



Florence Model United Nations

Research Guide

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Committee: Security Council

Topic: Topic 2: Addressing reports of ethnic violence in Sudan

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I. Introduction

Sudan has been characterized by violent conflicts rooted in complex historical and political dynamics, particularly in regions like Darfur. These conflicts often involve disputes between government forces and various rebel groups recruiting from diverse ethnic and regional backgrounds. The situation is further complicated by the involvement of militias like the Janjaweed, accused of genocidal acts, and the division of rebel groups into rival factions.

A major characteristic of the conflict is ethnic targeting and violence against women. For example, in reports by Aljazeera, there have been killings, beatings, and abductions of women from western Sudan, Darfur, and South Sudan by armed forces affiliated with the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF). Similarly, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have been accused of committing war crimes and targeting people based on their tribal affiliations. The United States has formally declared that genocide has been committed by the RSF militia in Sudan. The civil conflict in Sudan has resulted in approximately 150,000 deaths and displaced over 11 million people. The UN has declared the displacement in Sudan as the largest crisis of its kind in the world.

The UN Security Council (UNSC) has been involved in addressing the crisis in Sudan, particularly through peacekeeping operations like the AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The UNSC has focused on protecting displaced individuals, supporting local conflict-resolution mechanisms, and ensuring a safer environment for peacekeepers. However, the conflict is fueled by hate speech, social media propaganda, and the influx of weapons into Sudan. There are also reports of sexual violence and exploitation perpetrated by fighters from both the SAF and RSF. This issue requires immediate action, as the ongoing conflict continues to endanger the well-being and lives of various Sudanese groups.

II. Timeline of key events:

2003-2005: Darfur Genocide. The Sudanese government and Janjaweed militias carried out a campaign of ethnic cleansing against non-Arab populations, resulting in approximately 300,000 deaths and millions displaced.

April 15, 2023: Fighting breaks out between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), worsening existing ethnic tensions.

May 2023: Escalation of Violence. Reports of ethnically motivated attacks, particularly against the Masalit community in West Darfur. The RSF is accused of committing such attacks, including killings and sexual violence.

June 2023: Human Rights Watch documents mass killings and ethnic cleansing in El Geneina, West Darfur. Survivors report systematic targeting of the Masalit people by RSF forces.

November 2023: The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination calls for an immediate ceasefire and urges Sudan to prevent further ethnic violence and hate speech.

January 2024: The UN reports over 11 million people displaced due to the conflict, with millions facing food insecurity and lack of access to basic services.

April 2024: The UN Security Council discusses the situation in Sudan, emphasizing the need for targeted sanctions against those responsible for human rights abuses and calling for increased humanitarian assistance.

June 2024: Reports indicate ongoing ethnic violence, with armed groups continuing attacks on civilian populations. The situation remains dire, with growing calls for international intervention.

October 2024: Various human rights organizations urge the international community to hold perpetrators accountable for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the conflict.

December 2024: Mediators begin peace talks between the Sudanese government and rebel groups in an effort to end the violence and address the humanitarian crisis.

III. Definition of Key Terms

a) Ethnic Violence

Ethnic violence refers to acts of aggression, hostility, or persecution directed against individuals or groups based on their ethnic identity. In the context of Sudan, this violence often occurs in armed conflict, massacres, and systematic discrimination against certain ethnic groups, particularly in regions like Darfur.

b) Genocide

Genocide is defined by the United Nations as acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group. This includes killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm, and deliberately inflicting conditions calculated to bring about its physical destruction. The situation in Sudan has led to allegations of genocidal acts against specific ethnic communities.

c) Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Internally displaced persons are individuals who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict, violence, human rights violations, or natural disasters but remain within their country's borders. In Sudan, millions have become IDPs due to ongoing ethnic violence and armed conflict.

d) Rapid Support Forces (RSF)

The Rapid Support Forces are a paramilitary group in Sudan that emerged from the Janjaweed militias. They have been implicated in numerous human rights abuses and are accused of committing atrocities against civilians during conflicts in Darfur and other regions.

e) Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF)

The Sudanese Armed Forces is the national military of Sudan. It has been involved in various conflicts throughout the country and has faced accusations of complicity in ethnic violence and human rights violations against targeted populations.

f) Humanitarian Crisis

A humanitarian crisis occurs when there is a significant disruption of the social, economic, or political order that results in widespread suffering among a population. In Sudan, ongoing ethnic violence has led to severe humanitarian challenges, including food insecurity, lack of medical care, and displacement.

g) Peacekeeping Operations

Peacekeeping operations are missions established by international organizations such as the United Nations to help maintain peace and security in conflict-affected areas. In Sudan, peacekeeping efforts have included the AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), aimed at protecting civilians and facilitating humanitarian assistance.

h) Hate Speech

Hate speech refers to any form of communication that disparages or incites violence against individuals or groups based on attributes such as ethnicity, religion, or nationality. In Sudan, hate speech has been used as a tool to fuel ethnic tensions and justify acts of violence.

IV. General Overview

Key aspects of the conflict:

- Ethnic Targeting: There are reports of ethnically motivated attacks, particularly against the Masalit community in West Darfur. The RSF and allied militias are often identified as the forces behind these attacks.
- Crimes Against Humanity: The violence includes murder, torture, persecution, and forcible transfer of the civilian population. These acts are part of a widespread and systematic attack directed against the Massalit and other non-Arab populations.
- Specific Incidents:
 - In El Geneina, West Darfur, attacks by the RSF and allied militias from April to November 2023 resulted in the deaths of thousands and left hundreds of thousands as refugees.
 - A large-scale massacre occurred on June 15 when the RSF and its allies opened fire on a convoy of civilians trying to flee.
 - In Ardamata, a town in West Darfur, RSF forces and allied militias killed over 800 people in a multi-day rampage.
- Sexual Violence: Women and girls have been subjected to rape and other forms of sexual violence during these attacks.
- Destruction and Looting: The attackers have systematically destroyed critical civilian infrastructure, targeting neighborhoods and sites, including schools, in primarily Masalit displaced communities. They also engaged in looting on a grand scale and burned neighborhoods to the ground after emptying them of residents.
- UN Concerns: The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) has urged Sudan to address and prevent further escalation of ethnic violence, incitement to racial hatred, and racist hate speech.

The situation in Sudan is extreme, with civilians facing widespread displacement and sexual violence. The violence has raised alarms about potential genocide, with warnings that unchecked violence could prove worse than Darfur's previous cycle of killings. The UN is urging an end to ethnic violence and hate speech, calling for an immediate ceasefire.

V. Major Parties Involved and their Views

Sudan: is at the heart of a violent conflict involving its government and two main military groups. The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) are both fighting for power. The SAF wants to control the government, while the RSF, a paramilitary group with roots in the Janjaweed militias, has been accused of committing atrocities like ethnic cleansing against non-Arab communities, including the Masalit in Darfur. The Sudanese government is struggling to manage this crisis while facing international criticism.

The U.S.A: has been actively working to address the crisis through diplomacy and sanctions. It has condemned ethnic violence and called for accountability for war crimes committed by both the SAF and RSF. The U.S. has also urged neighboring countries and external actors, like the UAE, to stop supporting Sudan's warring factions. Additionally, it has labeled acts of violence in Darfur as genocide and continues to push for peace talks, though Sudanese military leaders have resisted these efforts.

The European Union: has imposed sanctions on groups linked to human rights abuses in Sudan, including entities associated with Russia's Wagner Group. EU officials have condemned violations of international law and demanded accountability for those responsible. However, the EU has faced criticism for not targeting specific individuals or organizations directly involved in the ongoing violence.

Russia: has been accused of supporting both sides of the conflict by providing weapons and training through groups like the Wagner Group. Russian backed companies have also been involved in gold mining and other resource extraction that helps fund Sudan's military factions. This involvement reflects Russia's broader strategic interests in Africa.

The UAE: has been accused of arming the RSF, although it denies direct involvement. Both the U.S. and UK have urged the UAE to stop providing support to Sudan's warring parties. These allegations highlight how external actors contribute to prolonging the conflict.

Chad, Libya, and South Sudan: have been drawn into the conflict due to their proximity and historical ties with Sudan. Chad has hosted hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing violence in Darfur but faces challenges managing this influx. Meanwhile, reports suggest that some of these countries may have provided logistical or military support to factions within Sudan.

The RSF: is a powerful paramilitary group led by Hemedti. It has been accused of organizing ethnic violence against non-Arab communities in Darfur. The RSF operates independently from Sudan's government and is financed by gold mining operations and foreign support. It seeks more power and autonomy but faces widespread condemnation for its role in war crimes.

The SAF: is Sudan's national army led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan. It is locked in a power struggle with the RSF but has also been accused of human rights abuses during its operations. The SAF portrays itself as a legitimate governing authority but faces significant challenges in restoring stability amid accusations of complicity in ethnic violence.

VI. Relevant UN Documents and Articles

1. UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) Decision (April 16, 2024): The CERD has urged Sudan to take immediate action to stop ethnic violence, incitement to racial hatred, and racist hate speech. They are calling for a ceasefire from the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), and their allied forces. The committee highlighted reports of attacks by the RSF and allied militias against the Masalit, Fur, and Zaghawa communities. These attacks include killings, assaults on displaced persons' camps, forced displacements, looting, and destruction of villages.
2. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD): The CERD called on all countries that are part of ICERD to fully respect their international obligations, especially those related to preventing and punishing genocide. They urged cooperation among nations to help end the violations happening in Sudan.
3. Reports from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): The UNHCR has collected vital data on displaced individuals and other important statistics regarding the conflict.
4. Reports from UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS): UNMISS has calculated various statistics about casualties and deployed UNMISS personnel (17,954 total deployed), providing valuable information on the current situation.

VII. Questions to Consider

- How do the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) exploit ethnic divisions for their own gain?
- What impact has the conflict had on civilian populations, including displacement and access to basic services?
- How have external actors, such as neighboring countries and international organizations, influenced the conflict in Sudan?
- What political reforms are necessary to promote inclusive governance and address the root causes of conflict in Sudan?
- What challenges exist in implementing a sustainable peace agreement, and how can these be addressed?

- **What are the potential consequences of inaction by the international community regarding the ongoing violence in Sudan?**

VIII. Conclusion

The situation in Sudan is dire and requires urgent attention from the international community. Ethnic violence, driven by long-standing tensions and power struggles between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), has led to a humanitarian crisis and poses a threat to regional stability. Reports of war crimes and potential genocide highlight the critical need for intervention.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) must prioritize the protection of civilians, especially vulnerable ethnic groups like the Masalit, Fur, and Zaghawa, who are experiencing targeted violence and displacement. This issue requires a thorough approach that includes increasing the UN's presence in Sudan, imposing sanctions on those responsible for human rights abuses, and ensuring accountability for past violence. Additionally, it is essential to address the root causes of ethnic tensions and promote inclusive governance for lasting peace. The international community should support efforts for reconciliation, transitional justice, and political reforms that encourage dialogue, respect for human rights, and equal opportunities for all Sudanese citizens.

The questions outlined in this guide are designed to help the Security Council analyze the situation thoughtfully and make informed decisions. By considering these issues and working together, member states can contribute to a sustainable resolution of the conflict and prevent further suffering in Sudan. The UNSC must act immediately, as the lives and futures of millions of Sudanese people depend on the Security Council's commitment to protect them.

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