

Sudan: Statement by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the armed conflict

The European Union (EU) strongly condemns the ongoing fighting in Sudan, as well as the continued refusal of the parties to the conflict to seek a peaceful solution. A lasting ceasefire must be brokered without delay to guarantee the protection of the people of Sudan, whose safety, security and unity continues to be endangered, and to allow space for mediation and an inclusive political dialogue to take place. Irrespective of the ceasefire, the EU calls on all actors to allow and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and to ensure safe, timely and unhindered access for humanitarian operations by all stakeholders.

The EU deplores the loss of lives and gross violations of international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law. The EU is particularly concerned about the reports of large-scale attacks on civilians and civilian areas, including on the basis of ethnicity, in particular in Darfur, with horrific reports of widespread sexual and gender based violence, targeted killings, forced displacement and steady weaponisation of militias. The opening of new battle fronts in South-Kordofan is also worrying. In such grave circumstances, ensuring protection of civilians and prevention of further atrocities must be our first priority. The EU reiterates the importance of compliance with international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles, and the need to urgently implement an immediate cessation of hostilities, without pre-conditions.

The EU expresses deep concern regarding the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation and salutes the work of health and humanitarian workers in providing humanitarian assistance to people in need. It is imperative to lift bureaucratic impediments to the humanitarian response, and to respect and protect humanitarian personnel.

With €256.4 million committed in 2023 for humanitarian and development assistance to Sudan, the EU reaffirms its steadfast support for, and solidarity with, the people of Sudan, especially women and young people who led a peaceful revolution four years ago. Their aspirations and demands for a better future remain a central focus of EU engagement. The EU will continue to engage with key partners, including Sudanese civilian and political figures as well as civil society actors, on a cessation of hostilities and a return to meaningful talks about a sustainable ceasefire and a credible peaceful solution to the conflict based on inclusive dialogue.

Regional protection is a vital lifeline for the millions of Sudanese who have been forced to flee the conflict. The EU commends states in the region for their ongoing reception of refugees, and values regional humanitarian assistance and peace efforts. The EU calls on neighbouring as well as transit countries to facilitate the delivery of immediate, unhindered, efficient and unconditional humanitarian assistance and protection. Furthermore, the EU will continue to support collective regional and international coordinated mediation efforts under the leadership of the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to urgently restore peace and contribute to stability and the restoration of the political process.

The EU calls on all external actors to play a constructive role in any mediation process. Any external interference which contributes to the prolongation of the ongoing conflict will further exacerbate the already catastrophic humanitarian situation in the country and undermine regional stability.

In order to halt the cycle of impunity, those responsible for atrocities must be identified and held to account. To that end, the EU is supporting the gathering of evidence on gross human rights violations. The EU stands ready to consider the use of all means at its disposal, including restrictive measures, to contribute to putting an end to the conflict and encourage peace.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina¹, the potential candidate country Georgia, the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Armenia align themselves with this statement.

¹ North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and

Association Process.

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