leverage to ensure the SAF, the RSF and their allied forces agree to and implement a nationwide ceasefire accompanied by a sustainable framework for longer-term security and stability, human rights protection, justice and accountability. Regardless of progress towards a ceasefire, immediately call on all parties to the conflict to end attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure and ensure unrestricted, unhindered and immediate humanitarian access across Sudan, including in North Darfur.
- Prioritize robust actions towards protection of civilians, including by supporting efforts for the deployment of an international protection force to Sudan and joining the newly created coalition on atrocity prevention and ensuring it takes concrete action in response to ongoing violations.

- Call for all countries, including the United Arab Emirates (UAE), to respect the UN Security Council's arms embargo on Darfur by refraining from transferring weapons and ammunition to the SAF, RSF and other actors; in addition, work with the UN Security Council and others to expand and enforce the arms embargo regime that currently applies to Darfur to the rest of Sudan.
- Implement any domestic laws that would restrict arms sales to countries fuelling the conflict.
- Urgently increase funding for an inclusive humanitarian response in Sudan as well as in refugee camps in neighbouring countries, including dedicated support for child protection. This should include family tracing and reunification, psycho-social support, prevention of and response to child recruitment, sexual violence and other grave violations, reintegration for children formerly associated with armed actors, disability-inclusive and age-appropriate services, safe reporting and referral pathways, and emergency education. Child protection should be treated as a core part of the humanitarian response, not an optional add-on.
- Support and fund comprehensive, survivor-centred assistance for survivors of sexual violence, including comprehensive sexual and reproductive healthcare, clinical management of rape, psycho-social support, safe shelter and livelihood support. International partners should also fund efforts to combat stigma and provide flexible support to survivor-led groups and local women's organizations working directly with survivors.
- Exercise jurisdiction over crimes committed under international law in Sudan under the principle of universal and extraterritorial jurisdiction and open "structural investigations" into crimes under international law committed in Sudan; in parallel, ensure that those responsible for grave violations in Sudan do not find a safe haven in third states.
- Call for prompt, independent investigations and prosecutions of named commanders and other suspects identified in this report, including through international and domestic mechanisms.
- Provide sustained financial and political support to the three existing accountability mechanisms for Sudan, ensuring they have adequate resources to effectively carry out their mandates – the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan; ACHPR's Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights Situation in the Republic of the Sudan; and the ICC – and press for the expansion of the ICC's jurisdiction to international crimes committed in the whole of Sudan.
- Ensure protection and support for people fleeing Sudan, opening safe and regular pathways, and refrain from returning Sudanese nationals to Sudan or to any third country where they may be at risk of being returned to Sudan.

■ **TO CHILD PROTECTION ACTORS IN SUDAN, INCLUDING UNICEF, THE UN AND NGO PARTNERS**

- Scale up child protection services in high-risk and hard-to-reach areas, including psycho-social support, family tracing and reunification and reintegration programmes for children formerly associated with armed forces and armed groups.
- Ensure all child protection responses are disability-inclusive, age-appropriate and accessible to displaced and marginalized children.
- Strengthen community-based early warning and protection mechanisms and ensure safe, confidential and child sensitive reporting, referral and response pathways for violations against children, including sexual violence, with safeguards against stigma, discrimination and retaliation.
- Advocate for sustained humanitarian access, protection of civilians, and increased funding for child protection programming.
- Support continuity of education through emergency learning programmes, temporary learning spaces, school materials, and advocacy for safe access to education for conflict-affected children.

■ **TO ALL COUNTRIES SENDING ARMS, AMMUNITION AND OTHER SUPPLIES TO PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT**

- Immediately cease supplies of all arms and ammunition to all parties to the Sudan conflict, including the direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer of arms and military materiel, related technologies, parts and components, technical assistance, training, and financial or other assistance.
- All states should stop transferring arms to the UAE until the UAE guarantees that none will be re-exported to Sudan or to other embargoed destinations, and that all its past breaches of the UN Security Council's arms embargoes are thoroughly investigated and perpetrators brought to account.

ANNEX I

A list of reported deaths from Abu Zerega town and surrounding villages during the November and December 2024 attacks by the RSF, shared with Amnesty International by a resident of the town. Information regarding child deaths are in **bold**.

	FULL NAME IN ARABIC	FULL NAME IN ENGLISH	AGE	SEX	VILLAGE / NEIGHBOURHOOD
1	عبدالله يونس اسحق	Abdallah Younis Issac	22	M	Adam Niel Village
2	هارون يونس اسحق	Haroun Younis Issac	26	M	Adam Niel Village
3	الصادق محمود عبدلكريم	Alsadig Mahmmoud Abdalkareem	27	M	Alsalam Neighbourhood
4	ادم يونس اسحق	Adam Younis Issac	31	M	Alsalam Neighbourhood
5	محمد خميس جديد	Mohammed Khamis Jadid	68	M	Alsalam Neighbourhood
6	ابكر علي حامد خاطر	Abaker Ali Hamid Khatir	47	M	Adoum Neighbourhood
7	محجوب عبدالله حامد خميس	Mahjoub Abdallah Hamid Khamis	39	M	Adoum Neighbourhood
8	سيف محجوب عبدالله حامد	Saif Mahjoub Abdallah Hamid	40	M	Sherio Village
9	إسماعيل محمد قاني هاشم	Ismail Mohammed Gani Hashem	49	M	Lil Village
10	عباس ابكر إسماعيل	Abbas Abaker Ismail	56	M	Hurra Village
11	بابكر عبدالرحمن مصطفى	Babikir Abdalrahman Mustafa	46	M	Hurra Village
12	يعقوب خاطر علي نور	Yagoub Khatir Ali Nour	37	M	Omda Village
13	مختار احمد سليمان	Mukhtar Ahmed Suliman	35	M	Imda Village
14	محمد هري بخيت عبدو	Mohammed Harri Bakhit Abdo	34	M	Alnaseem Neighbourhood North
15	محمد ادم عيسى	Mohammed Adam Issa	30	M	Alnaseem Neighbourhood East
16	يحيى اسماعيل خميس عبدالسلام	Yahya Ismail Khamis Abdalsalam	45	M	Lil Village
17	ابراهيم خميس خاطر عربي	Ibrahim Khamis Khatir Arbi	40	M	Lil Village
18	عبدالله حسن حسب الله	Abdallah Hassan Hassaballah	41	M	Alnaseem Neighbourhood North
19	عبدالله بشر هارون	Abdallah Basher Haroun	57	M	Omda Village
20	عثمان ادم شميين	Osman Adam Shomain	50	M	Yagoub Village
21	ادم ادريس مادبو	Adam Idriss Madibu	53	M	Alsalam Neighbourhood
22	حافظ موسى محمد ادم	Hafiz Musa Mohammed Adam	43	M	Ahmed Nimir Village

	FULL NAME IN ARABIC	FULL NAME IN ENGLISH	AGE	SEX	VILLAGE / NEIGHBOURHOOD
23	نورالدين صالح ابراهيم	Nour Aldeen Salih Ibrahim	37	M	Alnaseem Neighbourhood North
24	كمال حبيب ادم علي	Kamal Habib Adam Ali	39	M	Omda Village
25	محمد يوسف سليمان محمود	Mohammed Yousif Suliman Mahmoud	29	M	Abu Naiya Village
26	فرحان محمد ابراهيم	Farhan Mohammed Ibrahim	54	M	Daim Silk Village
27	ادم احمد زكريا توم	Adam Ahmed Zakaria Toun	22	M	Abakar Village
28	محمد جدو اسحق زبير	Mohammed Jido Issac Zubair	27	M	Abakar Village
29	محمد هارون محمد جبريل	Mohammed Haroun Mohammed Gibreel	17	M	Lammam Village
30	هارون محمد موسى	Haroun Mohammed Musa	48	M	Lammam Village
31	مبارك سالم هارون داؤود	Mubarak Salem Haroun Dawoud	33	M	Fadul Village
32	محمد يعقوب جمعة هارون وادي	Mohammed Yagoub Juma Harounwadi	70	M	Adam Niel Village
33	عبدالحميد جمعة هارون وادي	Abdalhameed Juma Harounwadi	72	M	Adam Niel Village
34	شيخ الدين حامد قناوي	Sheikh Aldeen Hamid Ginawi	75	M	Adam Niel Village
35	عبدالرحمن احمد عبدالله حامد	Abdallahman Ahmed Abdallah Hamid	71	M	Alsoug Neighbourhood
36	رشيد ابوه جلبه نهار	Rashid Abu Jalba Nahar	32	M	Secondary Neighbourhood
37	ادم محمد جمعة نهار	Adam Mohammed Juma Nahar	28	M	Abu Naiya Village
38	بابكر تابت حران	Babekir Tabit Haran	48	M	Abu Naiya Village
39	عمر يونس محمد ماينيس	Omer Younis Mohammed Maynis	53	M	Arou Village
40	عبدالمجيد عبدالله جدو حسب الله	AbdalMajid Abdallah Jido Hassaballah	29	M	Azhmed Nimir Village
41	محمد عبدالكريم محمد فضل	Mohammed Abdalkareem Mohammed Fadul	27	M	Yagoub Village
42	حافظ محمد جدو ادم	Hafiz Mohammed Jido Adam	31	M	Yagoub Village
43	مبارك محمد ادم دفع الله	Mubarak Mohammed Dafallah	42	M	Yagoub Village
44	ابكر عمر موسى امام	Abaker Omer Musa Imam	38	M	Yagoub Village
45	سليمان يعقوب موسى امام	Suliman Yagoub Musa Imam	42	M	Yagoub Village
46	حسب الكريم ابراهيم محمود	Hassab Alkareem Ibrahim Mahmoud	33	M	Musa Imam Village
47	ادم ادوم تبين	Adam Adoum Tibin	29	M	Musa Imam Village
48	عبدالمنعم محمد عبدالرحمن محمد	AbdalMounim Mohammed Abdallahman Mohammed	18	M	Tamal Desh Village
49	اصيل ابراهيم اسماعيل محمد	Aseel Ibrahim Ismail Mohammed	17	M	Tamal Desh Village
50	متوكل ابكر يونس	Mutawakil Abaker Younis	21	M	Tamal Desh Village

	FULL NAME IN ARABIC	FULL NAME IN ENGLISH	AGE	SEX	VILLAGE / NEIGHBOURHOOD
51	نور الدين محمد موسى	Nour Aldeen Mohammed Musa	43	M	Tamal Desh Village
52	سمير صالح ادريس	Samir Salih Idriss	28	M	Abakar Village
53	موسى ابراهيم عثمان	Musa Ibrahim Osman	58	M	Musa Village
54	عبدالله ابراهيم اسحق	Abdallah Ibrahim Issac	50	M	Ummtretir Village
55	احمد محمد جمعة	Ahmed Mohammed Juma	48	M	Ummtretir Village
56	مبارك عبدالرحمن محمد ابراهيم	Mubarak Abdalrahman Mohammed Ibrahim	22	M	Ummtretir Village
57	محمد ادم ابوه	Mohammed Adam Abu	55	M	Ummtretir Village
58	سليمان ادم خميس	Suliman Adam Khamis	48	M	Um Sadar Village
59	ابراهيم شريف امام	Ibrahim Sharief Imam	30	M	Miski Village
60	محمد ابراهيم عيسى	Mohammed Ibrahim Issa	32	M	Um Slal Village
61	سيف الدين عبدالله احمد	Saif Aldeen Abdallah Ahmed	49	M	Ahmed Nour Village
62	النور زكريا عبدالوهاب	Alnour Zakaria Abdalwahab	57	M	Omer Village
63	ابراهيم جدو خليل	Ibrahim Jido Khalil	42	M	Omer Village
64	عمر يحيى اتيتم	Omer Yahya Ateem	55	M	Omer Village
65	محمد يحيى اتيتم	Mohammed Yahya Ateem	64	M	Abu Naiya Village
66	ادريس علي ادم	Idriss Ali Adam	68	M	Abu Naiya Village
67	التوم حسين هارون	Altoum Hussain Haroun	24	M	Abu Naiya Village
68	ادم يوسف علي	Adam Yousif Ali	14	M	Abu Dewail Village
69	ابكر حامد بقري	Abaker Hamid Bagary	37	M	Abu Naiya Village
70	ادم محمد عبدالقادر احمد	Adam Mohammed Abdalgadir Ahmed	32	M	Alsoug Neighbourhood
71	عبدالحميد عبدالرحمن جابر شرف الدين	Abdalhameed Abdalrahman Jabir Sharaf Aldeen	38	M	Alnaseem Neighbourhood
72	الدومة ادم عبدالله الطاهر	Aldouma Adam Abdallah Altahir	31	M	Aldoum Neighbourhood
73	عبدالله يعقوب عثمان	Abdallah Yagoub Osman	17	M	Aldoum Neighbourhood
74	بدر ابراهيم محمددين	Badr Ibrahim Mhammedain	19	M	Alsoug Neighbourhood
75	طورين عبدالله حامد	Tourain Abdallah Hamid	34	M	Kabga Village
76	عبدالرحمن ادريس	Abdalrahman Idriss	75	M	Kotlla Village
77	تيتي عبدالرحمن ادريس	Titi Abdalrahman Idriss	32	M	Kotlla Village
78	عمدة اسحق عمدة جمعة	Omda Issac Omda Juma	4	M	Kotlla Village
79	حميدة اسحق عمدة جمعة	Hamida Issac Omda Juma	6	F	Kotlla Village

	FULL NAME IN ARABIC	FULL NAME IN ENGLISH	AGE	SEX	VILLAGE / NEIGHBOURHOOD
80	عصام داؤود اسحق حسين	Issam Dawoud Issac Hussain	27	M	Alsalam Neighbourhood
81	موسى ابكر خميس	Musa Abaker Khamis	59	M	Zagolona Village
82	جبر الله عبدالله وادي	Jaberallah Abdallah Wadi	65	M	Arou Village
83	ياسين	Yassin	41	M	Ahmed Nimir Village
84	التوم عبدالله عبدالله	Altoum Abdallah Abdallah	43	M	Zagolona Village
85	مختار ادريس عثمان	Mukhtar Idriss Osman	40	M	Hille Yagoub
86	امل زكريا محمد ادم	Amel Zakaria Mohammed Adam	16	F	Ahmed Nimir Village
87	سليمان حسن حامد بشارة	Suliman Hassan Hamid Bushara	33	M	Alsoug Neighbourhood
88	بشير يحيى اتييم	Bashir Yahya Ateem	55	M	Abu Naiya Village
89	بحر الدين محمد علي	Bahr Aldeen Mohammed Ali	23	M	Omda Village
90	عمر عبدالكريم محمد ادم	Omer Abdalkareem Mohammed Adam	49	M	Omda Village
91	صلاح الدين موسى ابكر احمد	Salah Aldeen Musa Abaker Ahmed	37	M	Omda Village
92	ابراهيم عيسى محمد احمد	Ibrahim Issa Mohammed Ahmed	40	M	Alsalam Neighbourhood
93	يعقوب عبدالحميد عبدالكريم	Yagoub Abdalhameed Abdalkareem	60	M	Alsalam Neighbourhood
94	ادم موسى وادي ابراهيم	Adam Musa Wadi Ibrahim	45	M	Alsalam Neighbourhood
95	هرون ادم حسن	Haroun Adam Hassan	53	M	Um Gidabu Village
96	اسماعيل عبدالله ابراهيم	Ismail Abdallah Ibrahim	43	M	Aldoum Village
97	عبدالكريم عبدالله الطاهر	Abdalkareem Abdallah Altahir	37	M	Aldoum Village
98	ابراهيم ادم احمد محمد	Ibrahim Adam Ahmed Mohammed		M	Aldoum Village
99	عبود دفع الله	Abboud Dafallah	38	M	Aldoum Village
100	هري محمد احمد	Harri Mahmoud Ahmed	37	M	Arou Village
101	عبدالكريم جمعة علي	Albdalkareem Juma Ali	26	M	Aldoum Village
102	عزالدين جمعة	Ezzadeen Juma	36	M	Alsoug Neighbourhood
103	يعقوب زكريا التوم	Yagoub Zakaria Altoum	50	M	Lammam Village
104	نصر الدين محمد ادم احمد	Naser Aldeen Mohammed Adam Ahmed	37	M	Lammam Village
105	عمارة عمر يونس محمد	Amara Omer Younis Mohammed	15	F	Adam Niel Village
106	محمد ادم الطاهر خريف	Mohammed Adam Altahir Khareef	50	M	Lammam Village
107	عبدالله مختار بخيت	Abdallah Mukhtar Bakhit	69	M	Rekhwea Village
108	محمد ادريس	Mohammed Idriss	32	M	Dar el Naim Village

	FULL NAME IN ARABIC	FULL NAME IN ENGLISH	AGE	SEX	VILLAGE / NEIGHBOURHOOD
109	عبدالرحيم موسى	Abdalahim Musa	27	M	Sanana Village
110	نمة عبدالله خليل	Nama Abdallah Khalil	62	M	Alsoug Neighbourhood
111	ابراهيم سليمان عيسى	Ibrahim Suliman Issa	75	M	Rekhwea Village
112	عبدالمجيد ابكر محمد	Abdalmajeed Abaker Mohammed	56	M	Rekhwea Village
113	مازن عبدالمجيد ابكر	Mazin Abdalmajeed Abaker	12	M	Rekhwea Village
114	فكي يونس	Faki Younis	55	M	Rekhwea Village
115	بثينة ادم عبدالرسول	Buthayna Adam Abdalrasoul	53	F	Abakar Village
116	محمد صالح سنين عبدالله	Mohammed Salih Senain Abdallah	80	M	Adam Rujal Village
117	مازن احمد اي عبدالله	Mazin Ahmday Abdallah	14	M	Rekhwea Village
118	مبارك هارون جمعة نهار	Mubarak Haroun Juma Nahar	31	M	Alnaseem North Neighbourhood
119	كمال هارون جمعة نهار	Kamal Haroun Juma Nahar	42	M	Alnaseem North Neighbourhood
120	حمادة صالح عبدالرحمن	Hamada Salih Abdalrahman	34	M	Alnaseem East Neighborhood
121	محمد عبدالله جبريل	Mohammed Abdallah Gebreel	95	M	Alsoug Neighborhood
122	يعقوب	Yagoub	39	M	Dar el Naim

ANNEX II

A list of reported deaths from Dar el Naim, Grawit Basham and surrounding villages during the March 2025 attacks by the RSF. Information regarding child deaths are in **bold**.

	LOCATION	NAME
1	Dar el Naim	Timan Bashar Jali
2	Dar el Naim	Mahmoud Usman
3	Dar el Naim	Adam Yousuf Daoud
4	Dar el Naim	Abtahir Ahmad Hasabu
5	Dar el Naim	Ahmad Masham
6	Dar el Naim	Nura Atom Ali
7	Dar el Naim	Ahmad Hassan
8	Dar el Naim	Abdallah Mohammad Sharab
9	Gileidad	Mohammed Adam Ahmad Abbas
10	Gileidad	Mahmoud Ishak Abdulrahman
11	Gileidad	Yunis Mohammedain Ahmed Ummar
12	Gileidad	Ali Yousuf Ali Haroun
13	Gileidad	Mohammed Idris Juma
14	Gileidad	Mahedain Ali Jehdo
15	Gileidad	Abdulkarim Ali Khamis
16	Grawit Basham	Doctor Abdulkarim
17	Grawit Basham	Isaac Ali
18	Grawit Basham	Mohammed Adam Ahmad Abbas
19	Torundi Village	Kamal Abdulrahman Ahmad Mohammed, husband
20	Torundi Village	Mohammed Mahjoub Isa Ali
21	Torundi Village	Adoumi Mohammed Saleh Jabal

ANNEX III

A list of reported deaths from the 19 September 2025 strike on El Safiya mosque in El Fasher, shared with Amnesty International by a human rights defender from the area. Information regarding child deaths are in **bold**.

	NAME IN ARABIC	NAME (AND POSITION) IN ENGLISH
1	الملك شريف ادم طاهر - (ملك عموم دار سويني)	Sharief Adam Tahir (Sharief of Dar Sowaini)
2	العمدة ادم ود الشيخ (رئيس الإدارة الأهلية بمعسكر ابو شوك للنازحين)	Adam wad Alshaikh (Chief Omda of Abu Shouk Camp)
3	عمر إسحق سلك	Omer Issac Silik
4	حبيب إبراهيم عبد الرحمن	Habib Ibrahim Abdalrahman
5	أحمد ادم علي حسن (أمين حكومة ولاية وسط دارفور)	Ahmed Adam Ali Hassan (Secretary General of Central Darfur State)
6	معاوية حسن علي سعيد	Maweya Hasan Ali Said
7	مالك ادم إبراهيم احمد	Malik Adam Ibrahim Ahmed
8	حذيفة ادم إبراهيم	Huzaifa Adam Ibrahim
9	حمودة كدك	Hamouda Kadak
10	إسحق إبراهيم جمعة	Issac Ibrahim Juma
11	محمد جمعة سليمان	Mohammed Juma Suliman
12	محمد زكريا	Mohammed Zakaria
13	حسين النور ادم محمد	Hassan Alnour Adam Mohammed
14	سامي	Sami (Wad Alniel)
15	الحاج كشام علي نيل	Alhaj Kasham Niel
16	عبد الرحمن عبد الله وادي	Abdalrahman Abdallah Wadi
17	الفكي شين	Alfaki Shain
18	الأمين جرن	Alamien Jourun
19	انس صديق التوم	Anas Sidig Altoum
20	إبراهيم دفع الله موسى	Ibrahim Dafallah Musa
21	شريف شمين حمدان	Sharief Shomain Hamdan
22	موسى الدومة	Musa Aldouma
23	إسماعيل فضيل	Ismail Fedail
24	عبد الله إبراهيم ضحية	Abdallah Ibrahim Dahiya
25	محمد الحافظ حسن	Mohammed Alhafiz Hassan
26	د. آدم إبراهيم احمد	Dr. Adam Ibrahim Ahmed
27	حسان الرشيد	Hassan Alrasheed

	NAME IN ARABIC	NAME (AND POSITION) IN ENGLISH
28	عبد المجيد صالح سليمان تور	Abdalmajeed Salih Suliman Tour
29	محمد طاهر عيسى	Mohammed Tahir Issa
30	جلال إبراهيم نمير عطية	Jalal Ibrahim Nimir Attia
31	بدر محمد	Badr Mohammed
32	يحي	Yahya
33	التوم	Altoum
34	احمد ادم عيسى (عبدوش)	Ahmed Adam Issa (Abdoush)
35	عبد الرحمن هارون	Abdalrahman Haroun
36	محمود عبد العزيز	Mahmmoud Abdalaziz
37	محمد الضي	Mohammed Aldai
38	سليمان ادم احمد	Suliman Adam Ahmed
39	أسعد محمد عبدو	Assad Mohammed Abdo
40	محمد عبد الجبار	Mohammed Abdalgabar
41	خاميس زكريا عبد الله	Khamis Zakaria Abdallah
42	عثمان عبد الله النور	Osman Abdallah Alnour
43	حافظ محمد إبراهيم	Hafiz Mohammed Ibrahim
44	علي	Ali
45	أدم يحي شلوة	Adam Yahya Shawa
46	احمد محمد إبراهيم	Ahmed Mohammed Ibrahim
47	احمد إبراهيم	Ahmed Ibrahim
48	خريف ادريس جمعة	Kharief Idriss Juma
49	مصطفى علي محمد	Mustafa Ali Mohammed
50	بدر الدين ادريس عمر	Badr Aldien Idriss Omer
51	علي ابكر محمد صابون	Ali Abaker Mohammed Saboon
52	محمد علي ابكر	Mohammed Ali Abaker
53	احمد زكريا يوسف	Ahmed Zakaria Yousif
54	الصادق ود الجزيرة	Alsadig Wad Aljazera
55	مصعب	Musab
56	ادماي خليل	Admai Khalil
57	الطيب الأمين اسماعيل	Eltayeb Elamine Ismail



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CITY UNDER SIEGE, CHILDREN UNDER FIRE

RAPID SUPPORT FORCES' CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY IN NORTH DARFUR

More than three years into Sudan's brutal conflict, this report documents the Rapid Support Forces' siege and seizure of El Fasher, North Darfur, and grave crimes against civilians in and around the city. Based on eight months of investigation and 247 interviews, including with 39 children, Amnesty International finds that the RSF committed crimes against humanity, including murder, extermination, forcible transfer, imprisonment, torture, rape, sexual slavery, other forms of sexual violence, enslavement and persecution. In the Abu Zerega area, the RSF's destruction of predominantly Zaghawa villages is consistent with ethnic cleansing.

The report traces the RSF's campaign from attacks on villages around El Fasher, to the siege and starvation of civilians, and the mass killings, rape, torture and hostage-taking that accompanied the city's takeover in October 2025. It highlights the devastating impact on children, who were killed, injured, raped, abducted, forcibly recruited, detained, orphaned and displaced on a massive scale.

**THE REPORT CALLS FOR URGENT INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROTECT
CIVILIANS BY DEPLOYING AN INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION FORCE,
ENSURING AID REACHES REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PEOPLE,
STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY, SUPPORTING CHILD PROTECTION,
AND ENDING ARMS FLOWS TO THE PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT.**

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