CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Human Rights Council
Statement of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan at the 57th
Session of the Human Rights Council
10 September 2024

Statement delivered by Mr. Mohamed Chande Othman, Chair of the Fact-Finding Mission

Mr. President,
Excellencies,

I am pleased to present the report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan with my two colleagues, Ms. Mona Rishmawi and Ms. Joy Ngozi Ezeilo.

In discharging our mandate, we visited Chad, Kenya, and Uganda, to which we are grateful. We also held extensive consultations with Sudanese and international human rights defenders, experts, diplomats and conducted interviews with victims and eyewitnesses. We are grateful to all those who have engaged with us.

We sought to visit Sudan and engage with its Government, reaching out four times. Regrettably, no response was received. We remain open to such engagement.

Let me now share our main findings:

Our report found that both the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Response Forces (RSF), and their respective allied militias, have committed large-scale human rights and international humanitarian law violations, some of which may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Both have attacked civilians and civilian objects, including through airstrikes and heavy artillery shelling in densely populated areas, notably in Khartoum and Darfur. It has now engulfed most of Sudan, resulting in thousands of killings, injuries, extensive displacement and destruction of residential homes, hospitals, schools and other critical infrastructure, amounting to war crimes.

Both are responsible for violating children's rights, including through killing and maiming.

Both engaged in a pattern of arbitrary arrest and detention as well as torture and ill-treatment in areas under their control, also amounting to war crimes.

Both have imposed broad internet shutdowns and curtailed freedom of information and expression, including through attacks on media, journalists and human rights defenders.
Both obstructed access to humanitarian aid for civilians in need.

The RSF and its allied militias have also engaged in other war crimes and crimes against humanity. These include widespread sexual and gender-based violence, rape, sexual slavery, abduction, and recruitment and use of children in hostilities. They have also systematically engaged in pillage and looting. And they committed large-scale attacks based on ethnicity, especially against the Masalit community in El Geneina, including killings, torture, rape, and persecution.

Let me now stress our main recommendations:

- First. since the current conflict erupted in April last year, thousands were killed and injured, nearly 8 million internally displaced, 2.1 million refugees, and 25.6 million facing acute hunger. A sustainable ceasefire that would also enable the effective delivery of the much-needed humanitarian assistance is needed. We applaud the various efforts aimed at bringing the parties to negotiations and urge the negotiators to consider our findings and recommendations.

- Second, the deployment of an independent and impartial force with a mandate to protect civilians is necessary.

- Third, all states and entities must comply with the existing arms embargo imposed in Darfur pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1556. This embargo must now cover the whole of Sudan.

- Fourth, the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court should be expanded to cover all Sudan. Given the focus of the ICC on those most responsible, a separate international judicial mechanism working in complementarity with the ICC is also needed.

- Fifth, a dedicated entity in the form of a victim's support and reparations office should be established immediately.

Thank you, Mr. President

President Mohamed Chande Othman, Chair of the Fact-Finding Mission
Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, Expert Member of the Fact-Finding Mission Mona Rishmawi
Expert Member of the Fact-Finding Mission