



“THEY RAPED ALL OF US”

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SUDAN

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



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First published in 2020

by Amnesty International Ltd

Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street

London WC1X 0DW, UK

Index: AFR 54/9201/2025

Original language: English

amnesty.org



Cover photo: Women carrying belongings walk down a street in Omdurman, the capital's twin city in Sudan, on May 29, 2023. (Photo by -/AFP via Getty Images)

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GLOSSARY

WORD	DESCRIPTION
ACHPR	African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
ACJPS	African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies
CAT	Convention Against Torture
CVAW	Combating Violence Against Women and Children
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
RSF	Rapid Support Forces
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces
SIHA	Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa
SORD	Sudanese Organization for Research and Development
SMSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UN	United Nations
UN FFM	United Nations Fact-Finding Mission
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“...Four RSF soldiers came to my house. One of the men grabbed me and said he wanted to rape me. I tried to resist but he hit me with his gun and said I am going to rape your small daughter if you resist. Two of them then tied my hands together and they removed my clothes. Three of them raped me while my daughter was watching. It was so humiliating. I did not go to any hospital because I did not want anyone to know about it. You are the first people I am sharing this with. I feel broken”

“Hamida”, 30, widow and survivor of gang-rape from Madani, Gezira state.

The escalating conflict in Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) that erupted in April 2023 is devastating for civilians and continues to decimate the country. Tens of thousands of people have been killed and many more injured. Over 11 million people fled their homes including 8.6 million who are internally displaced. Over three million others are refugees in neighbouring countries living in dire conditions. Sudan is currently the largest displacement crisis in the world.

The conflict has been particularly devastating for women like “Hamida” who have been subjected to widespread sexual violence by the RSF. In this report, Amnesty International documents 16 incidents of conflict-related rape and other forms of sexual violence committed by members of the RSF against women and girls in Khartoum, and other towns and villages in Gezira, north and south Darfur states. These include eleven incidents of rape and gang rape against 36 women and girls, sexual slavery of two women, and two incidents of sexual assault of four women and girls. All the cases of rape and other sexual violence took place between 17 April 2023 and late October 2024. The RSF have carried out widespread sexual violence across towns and villages in Sudan to humiliate, assert control, and displace communities.

According to Amnesty International documentation and that of others, RSF soldiers raped and gang-raped women and girls in Khartoum and its sister cities of Bahri and Omdurman. They raped women and girls inside their homes or abducted and raped them in other residential houses where the RSF resided. Those raped and gang-raped include women medical workers who were also forced to treat RSF injured soldiers. Two women who resisted rape were killed. For this report, Amnesty International documented two instances

in which the RSF subjected two women in Khartoum to conditions of sexual slavery, holding them captive for several days—one of them more than 30.

In Gezira state, Amnesty International documented the rape and gang rape by RSF of five women and girls in their homes mostly in the presence of family members and in some cases after robbing them of their valuables. In one case, the RSF soldiers shot and killed a woman after gang-raping her. In another case, a woman had a child as a result of rape by an RSF soldier and her husband subsequently left her.

The RSF also raped and gang-raped women and girls in the Darfur region. In 2023, Amnesty International found that RSF and allied militias carried out rape and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls in Darfur. For this report, Amnesty International documented rape, gang-rape and sexual assault against women and girls including internally displaced and pregnant women. In one case, the RSF carried out mass rape of 20 women and girls in Um Shanabat village, north Darfur.

In addition to rape and gang-rape, RSF soldiers also subjected women and girls to other forms of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment including beatings, cutting them with sharp blades and pouring hot and melting liquid on their body, inflicting women with severe bodily injuries. The widespread sexual and other violence by the RSF in the current conflict is happening against the backdrop of decades of impunity for such crimes where perpetrators went unpunished.

Survivors of sexual violence have suffered both physical injuries and psychological trauma. Some developed health conditions including kidney pains, irregular periods and walking difficulties. Some survivors also suffered psychological trauma and have developed occasional memory loss because of rape. None of the survivors of sexual violence interviewed for this research had access to post rape-care services or reported the cases to authorities. It was difficult for them to access health facilities and the police because of the ongoing fighting, and they also feared stigmatization and reprisals. Currently, about 80 percent of hospitals in the most conflict-affected areas in Sudan are not functional.

The report is based on interviews with 30 people including 16 survivors of sexual violence, five relatives of survivors, and five human rights investigators who are closely monitoring the Sudan conflict, among others. The interviews took place between 18 November 2024 and 28 February 2025. Most were conducted between 18 and 25 November 2024, in the Kiryandongo refugee settlement in Uganda, which hosts thousands of Sudanese refugees. Some were done remotely via internet-based call applications. The number of cases presented in this report represent a fraction of the total number of sexual violence cases documented by others including by service providers but are emblematic of the nature of violence Sudanese women and girls faced in the past two years.

Rape, gang-rape, sexual slavery, and other forms of sexual violence committed in the context of armed conflict are serious violations of international humanitarian law that amount to war crimes. They also violate several human rights, including the rights to equality and non-discrimination, to physical integrity, and the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment. The sexual violence cases documented in this report occurred in the context of the ongoing non-international armed conflict in Sudan and amount to war crimes. In addition, the evidence collected for this report and that reported previously by Amnesty International and by other human rights organizations and UN mechanisms since the onset of the conflict in Sudan in April 2023 suggests that the acts of rape and sexual slavery may have been committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack by the RSF against the civilian population of Sudan. This evidence suggests further that the rape of women and girls was itself carried out by the RSF in a manner that was both widespread and systematic. Any acts of rape carried out in this context, where the perpetrator was aware of the wider context, may amount to crimes against humanity.

The response from international and regional actors to the suffering of Sudanese civilians has been reprehensible and women and girls bear the brunt. For nearly two years, they have been neglected and ignored during this devastating conflict. Diplomatic efforts have so far failed to end violations, protect civilians, provide sufficient humanitarian aid, or hold the perpetrators of crimes to account. It is time for Sudan's international and regional partners to put more pressure on the warring parties to end sexual violence, ensure justice and accountability and provide support mechanisms for survivors of sexual violence, including comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services.

1. METHODOLOGY

This report documents sexual violence against women and girls by the RSF between April 2023 when fighting broke out in Sudan and late October 2024. The cases highlighted in the report cover only Khartoum, Gezira, and south and north Darfur states.

This report only documents cases of sexual violence in a small proportion of the population affected by the conflict. Accessing Sudan where most survivors remain is difficult due to insecurity. Remote interviewing of people still inside Sudan is a major challenge due to the widespread telecommunication blackout. For this reason, Amnesty International investigators were only able to interview survivors who managed to flee Sudan. For this research, Amnesty International preferred interviewing survivors of sexual violence in person and limited remote interviewing of survivors to a minimum. As outlined below, many survivors of sexual violence prefer not to report or speak about their experiences due to the stigma associated including shaming from community and close family members.

The report is based on research between 18 November 2024 and 28 February 2025. Most interviews were conducted between 18 and 25 November 2024, in Kiryandongo refugee settlement in Uganda where thousands of Sudanese refugees are staying. Some were done remotely via internet-based call applications with people inside and outside Sudan mostly in Kenya and Uganda. Most of the interviews were in Arabic, some via interpretation, and others in English. Two Amnesty International investigators carried out the interviews, mostly together but sometimes separately interviewing individual interviewees one-on-one.

Amnesty International interviewed 30 people for this research. Interviewees included 16 survivors of sexual violence, five relatives of survivors including two witnesses, five human rights investigators who are closely monitoring the Sudan conflict and four service providers who were providing medical and psychosocial support and assistance for women subjected to sexual violence. In addition, Amnesty International reviewed media and other reports from human rights organizations and from the UN including reports by the Independent International Fact Finding Mission for Sudan, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNICEF and UN Women.

Amnesty International investigators informed interviewees about the research's nature and purpose, the possible consequences of the interview, and how the information they shared would be used. All interviews with survivors of sexual violence were carried out in a set-up that ensured their privacy and security. Informed oral consent was obtained from all the interviewees before each interview and interviewees were all provided the opportunity to stop if they wished at any time during the interview. Only one survivor ended the interview after informed consent was obtained because they were tired. Survivors were selected through trusted community leaders who were already providing services to them.

All survivors were given the opportunity to be interviewed by male or female investigators with two survivors preferring to be interviewed by a female investigator. 13 of the 16 survivors were interviewed in person and only three were interviewed remotely via secure apps. No financial incentive was offered to interviewees to speak with Amnesty International. Where interviewees had to travel to meet the investigators, Amnesty International reimbursed their transport expenses.

Amnesty International referred survivors to medical or psychological support services, as appropriate. The names of certain individuals are included in the report with their express consent, but pseudonyms were used to conceal the identity of all survivors and relatives of survivors of sexual violence. Certain identifying information was also removed to preserve the dignity and the privacy of the survivors and some for fear of reprisals. Survivors were asked what they wanted the duty bearers to do, and their views are reflected in the report as appropriate.

On 24 March 2025, Amnesty International wrote to the RSF sharing its findings and requesting information about the conduct of their forces in relation to specific allegations documented in this report. At the time of publication, the organization has not received any response from the RSF.

2. BACKGROUND

In April 2023, fighting started in Sudan's capital, Khartoum, between the SAF, led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the RSF paramilitaries, led by General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (also known as Hemedti).¹ Over the last two years, the clashes spread to other areas of Sudan, including the Darfur region, North and South Kordofan, Gezira and others.² The conflict came after months of growing tension between the SAF and RSF during negotiations surrounding a new transitional government and security force reforms, among other issues.³

The conflict continues to be fueled by an almost unimpeded supply of weapons from states and corporate actors around the world to parties to the conflict.⁴ Despite the United Nations Security Council arms embargo on the Darfur region which has been in place for two decades, recently manufactured weapons and military equipment from Russia, China, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates and others are being imported in large quantities into the country including to Darfur.⁵

Many civilians have been killed and injured as members of the SAF and RSF, often using explosive weapons with wide area effects, launched frequent and indiscriminate attacks in and from densely populated civilian neighborhoods and deliberately targeted civilians in Darfur, Gezira and Khartoum states.⁶ Both SAF and RSF have also caused massive civilian casualties across the country through indiscriminate shelling of residential areas and through airstrikes leading to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people who were already displaced by previous conflicts.⁷ According to the UN, more than 27,000 people were killed nationwide between April 2023 and December 2024.⁸ Over 11 million fled their homes including 8.6 million people who are internally displaced and over 3 million who fled to neighboring countries, making Sudan the scene of the largest displacement crisis in the world at present.⁹

The RSF is a paramilitary force that was formed by former president Omar al-Bashir from the Janjaweed militia – a notorious force that had since 2003 been documented to have committed various crimes under

¹ Amnesty International 'Death Came To Our Home': War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>

² Amnesty International, "New Weapons Fuelling the Sudan Conflict, Expanding existing arms embargo across Sudan to protect civilians" 25 July 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2024/07/new-weapons-fuelling-the-sudan-conflict/>

³ International Crisis Group, "Stopping Sudan's Descent into Full-Blown Civil War", 20 April 2023. [crisisgroup.org/africa/hornofafrica/sudan/stopping-sudans-descent-full-blown-civil-war](https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/hornofafrica/sudan/stopping-sudans-descent-full-blown-civil-war). New Lines Magazine, "In Sudan, a Deadly Reckoning for Rival Forces", 17 April 2023. [newlinesmag.com/reportage/in-sudan-a-deadly-reckoning-for-rival-forces/](https://www.newlinesmag.com/reportage/in-sudan-a-deadly-reckoning-for-rival-forces/).

⁴ Amnesty International, "New Weapons Fuelling the Sudan Conflict, Expanding existing arms embargo across Sudan to protect civilians" 25 July 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2024/07/new-weapons-fuelling-the-sudan-conflict/>

⁵ Amnesty International, "New Weapons Fuelling the Sudan Conflict, Expanding existing arms embargo across Sudan to protect civilians" 25 July 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2024/07/new-weapons-fuelling-the-sudan-conflict/>

⁶ Amnesty International 'Death Came To Our Home': War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>; and, Amnesty International, "New Weapons Fuelling the Sudan Conflict, Expanding existing arms embargo across Sudan to protect civilians" 25 July 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2024/07/new-weapons-fuelling-the-sudan-conflict/>

⁷ See for example, Amnesty International, "Sudan: UN and African Union must act swiftly to prevent mass atrocities in El Fasher", 23 May 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/05/sudan-un-and-african-union-must-act-swiftly-to-prevent-mass-atrocities-in-el-fasher/>; and Amnesty International, "Sudan: SAF airstrike on crowded market a flagrant war crime, 12 December 2024", <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/sudan-armed-forces-saf-killed-dozens-in-an-air-strike-on-a-crowded-market-in-the-rapid-support-forces-rsf-controlled-town-of-kabkabiya-in-north-darfur/>

⁸ See UNOCHA update <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-update-1-30-november-2024>, 4 December 2024; see also, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-update-1-30-november-2024>

⁹ See UNOCHA update <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-update-1-30-november-2024>, 4 December 2024.

international law, among other serious human rights violations in Darfur, Blue Nile and South Kordofan.¹⁰ After the onset of the April 2023 conflict, the RSF rapidly gained territory over the SAF and have since carried out serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, across the country and particularly in Khartoum, Darfur and Gezira states.¹¹ Impunity is at the heart of the violations and abuses taking place in Sudan including the widespread sexual violence by the RSF documented in this report.¹²

2.1 SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ITS FUNCTION IN THE SUDAN CONFLICT

Reports of sexual violence against women and girls emerged in the early days of the conflict particularly in Khartoum and in Darfur. In 2023, Amnesty International found that members of both the SAF and RSF have subjected women and girls to conflict-related sexual violence, including rape.¹³ The UN and other organizations have also reported widespread conflict-related sexual violence in the country since the beginning of the conflict in April 2023.¹⁴ (See more in section 3 below.)

Various Sudanese human rights groups including women-led and grassroots organizations have also documented widespread sexual violence by RSF during the ongoing Sudan conflict. The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS), a Sudanese human rights organization, through interviews with survivors and other methods documented widespread sexual and gender-based violence, including rape, gang rape, sexual exploitation and enforced prostitution among other violations since the outbreak of the ongoing armed conflict in Sudan.¹⁵ Based on interviews with survivors and through the provision of services to survivors of sexual violence, the Sudanese Organization for Research and Development (SORD) similarly documented widespread sexual violence against women and girls including rape throughout the conflict.¹⁶ The head of SORD told Amnesty International that the “violence against women is a reflection of the warring parties’ apprehension about the influential role women played in the revolution and the ultimate aim is to morally destroy and demoralize women.”¹⁷

In the past, Amnesty International found that the war crime and crime against humanity of rape and other forms of sexual violence in Sudan’s Darfur region have been committed against women, and that sexual violence was used - in a strategic manner to humiliate, punish, control, inflict fear and displace women and their communities.¹⁸ Some of the survivors of sexual violence interviewed for this report including those raped and gang-raped in front of their family members said that the sexual violence against them caused them to feel humiliated and they all said they decided to flee from their homes after the sexual assaults by

¹⁰ Amnesty International, “Sudan: Fresh evidence of government-sponsored crimes in Darfur shows drawdown of peacekeepers premature and reckless” (previously cited); Amnesty International, *Scorched Earth, Poisoned Air: Sudanese Government Forces Ravage Jebel Marra, Darfur* (previously cited); See Foreign Policy, “The Man Who Terrorized Darfur Is Leading Sudan’s Supposed Transition”, 14 May 2019, foreignpolicy.com/2019/05/14/man-who-terrorized-darfur-is-leading-sudans-supposed-transition-Hemedti-rsf-janjaweed-bashir-khartoum/.

¹¹ Amnesty International, “Sudan: Urgent need for civilian protection in wake of escalating violence”, 30 October 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/10/sudan-urgent-need-for-civilian-protection-in-wake-of-escalating-violence/>; and Amnesty International ‘Death Came To Our Home’: War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>.

¹² Amnesty International, “Q & A: Why should the mandate of the fact-finding mission (FFM) for Sudan be extended at HRC57?”, 27 October 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/8460/2024/en/>.

¹³ Amnesty International ‘Death Came To Our Home’: War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>.

¹⁴ See for example, Sudan FFM, “Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan (Advance unedited version) (A/HRC/57/23)”, 5 September 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/report-independent-international-fact-finding-mission-sudan-advance-unedited-version-ahrc5723>, and HRW, “Sudan: Widespread Sexual Violence in the Capital”, 28 July 2024, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/07/29/sudan-widespread-sexual-violence-capital>.

¹⁵ ACJPS, “War Time Sexual Violence, a Tactic in the Sudan Armed Conflict”, December 2024, <https://www.acjps.org/publications/war-time-sexual-violence-a-tactic-in-the-sudan-armed-conflict> 16 December 2024

¹⁶ SORD, “Understanding and Addressing Violence Against Women in the Context of the April 2023 War in Sudan”, December 2023, report on file with Amnesty International.

¹⁷ Amnesty International remote interview with Ilham Al-Hajj, 26 March 2024.

¹⁸ Amnesty International, “Sudan: Darfur: Rape as a weapon of war: sexual violence and its consequences”, 18 July 2004, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/076/2004/en/>.

the RSF.¹⁹ One woman who was sexually assaulted in public said: “they sexually harassed all the women in the bus including myself and my daughter. They aggressively touched our breasts and thighs in a humiliating manner.”²⁰ Others said it was humiliating for them to be raped in front of their family members.²¹ One woman said: “Two of them (RSF soldiers) tied my hands together and removed my clothes. Three of them raped me while my daughter was watching. It was so humiliating.”²²

2.2 INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL RESPONSE

The response from regional and international actors to the suffering of Sudanese civilians including those impacted by conflict-related sexual violence has been deplorable.²³ For nearly two years, the people of Sudan have been neglected and ignored as they bore the brunt of this devastating conflict. Diplomatic efforts have so far failed to end violations, protect civilians, provide sufficient humanitarian aid, or hold the perpetrators of war crimes to account. The African Union, in particular, has not displayed the required level of leadership nor taken concrete actions that match the scale and gravity of the conflict.²⁴

In September 2024, the UN Security Council extended for another year an arms embargo in place since 2004 which applies only to the Darfur region.²⁵ It failed to expand the embargo to the rest of Sudan. The existing arms embargo had been poorly implemented and frequently violated and covers only the Darfur region making it inadequate to meet the needs of the current crisis.²⁶ In November 2024, Russia vetoed a UN Security Council resolution on Sudan calling for an end to attacks against civilians and calling for facilitation of humanitarian assistance to millions in desperate need, amongst other things.²⁷

In October 2023, the UN Human Rights Council established the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission (IFFM) for the Sudan for an initial period of one year. The IFFM was mandated *inter alia* to investigate and establish the facts, circumstances and root causes of all alleged violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law, and related crimes. The mandate of the IFFM was extended for an additional one year in October 2024.

Local groups including emergency response rooms have been providing essential services to survivors of sexual violence but face challenges accessing financial and logistical support.²⁸ U.S. President Trump’s executive order on 20 January 2025 freezing foreign assistance and forcing American-funded aid and development programs worldwide to shut down has severely impacted the work of service providers in Sudan including the emergency response rooms and others providing health services to survivors of sexual violence.²⁹ The head of a Sudanese women-led organization told Amnesty International that her organization had to suspend two of its projects in Sudan in January 2025, one that provided health services to victims of gender-based violence including conflict-related sexual violence in Blue Nile, and another that supported income generating activities for women farmers in Gadrif.³⁰

¹⁹ Amnesty International in person and remote interviews with 16 survivors of sexual violence in Khartoum, North Darfur and South Darfur, in November and December 2024, Uganda.

²⁰ Amnesty International in person interview with “Aziza”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

²¹ Amnesty International in person interview with “Hamida”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

²² Amnesty International in person interview with “Hamida”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

²³ Amnesty International, “Sudan: One year since conflict began, response from international community remains woefully inadequate”, 12 April 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/04/sudan-one-year-since-conflict-began-response-from-international-community-remains-woefully-inadequate/>.

²⁴ Amnesty International, “Sudan: One year since conflict began, response from international community remains woefully inadequate”, 12 April 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/04/sudan-one-year-since-conflict-began-response-from-international-community-remains-woefully-inadequate/>.

²⁵ UN, “Security Council Extends Sanctions Regime against Sudan, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2750 (2024)”, 11 September 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15817.doc.htm>

²⁶ Amnesty International, “New Weapons Fuelling the Sudan Conflict, Expanding existing arms embargo across Sudan to protect civilians” 25 July 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2024/07/new-weapons-fuelling-the-sudan-conflict/>

²⁷ Amnesty International, “Russia: Shameful veto of Security Council resolution on Sudan leaves millions of civilians at continued risk”, 19 November 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/11/russia-shameful-veto-of-security-council-resolution-on-sudan-leaves-millions-of-civilians-at-continued-risk/>

²⁸ Amnesty International remote interviews with three emergency rooms responders on various dates in January and February 2025.

²⁹ See 20 January 2025 executive order, “Re-evaluating and realigning united states foreign aid,” <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/re-evaluating-and-realigning-united-states-foreign-aid/>; See also, NBC News, “A lot of people will die: How Trump’s USAID overhaul could lead to famine in Sudan” 11 February 2025, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/trump-usaid-cuts-sudan-famine-civil-war-rcna191389>.

³⁰ Amnesty International remote interview with the head of a women-led Sudanese organization, 26 March 2024.

3. WIDESPREAD CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Evidence collected by Amnesty International and other human rights organizations since the conflict started in Sudan in April 2023 shows that the RSF have carried out widespread sexual violence across towns and villages in Sudan to humiliate, assert control, and to forcefully displace families and communities from their homes.³¹ The widespread sexual violence taking place in the current conflict in Sudan, including the cases documented in this report that took place between April 2023 and October 2024, is happening against the backdrop of over two decades of impunity for such crimes and particularly by the RSF.³²

Various groups and organizations including international human rights organizations³³, the UN FFM for Sudan³⁴ and regional and Sudanese organizations³⁵ have all documented the widespread nature of conflict-related sexual violence by the warring parties in Sudan and particularly the RSF.³⁶ In September 2024, the UN FFM found that sexual and gender-based violence, in particular conflict related rape and gang rape, was widespread across Sudan. It also found that RSF members perpetrated sexual violence on a large-scale during attacks on cities in the Darfur region and in Greater Khartoum.³⁷ The rape and other forms of sexual violence documented by the FFM were largely attributed to men wearing RSF uniforms and, in the context of Darfur, armed men allied to RSF, who victims referred to as Janjaweed, wearing traditional attire and a shawl/kadamol around their head. The FFM's findings were based, among other sources, on first-hand

³¹ See section two above.

³² Amnesty International, "Sudan: Darfur: Rape as a weapon of war: sexual violence and its consequences", 18 July 2004, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/076/2004/en/>.

³³ Human Rights Watch, "Widespread Sexual Violence in the Capital, Rapid Support Forces Main Perpetrators; Attacks on Aid, Health Care Harm Survivors", 28 July 2024, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/07/29/sudan-widespread-sexual-violence-capital>

³⁴ Sudan FFM, "Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan (Advance unedited version) (A/HRC/57/23)", 5 September 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/report-independent-international-fact-finding-mission-sudan-advance-unedited-version-ahrc5723>

³⁵ SIHA, "Gezira State and the Forgotten Atrocities A Report on Conflict related Sexual Violence", June 2024, <https://sihanet.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Research-Report-on-CRSV-in-Gezira-State.pdf>; see also, SORD, "Understanding and Addressing Violence Against Women in the Context of the April 2023 War in Sudan", December 2023, report on file with Amnesty International.

³⁶ See paras. 57 to 63 of the UN FFM; "Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan (Advance unedited version) (A/HRC/57/23)", 5 September 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/report-independent-international-fact-finding-mission-sudan-advance-unedited-version-ahrc5723>

³⁷ Sudan FFM, "Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan (Advance unedited version) (A/HRC/57/23)", 5 September 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/report-independent-international-fact-finding-mission-sudan-advance-unedited-version-ahrc5723>

information through interviews with 182 individuals including survivors, their families, eyewitnesses, first-line responders and other sources.³⁸

In December 2024, UN Women reported widespread gender-based violence including conflict-related sexual violence in the form of rape and gang rape, enforced prostitution, trafficking, sexual violence in the context of abduction and enforced disappearances, forced marriage, and sexual violence combined with brutal attacks and killings against women, girls, men, and boys.³⁹ It noted that between December 2023 and December 2024, the number of survivors of gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, seeking services increased by 288 per cent.⁴⁰ It added that gender-based violence incidents, particularly conflict-related sexual violence have been reported across different states where there has been intense fighting.⁴¹ According to a recent UNICEF publication, a total of 221 rape cases against children alone were recorded by service providers since the beginning of 2024, including children as young as one year old.⁴²

In a July 2024 report, Human Rights Watch found that since the onset of the current conflict, Sudan's warring parties, particularly the RSF, have committed widespread acts of rape, including gang rape, and forced women and girls into marriages in Khartoum. Eighteen health care providers interviewed by the organization said they had provided direct medical care, psychosocial support to survivors of sexual violence, or managed individual incidents, cared for a total of 262 survivors of sexual violence between April 2023 and February 2024.⁴³

The Sudanese government's Unit of Combating Violence Against Women and Children (CVAW) documented 1138 incidents of sexual violence including 134 cases of sexual slavery between April 2023 and December 2024 across Sudan. The unit estimates the cases it documented constitute a small percentage of the total incidents of sexual violence.⁴⁴ The SIHA Network has documented 346 cases of conflict-related sexual violence between April 2023 and early 2025, the majority of which were gang rape. In ninety percent of the cases documented by SIHA, the perpetrators were RSF, and the rest are attributed to SAF, Darfur-based armed groups and other armed actors.⁴⁵

In this report, Amnesty International documented 16 incidents of conflict-related rape, gang rape, sexual slavery and other forms of sexual violence committed by members of the RSF against women and girls in Sudan's greater Khartoum city, and other towns and villages in Gezira, North Darfur and South Darfur

³⁸ Sudan FFM, "Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan (Advance unedited version) (A/HRC/57/23)", 5 September 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/report-independent-international-fact-finding-mission-sudan-advance-unedited-version-ahrc5723>

³⁹ UN Women, "Alarming 288 per cent rise in demand for gender-based violence services in the last 12 months in Sudan" 17 December 2024, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2024/12/alarming-288-per-cent-rise-in-demand-for-gender-based-violence-services-in-the-last-12-months-in-sudan> The full publication can be accessed here: https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/sudan-gender-alert-no_excuse_en_2024.pdf; UN Women's research for this publication was carried out between 11 November to 8 December 2024. Their methodology included a review of secondary source data, as well as eight semi-structured interviews and two focus group discussions held with 18 individuals (17 female, 1 male), from 16 organizations and entities including UN, INGO, government and WLO actors.

⁴⁰ UN Women, "Alarming 288 per cent rise in demand for gender-based violence services in the last 12 months in Sudan" 17 December 2024, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2024/12/alarming-288-per-cent-rise-in-demand-for-gender-based-violence-services-in-the-last-12-months-in-sudan>. The full publication can be accessed here, https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/sudan-gender-alert-no_excuse_en_2024.pdf.

⁴¹ UN Women, "Alarming 288 per cent rise in demand for gender-based violence services in the last 12 months in Sudan" 17 December 2024, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2024/12/alarming-288-per-cent-rise-in-demand-for-gender-based-violence-services-in-the-last-12-months-in-sudan> The full publication can be accessed here: https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/sudan-gender-alert-no_excuse_en_2024.pdf; UN Women's research for this publication was carried out between 11 November to 8 December 2024. Their methodology included a review of secondary source data, as well as eight semi-structured interviews and two focus group discussions held with 18 individuals (17 female, 1 male), from 16 organizations and entities including UN, INGO, government and WLO actors.

⁴² See UNICEF report, "Sudan's child rape and sexual violence crisis" March 2025, <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/reports/sudans-child-rape-and-sexual-violence-crisis>.

⁴³ Human Rights Watch, "Widespread Sexual Violence in the Capital, Rapid Support Forces Main Perpetrators; Attacks on Aid, Health Care Harm Survivors", 28 July 2024, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/07/29/sudan-widespread-sexual-violence-capital>; In addition to health care providers, HRW also conducted interviews with service providers, including healthcare workers, as well as social workers, counsellors, lawyers, and members of local "emergency response rooms" volunteers.

⁴⁴ Amnesty International remote interview with Dr. Sulaima Ishaq, head of the Combating Violence Against Women and Children Unit, 28 February 2025; documentation by the CVAW on file with Amnesty International. The data by the unit is based on interviews with survivors and information collected from services providers who attended to individuals who faced sexual violence including conflict related sexual violence.

⁴⁵ Amnesty International remote interview with Hala AlKarib, Regional Director, SIHA Network, 28 February 2025; SIHA documentation on file with Amnesty International. SIHA's data is based on interviews with survivors of sexual violence, eyewitnesses and service providers who attended to individuals impacted by conflict related sexual violence among other sources.

states.⁴⁶ The cases documented in this report are emblematic of the nature of violence Sudanese women and girls have endured over the past two years, but represent a very small proportion of the actual violations that occurred since the start of the conflict.

All cases of sexual violence documented by Amnesty International in this report were perpetrated by members of the RSF. All the interviewees positively identified the RSF through their uniforms and the branded vehicles they used. Interviewees said the name RSF was written on the vehicles used by the soldiers that subjected them to sexual violence. In some cases, the interviewees identified the RSF through the dialect they spoke and in some cases through their physical appearance or a combination of both.⁴⁷

3.1 RAPE AND GANG-RAPE IN KHARTOUM

The RSF soldiers raped and gang-raped women and girls in Khartoum and its sister cities of Bahri and Omdurman.⁴⁸ Amnesty International interviewed seven survivors of sexual violence and one witness of rape from Khartoum who said RSF soldiers raped or gang raped women and girls inside their homes or abducted and raped them in other residential houses or in other locations.⁴⁹ In addition to raping and gang-raping women and girls, the RSF soldiers also subjected women to other forms of torture and ill-treatment including severe beatings and inflicting them with severe bodily injuries such as cutting parts of their body with sharp blades.⁵⁰

For this report, Amnesty International documented seven cases of rape and gang rape including two cases of sexual slavery in the greater Khartoum area. Amnesty International documented two cases in which the RSF raped two women medical workers after forcing them to treat their injured soldiers in Khartoum⁵¹ and one case where the RSF shot and killed a woman medical doctor who resisted rape.⁵² In one of the cases, an RSF soldier raped a medical worker in front of her 14-year-old son.⁵³

On 16 July 2023, at around midday, the RSF abducted “Batul”, a nurse, from her home in Kafouri, Khartoum, Bahri North and drove her to Al-Amal Hospital in Khartoum North.⁵⁴ In the hospital, the RSF forced her to treat some of their injured soldiers. Thirteen RSF soldiers gang-raped her the following day. “Batul” was kept in the hospital and forced to treat injured RSF soldiers for 45 days.⁵⁵ She said:

“I was at home with my six children including my sick daughter who has a heart disease. The RSF said they were arresting me because they knew I was a nurse, and they wanted me to treat their injured soldiers. They blindfolded me and put me in a car and drove me to Al-Amal Hospital in Khartoum North. There were many RSF soldiers in the hospital. They asked me to treat one of them who was critically injured. I told them that I was unable to do so because I was not a medical doctor. The injured man died early morning the following day. On that second day (17 July 2023), at around 10am, eight RSF soldiers came to the room where I was detained. They beat me badly and then raped me one after the other. My un-healed C-section wound opened because I am diabetic and had given birth nine months earlier. I started bleeding and became

⁴⁶ Amnesty International in person and remote interviews with 16 survivors of sexual violence in Khartoum, North Darfur and South Darfur, in November and December 2024, Uganda

⁴⁷ Amnesty International in person and remote interviews with 16 survivors of sexual violence in Khartoum, North Darfur and South Darfur, in November and December 2024, Uganda.

⁴⁸ Amnesty International in person interview with seven survivors of sexual violence and one witness of rape from Khartoum, in November and December 2024, Uganda; As described above in this section, this is also based on various reports from human rights organizations reviewed by Amnesty International

⁴⁹ Amnesty International in person interview with seven survivors of sexual violence and one witness from Khartoum, in November and December 2024, Uganda.

⁵⁰ Amnesty International in person interview with seven survivors of sexual violence and one witness from Khartoum, in November and December 2024, Uganda.

⁵¹ Amnesty International in person interview with two survivors of sexual violence from Khartoum, in November and December 2024, Uganda.

⁵² Amnesty International in person interview with “Batul”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁵³ Amnesty International in person interview with “Hayat”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁵⁴ Amnesty International in person interview with “Batul”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁵⁵ Amnesty International in person interview with “Batul”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

unconscious. I woke up several hours later. They kept beating and harassing me everyday. They later released me after 45 days while in very bad condition.”⁵⁶

“Batul” said she was not the only medical worker who was forced to treat RSF soldiers in the Al-Amal Hospital. She saw several other medical workers, including Dr. Tehani who was known to her in the hospital. The RSF shot and killed Dr. Tehani on 18 July 2023 for resisting rape.⁵⁷

“While in Al-Amal Hospital, I met Dr. Tahani who was a female doctor that I knew. She was detained in the opposite room. The RSF really mistreated her because she resisted and refused them to rape her. They put gasoline in a plastic bottle and poured the melting plastic liquid on her naked thighs and hips. I talked to Dr Tahani once when she was alive on 16 July 2023. She told me to accept whatever the RSF soldiers asked me to do. She said: ‘my children know where I am detained and I know they are safe, but your children don’t know where you are, and you don’t know whether they are safe or not. So just collaborate with the RSF to survive. I don’t care whether they kill me or not. I will not allow them to rape me.’ They finally shot her in the head and chest several times. I watched her die. Dr Tahani was killed on 18 July 2023 at 6:30pm”⁵⁸

In mid-July 2023, one RSF soldier raped “Hayat”, a pharmacist, in her house in Bahri in the presence of her children. The RSF soldiers told “Hayat” that they were raping her because she was not able to save the life of one of their injured soldiers the previous day.⁵⁹ She said:

“In mid- July 2023, three RSF soldiers entered the pharmacy where I worked in Bahri. They were carrying an injured RSF soldier who was bleeding, and it looked like his injury was critical. They asked me to treat him and save his life. I told them I wasn’t a doctor, but I tried to provide first aid. I then advised them to take him to the hospital. They left, and I closed the pharmacy. The same RSF soldiers came back to the pharmacy the following day at around 4:30pm. They waited for me to close the pharmacy and then followed me to my house. I arrived at home and while I was in my veranda near the kitchen, I realized four of them broke my main door and entered my house. My three children were at home. One of them grabbed my hand and started flirting with me, saying my hands were very soft. Another one slapped me very hard and shouted that I refused to save the life of their friend. He pushed me to the ground, and he asked one of them to rape me. He raped me in front of my 14-years-old son. My son came running trying to protect me but one of them hit him with the gun butt. My son is now suffering from a kidney problem because of this attack.”⁶⁰

Amnesty International spoke to two women from Khartoum who said the RSF targeted them with rape and other forms of sexual violence after accusing them of being relatives of, or allegedly associated with, current or former SAF soldiers.⁶¹

In one of these assaults, in mid-November 2023, an RSF soldier raped “Suhair”, a 35-year-old mother of four in her house in Omdurman, Ombadda, Hara 41. The RSF soldiers who forcefully entered her house after Maqrib prayers told her that they were looking for her husband. According to “Suhair”, her husband was a former SAF soldier who was laid off from the army years ago.⁶²

“Four RSF soldiers in uniform came to my house after Maqrib prayers. I was sitting in my veranda and was breastfeeding my 10-month-old son. One of them came to me, threw my baby away and squeezed my breasts. It was like he was milking me like a cow. Another one cut my back with a blade. They were asking me about my husband. They said: ‘*where is this dog?*’ I was alone in the house with my baby. My other children were with my mother. One of them forced me inside my bedroom. He said I want to feel how you have sex with your husband. I want to burn his heart by doing this to you. He then raped me in my bed. I tried to resist but he hit me so hard in my face. My baby was crying outside while he raped me, that was the worst part. Heavy fighting started while he was still raping me, and they all run away. I think this is what saved me because the other three men standing outside also wanted to rape me.”⁶³

⁵⁶ Amnesty International in person interview with “Batul”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁵⁷ Amnesty International in person interview with “Batul”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁵⁸ Amnesty International in person interview with “Batul”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁵⁹ Amnesty International in person interview with “Hayat”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁶⁰ Amnesty International in person interview with “Hayat”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁶¹ Amnesty International in person interview with two survivors of sexual violence from Khartoum, in November and December 2024, Uganda.

⁶² Amnesty International in person interview with “Suhair”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁶³ Amnesty International in person interview with “Suhair”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

In another case, the RSF accused “Halima”, a 32-year-old woman of working and spying for the SAF. They abducted her from her house and took her to a house in their neighbourhood and gang-raped her. “Halima” said she was sick and suffered from a calcium deficiency condition and that her general health deteriorated after the rape.⁶⁴

“On 27 May 2023, Three RSF soldiers came to our house in Khartoum’s Jabra, Block 12, and accused me of spying for the SAF. One of them said I had to go with them to the Jabra police station. I tried to run but they fired bullets towards my direction, and I fell down. They caught me and beat me very badly. They then took me to a nearby house before we even reached the police station. In that house, I found three girls who were not able to move probably because they have been raping them repeatedly. There were more RSF soldiers in that house. Five of them came to the room where I was taken. Two of them held my hands behind my back and pushed me to the floor. They then started raping me one after another. I had gone through circumcision, so they struggled to penetrate. It is then that I realized I was no longer a virgin. They let me go after they all raped me. I can’t believe I am still alive. I don’t want to see RSF ever in my life.”⁶⁵

These above two cases demonstrate the brutality with which RSF soldiers treated women they accused of being relatives of or having some sort of relationship with the SAF. Both women said they felt humiliated and the RSF soldiers who raped them appeared to be passing a message to the SAF through their suffering. The RSF soldier who raped “Suhair” told her that he was raping her because he wanted her husband to feel the pain.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Amnesty International in person interview with “Halima”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁶⁵ Amnesty International in person interview with “Halima”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁶⁶ Amnesty International in person interview with “Suhair”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

3.2 SEXUAL SLAVERY IN KHARTOUM

The RSF subjected women in Khartoum to conditions of sexual slavery holding women for several days—in some cases more than 30 days—in random houses and locations near RSF-manned checkpoints and repeatedly raping and mistreating them.⁶⁷

Seven RSF soldiers abducted “Mariam,” a 34-year-old mother of five, from her house in Khartoum’s Jabra neighbourhood on 15 May 2023. She was taken to a house in Khartoum’s Riyadh area where she found more RSF soldiers together with three other women. Mariam was held captive in the house for 30 days during which she was repeatedly raped by several RSF soldiers and was later released. She said:

“On 15 May 2023, seven RSF soldiers jumped into my house. They put me in a car and drove me to a house in Riyadh. They were all wearing the RSF uniform. In the house there were three women all wearing only Abaya dress and many RSF soldiers. A few minutes later, one of them took me to one of the rooms and raped me. I was detained in that house for 30 days where they kept raping me almost every day. They released me after 30 days when I became very sick. They also kept repeatedly raping the other women. I know because I heard them cry every day.”⁶⁸

In another case, on 22 May 2023, the RSF stopped “Nabha”, a 27-year-old mother of one at a checkpoint in Ombadda, Hara 10, and forcibly separated her from her husband. The RSF soldiers held Nabha in a small shop near the checkpoint for several days during which they repeatedly raped her. Her husband said: “they raped my wife for more than four consecutive days. They detained me in a separate shop. I could hear my wife scream as they raped her every day, but I was not able to help.”⁶⁹

This is not the first time Amnesty International has documented cases in which the RSF subjected women and girls to sexual slavery during Sudan’s ongoing conflict. In 2023, the organization documented a case in which RSF members abducted a group of 24 women and girls and took them to a hotel in Nyala, South Darfur, where they were held in conditions amounting to sexual slavery for several days and raped by several RSF soldiers.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Amnesty International in person interview with two survivors of sexual violence from Khartoum, in November and December 2024, Uganda.

⁶⁸ Amnesty International in person interview with “Mariam”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

⁶⁹ Amnesty International in person interview with Mohanad, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

⁷⁰ Amnesty International ‘Death Came To Our Home’: War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>.

3.3 RAPE AND GANG-RAPE IN GEZIRA STATE

Reports of rape, as well as other forms of sexual violence against women and girls, emerged during mid-December 2023 when the RSF first took over key cities in Gezira state including Madani and Hasahisa and have continued as the conflict spread to other parts of the state.⁷¹ For instance, following the defection to the SAF of Abu Aqla Keikel, a former RSF commander in Gezira state, on 20 October 2024, the RSF launched retaliatory attacks on towns and villages in the eastern part of Gezira state targeting civilians in that area. During the few days that followed 20 October 2024 alone, the UN OHCHR documented at least 25 cases of sexual violence by the RSF in several villages in East Gezira locality.⁷²

For this report, Amnesty International documented three instances in which RSF soldiers raped or gang-raped five women in three different locations in Madani city and Al-Seriha and Al-Samer villages of Gezira state. In all three cases, the RSF soldiers raped or gang-raped women in the presence of their family members compounding their suffering.⁷³ In one case, the RSF soldiers shot and killed a woman after gang-raping her.⁷⁴ In another case, a woman had a child as a result of the rape by an RSF soldier.⁷⁵

In the evening of 16 December 2023, a day after the RSF took over Madani, the capital of Gezira state, three RSF soldiers gang-raped “Hamida”, a 30-year-old widow and mother of three in her house in eastern Madani.⁷⁶ She was raped in front of her 12-year-old daughter and sister-in law.⁷⁷ “Hamida” narrated the ordeal to Amnesty International and said:

“It was after Isha prayers. Four RSF soldiers came to my house. One of the men grabbed me and said he wanted to rape me. I tried to resist but he hit me with his gun and said I am going to rape your small daughter if you resist. Two of them then tied my hands together and they removed my clothes. Three of them raped me while my daughter was watching. It was so humiliating. I did not go to any hospital because I did not want anyone to know about it. You are the first people I am sharing this with. I feel broken.”⁷⁸

In late December 2023, one RSF soldier raped “Amina”, a 32-year-old mother of six in her house in Al-Samer village in Gezira state. “Amina” had a baby boy as a result of this rape. She was raped in front of her 11-year-old son who was badly beaten by an RSF soldier when he tried to assist his mother. Her son died 17 days later as result of the injuries he sustained during the beating.⁷⁹

“After Isha prayers, seven RSF soldiers came to our house in Al-Samer village in Gezira. Two of them came to me in our veranda where I was standing. One of them forcefully tied my arms behind my back, and the other raped me in front of my 11-year-old son. My son screamed at them saying ‘leave my mother alone’, ‘stay away from my mum’ One of them hit my son in the back with his gun butt and broke his backbone. My beloved son, “Mohamed”, died 17 days later. I became pregnant because of the rape and just gave birth to a baby boy about a month and half ago here in Uganda. I have not received any medical treatment since. I am afraid that I might be sick. I would like to have medical check up to make sure that I have not been infected with any disease.”⁸⁰

In another incident, on 12 July 2024, RSF soldiers gang-raped and then shot dead “Farhiya”, 39, in front of her husband and her two kids in Al Seriha village in Gezira state.⁸¹ They also raped her two sisters who were staying in her house.⁸² According to two other Al Seriha village residents, the RSF also raped a dozen other women in the village that day. They told Amnesty International those raped were either their relatives or their

⁷¹ Sudan FFM, “Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan (Advance unedited version) (A/HRC/57/23)”, 5 September 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/report-independent-international-fact-finding-mission-sudan-advance-unedited-version-ahrc5723>

⁷² UN, “Sudan: Escalating violence in Al-Jazirah”, 29 October 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-briefing-notes/2024/10/sudan-escalating-violence-al-jazirah>

⁷³ Amnesty International in person interview with three survivors of sexual violence from Gezira state, in November and December 2024, Uganda.

⁷⁴ Amnesty International in person interview with “Hussein”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

⁷⁵ Amnesty International in person interview with “Hussein”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

⁷⁶ Amnesty International in person interview with “Hamida”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

⁷⁷ Amnesty International in person interview with “Hamida”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

⁷⁸ Amnesty International in person interview with Hamida”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

⁷⁹ Amnesty International in person interview with “Amina”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁸⁰ Amnesty International in person interview with “Amina”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁸¹ Amnesty International in person interview with “Hussein”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

⁸² Amnesty International in person interview with “Hussein”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

neighbours in the village and they have either directly spoken to the survivors or with the survivors' family members who confirmed the rape to them.⁸³

"Hussein", 42, the husband of "Farhiya" said:

"On 12 July 2024, The RSF entered our village. They killed and injured a lot of people. I know they are RSF from their uniforms and names and colours of their vehicles. They started entering houses. At about 3pm, four RSF soldiers entered my house, started beating me asking me for money and gold. My wife, my kids, and my two sisters in law were in the house with me that day. My wife and I were in one room. They asked us to lie on the floor. They took her gold and then the four of them raped her in front of me and my two kids. I tried to stand and stop them from raping my wife, and then one of them shot my wife in the chest. She died immediately. They then started beating me badly with their guns until I fainted."⁸⁴

Other RSF soldiers also came to his house at the same time and raped his two sisters in law. "While the four men were beating me and raping my wife, another group of RSF soldiers came to our house and raped my two sisters in law, "Zeyna", 35 and "Rakia"33. It was the darkest day of my life."⁸⁵

⁸³ Amnesty International in person interview with two residents of Al Seriha, 23 November 2024, Uganda.

⁸⁴ Amnesty International in person interview with "Hussein", 22 November 2024, Uganda.

⁸⁵ Amnesty International in person interview with "Hussein", 22 November 2024, Uganda.

3.4 RAPE AND GANG-RAPE IN DARFUR

The RSF soldiers also raped and gang-raped women and girls in the Darfur region. In 2023, Amnesty International found that RSF and allied militias carried out rape and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls in Darfur.⁸⁶ This included the rape by RSF-allied militia of a 25-year-old woman in El Geneina, West Darfur.⁸⁷

For this report, Amnesty International documented three incidents in which the RSF raped and gang-raped at least three women in towns and villages in North and South Darfur.⁸⁸ One woman told Amnesty International that she and 19 other women and girls were either raped or gang raped by RSF soldiers in Um Shanabat village, North Darfur.⁸⁹ Another woman said an RSF soldier raped her in her house in Nyala.⁹⁰ In the third case, a man told Amnesty International that three RSF soldiers gang raped his pregnant wife in front of him and his son.⁹¹

On 27 May 2024, three RSF soldiers gang-raped a 32-year-old woman in the Thoura Junub neighbourhood, in El Fasher, North Darfur, in front of her husband and five-year old son. Her husband “Ali” told Amnesty International that in addition to raping his wife, the RSF had also beaten him badly.⁹²

“On 27 May 2024, five RSF soldiers broke into my house at around 11am in the morning. They started beating me with their gun butts and tied my arms together with a rope. They kicked me many times using their boots. Four soldiers then entered the room where my wife was. One of them had taken all our gold and cash of about 4.5 million Sudanese Pound. The other three remained inside the room and raped my wife. I heard my wife screaming but I could not help her. My wife was one month pregnant when she was raped. We decided to leave El Fasher that day because it was no longer safe.”⁹³

As the conflict intensified in El Fasher city in May 2024, internally displaced people in the city, mostly women and girls fled to neighbouring towns and villages to seek safety.⁹⁴ But the RSF did not spare those desperately seeking safety. On 25 May 2024, “Hannah”, 34-year-old woman said she fled from an IDP shelter at Janobiya Primary School for Boys in El Fasher together with 19 other women and girls to Um Shanabat village.⁹⁵ Upon arriving in Um Shanabat in mid-afternoon, she said 40 RSF men attacked them and either raped or gang-raped all of them. “Hannah” said:

“When we arrived in Um Shanabat village, we stopped in a house and asked a woman to give us water. Shortly after, around 40 RSF soldiers, all armed with weapons attacked us. They started beating us with their guns. One of them hit me in the head, with his gun and then two of them dragged me to a corner in the house and both of them raped me. I was hearing the other women screaming. They raped all of us, some of the girls were as young as 15. I remember one old woman was begging them and saying, ‘please don’t rape me, I am an old woman.’”⁹⁶ Amnesty International tried to locate the other survivors of this incident but could not trace them.

On 29 October 2023, three RSF men stormed the house of “Rahma”, 30, in the Nahda neighbourhood in Nyala city, South Darfur and raped her.⁹⁷ “Rahma”, had a six-month old baby when she was raped. She said:

“At around 4pm, three RSF soldiers broke into my house. I was alone with my three daughters. One of them slapped me and cut my dress. They tied me to a lemon tree in my compound. They tied my left hand and right leg and made me stand on one leg. One of them raped me while the others restrained my movements

⁸⁶ Amnesty International ‘Death Came To Our Home’: War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>

⁸⁷ Amnesty International ‘Death Came To Our Home’: War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>

⁸⁸ Amnesty International in person interviews with three survivors of sexual violence from North and South Darfur, 23 November 2024, Uganda.

⁸⁹ Amnesty International remote interview with “Hannah”, 16 December 2024, Uganda.

⁹⁰ Amnesty International remote interview with “Rahma”, 13 December 2024, Uganda.

⁹¹ Amnesty International interview with “Ali”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁹² Amnesty International interview with “Ali”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁹³ Amnesty International interview with “Ali”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

⁹⁴ Amnesty International interviews with five residents from El Fasher city, North Darfur, in November and December 2024, Uganda.

⁹⁵ Amnesty International remote interview with “Hannah”, 16 December 2024, Uganda.

⁹⁶ Amnesty International remote interview with “Hannah”, 16 December 2024, Uganda.

⁹⁷ Amnesty International remote interview with “Rahma”, 13 December 2024, Uganda.

and watched. There were sudden explosions and then they ran away. Neighbours came and untied me. It was the most horrific day in my life.”⁹⁸

3.5 SEXUAL ASSAULT

In addition to rape and gang-rape, women and girls in Sudan were also subjected to other forms of sexual violence. For this report, Amnesty International documented two cases in which RSF soldiers sexually assaulted two women and their daughters, one at a checkpoint between Khartoum and Madani, and another in Nyala South Darfur.⁹⁹

On 28 April 2023, “Aziza”, 37, and her daughter Rinad Abdirahaman Haur, 17, together with other women were sexually assaulted by RSF soldiers who stopped the bus they were travelling in at a checkpoint towards Madani. “Aziza” said:

“While traveling to Madani, seven RSF soldiers stopped our bus at a checkpoint and asked us to get out of the bus. They sexually harassed all the women in the bus including myself and my daughter. They aggressively touched our breasts and thighs in a humiliating manner. I was not comfortable and was very worried that they might rape us. My daughter is still traumatized by the experience from that day”¹⁰⁰

On 7 July 2023, five RSF soldiers broke into “Fahima’s” house in Nyala, South Darfur and sexually assaulted her. “Fahima” told Amnesty International that at least two RSF soldiers aggressively touched her breasts and other parts of her body.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Amnesty International remote interview with “Rahma”, 13 December 2024, Uganda.

⁹⁹ Amnesty International in person interviews with “Aziza” 22 November 2024, and “Fahima”, 23 November 2024, Uganda.

¹⁰⁰ Amnesty International in person interviews with “Aziza”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

¹⁰¹ Amnesty International in person interviews with “Fahima”, 23 November 2024, Uganda.

4. IMPACT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON SURVIVORS

4.1 PHYSICAL INJURIES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA

Survivors of sexual violence said they have suffered both physical injuries and psychological trauma as a result of rape or gang-rape and other forms of sexual violence.¹⁰² Four survivors said they developed walking difficulties and other health conditions including kidney pains and irregular periods because of rape or gang rape.¹⁰³ One woman said she had her c-section wound opened during rape and suffered severe bleeding and later developed other health complications.¹⁰⁴ Four Sudanese organizations providing support for sexual violence survivors in Sudan and in Uganda said between them they facilitated treatment for hundreds of women and girls who suffered physical injuries and other health complications resulting from sexually transmitted diseases and rape. For example, SORD facilitated health services for two women who developed fistula as a result of rape, one woman who got infected with HIV, and another with Hepatitis B in Uganda.¹⁰⁵ In addition, SORD also provided antenatal care for 41 girls in Kassala city¹⁰⁶

Survivors also talked of trauma. One woman said she had suffered psychological trauma and has developed occasional memory loss as a result of rape, and she keeps forgetting dates and names of people and places.¹⁰⁷ Children who witnessed the rape of their mothers or other relatives also got traumatized because of those experiences. Two women said their children developed nightmares and mental health condition after witnessing their rape.¹⁰⁸

4.2 STIGMA AND FEAR OF REPORTING

In many cases, the RSF soldiers sexually assaulted women and girls in front of their family members, adding to the trauma experienced by family members who witnessed the attacks. This also compounded stigma and

¹⁰² Amnesty International in person interviews with four survivors of sexual violence, November 2024, Uganda; Amnesty International remote interviews with four women activists providing support services women impacted by sexual violence on various dates in January and February 2025.

¹⁰³ Amnesty International in person interviews with four survivors of sexual violence, November 2024, Uganda.

¹⁰⁴ Amnesty International in person interview with "Batul", 21 November 2024, Uganda.

¹⁰⁵ Amnesty International remote interview with Ilham Al-Hajj, 25 February 2025.

¹⁰⁶ Amnesty International remote interview with Ilham Al-Hajj, 25 February 2025.

¹⁰⁷ Amnesty International in person interview with "Hayat", 21 November 2024, Uganda.

¹⁰⁸ Amnesty International in person interviews with two survivors of sexual violence, November 2024, Uganda.

other social consequences for survivors. In addition, many families and survivors fear stigma, societal judgment and reprisals, and avoid reporting rape and other forms of sexual violence to the police or to service providers. None of the survivors of sexual violence interviewed for this research had reported their cases to authorities. They said they feared stigmatization and reprisals.¹⁰⁹ Several women said it was the first time they talked about their experiences.¹¹⁰ One woman said: "...you are the first people I am sharing this with..."¹¹¹ Women who have children as a result of rape face additional stigma including shaming from their close family members. One woman who had a child as a result of rape said her husband had left her because of it and that she felt ashamed to explain the situation to her children. She said: "I can't tell my family who this child is. It is a big shame for me. I don't know what to do. They shattered my life."¹¹²

4.3 DIFFICULTY ACCESSING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES

None of the survivors of sexual violence interviewed for this research had access to any post rape-care services or reported their cases to authorities. They said they were unable to access both health facilities and the police because of the ongoing fighting and for fear of stigma. Members of the RSF or SAF were also present in some health facilities especially in Khartoum further restricting survivors' access to time-sensitive medical treatments.¹¹³ In addition to this, both parties to the conflict, and particularly the RSF, attacked health facilities and looted medical supplies.¹¹⁴ According to World Health Organization (WHO), about 80 percent of hospitals in the most conflict-affected areas in Sudan are not functional.¹¹⁵ Both the SAF and RSF have restricted the delivery of essential aid including medical supplies throughout the conflict.¹¹⁶ It is as a result of all the above that medical supplies essential for post-rape care, especially post-exposure prophylaxis kits to prevent HIV transmission and anti-retroviral therapy, and the treatment to prevent Hepatitis B infections have been in short supply since the beginning of the conflict.¹¹⁷ While all the survivors interviewed by Amnesty International said that they had no access to sexual and reproductive health services, some service providers interviewed said a significant number of survivors had access to post rape-care services provided by clinics, hospitals and by volunteer groups.¹¹⁸

4.4 SURVIVOR NEEDS

As explained above, none of the survivors of sexual violence interviewed for this report had access to post rape medical care. As a result, all the survivors said their priority was to get medical checkups and treatment. One woman said her health deteriorated since she was raped in December 2023, and that she needed urgent medical attention. She said: "I am afraid that I might be sick. I would like to have medical check up to make sure that I have not been infected with any disease."¹¹⁹ Another woman who was held in conditions of sexual slavery and repeatedly raped for 30 consecutive days in Khartoum said she was only released by the RSF after she became very sick. She said: "The experience from those thirty days had a long-lasting impact on my health and my priority now is to get proper health care. I used to be healthy and

¹⁰⁹ Amnesty International in person interviews with six survivors of sexual violence, November 2024, Uganda; Amnesty International remote interviews with four service providers on various dates in January and February 2025.

¹¹⁰ Amnesty International interviews with survivors of sexual violence in November 2024, Uganda.

¹¹¹ Amnesty International in person interviews with "Hamida", 22 November 2024, Uganda.

¹¹² Amnesty International in person interview with "Amina", 21 November 2024, Uganda.

¹¹³ Amnesty International remote interview with four service providers on various dates in January and February 2025. See also, Amnesty International 'Death Came To Our Home': War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>.

¹¹⁴ See UN, "UNICEF condemns looting of lifesaving supplies for children in Sudan," 21 March 2025, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2025/03/unicef-condemns-looting-of-lifesaving-supplies-for-children-in-sudan/>; and Save the Children, "SUDAN: Armed groups loot medical supplies and aid from Save the Children" 17 April 2023, <https://www.savethechildren.net/news/sudan-armed-groups-loot-medical-supplies-and-aid-save-children>. See also Amnesty reporting at; Amnesty International 'Death Came To Our Home': War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>.

¹¹⁵ WHO, "Sudan Conflict: Public Health Situation Analysis (PHSA) (01 September 2024)", 4 September 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-conflict-public-health-situation-analysis-phsa-01-september-2024>.

¹¹⁶ OHCHR, "Using starvation as a weapon of war in Sudan must stop: UN experts", 26 June 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/06/using-starvation-weapon-war-sudan-must-stop-un-experts>.

¹¹⁷ Amnesty International remote interview with four service providers on various dates in January and February 2025.

¹¹⁸ Amnesty International remote interview with four service providers on various dates in January and February 2025.

¹¹⁹ Amnesty International in person interview with "Amina", 21 November 2024, Uganda.

strong, but now I am sick every other day. I need support to go to Kampala and get proper treatment.”¹²⁰ A third woman who was gang raped in Khartoum said she had a medical condition before the rape in 2023 and had suffered from calcium deficiency that has now been exacerbated by the rape for which she needed urgent treatment.¹²¹ Two women said they needed treatment for their sick children, one for her daughter who has a chronic heart disease that she had since when she was born¹²², and another whose 14-year-old son suffered from kidney issues resulting from beatings by an RSF soldiers who raped his mother in Khartoum.¹²³

Two survivors emphasized the need for safety and protection from further violations. One of them said: “I don’t want to see RSF ever in my life. I am scared of their brutality; they are heartless and have humiliated me enough. I am not planning to return to Sudan again”¹²⁴ The other woman said she needed her and her children to be safe from further suffering.¹²⁵

In addition, two survivors spoke about the need for justice and accountability for the violations committed by the RSF and particularly for what the RSF did to them and their family members. A man whose wife was raped and killed in front of him said he wished that those who raped and killed his wife were punished for the brutality they inflicted on him and his wife. “I demand justice for what they did to us. Justice for me is to arrest all of them and punish them for what they did to my wife. They need to be punished the same way they punished us. I will never forgive them in my life.”¹²⁶ “Suhair”, who was raped by an RSF soldier in November 2023 similarly demanded accountability for the violations she was subjected to. She said: “Women are not leading or participating in this war, but it is women who are suffering the most. I want the whole world to know about the suffering of Sudanese women and girls and ensure that all the bad men who raped us are punished.”¹²⁷

¹²⁰ Amnesty International in person interview with “Mariam”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

¹²¹ Amnesty International in person interview with “Halima”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

¹²² Amnesty International in person interview with “Batul”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

¹²³ Amnesty International in person interview with “Hayat”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

¹²⁴ Amnesty International in person interview with “Halima”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

¹²⁵ Amnesty International in person interview with “Batul”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

¹²⁶ Amnesty International in person interview with “Hussein”, 22 November 2024, Uganda.

¹²⁷ Amnesty International in person interview with “Suhair”, 21 November 2024, Uganda.

5. LEGAL ANALYSIS

Given the intensity of the fighting and the level of organization of the parties to the conflict, Amnesty International considers the fighting between the SAF and RSF that erupted in Sudan in April 2023 to constitute a non-international armed conflict.¹²⁸ The organization also considers both the SAF and RSF to be state forces as defined under international humanitarian law.¹²⁹

International humanitarian law rules that regulate non-international armed conflicts apply to the ongoing conflict in Sudan. Parties to the conflict are bound to comply with the norms contained in Common Article 3 of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, Additional Protocol II to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, and customary international humanitarian law. Sudan is a party to the four Geneva Conventions and ratified Additional Protocol II in 2006.¹³⁰ Although Sudan is not a state party, the provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court are also applicable as codifications of crimes under customary international law.

Sudan is also bound by the international and regional human rights treaties it has ratified, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention Against Torture (CAT),¹³¹ and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR).¹³²

The sexual violence documented by Amnesty International in this report amounts to violations of international human rights law by the RSF. Rape, gang-rape and other forms of sexual violence violate numerous human rights, including the rights to equality and non-discrimination, to physical integrity, and the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.¹³³

Rape is defined under international law as sexual penetration or "invasion," however slight, when committed by force, or by threat of force or coercion, by taking advantage of a coercive environment, or against a

¹²⁸ Amnesty International 'Death Came To Our Home': War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>; 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 conflicts 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 organisation." ICRC, How is the term "Armed Conflict" defined in international humanitarian law?, Opinion Paper, March 2008. <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/opinionpaper-armed-conflict.pdf>

¹²⁹ Amnesty International 'Death Came To Our Home': War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>

¹³⁰ See ICRC, *International Humanitarian Law Database: IHL Treaties and States Parties: Sudan*, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/treaties-and-states-parties?title=&topic=&state=SD&from=&to=&sort=state&order=ASC>

¹³¹ UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies, Ratification Status for Sudan:

tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=165&Lang=EN. Regrettably, Sudan has not yet ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

¹³² State parties to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Charter):

<https://achpr.au.int/en/states#:~:text=The%20African%20Charter%20on%20Human,Charter%20on%2023%20October%202013.>

¹³³ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Articles 2(1), 7, and 26; CEDAW, Article 1; CEDAW, General Recommendations 19 and 35 prohibit gender-based violence including rape as a human rights violation and set out the steps states are required to take to comprehensively respond. General Recommendation 30 specifically focuses on the obligations of duty bearers in conflict, conflict prevention and post-conflict contexts, and reaffirms State obligations to take action to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in conflict including rape.

person incapable of giving genuine consent.¹³⁴ Rape also constitutes torture.¹³⁵ States are required to act to end sexual violence in conflict, protect those at risk, bring perpetrators to justice, and provide comprehensive services and reparation for survivors.¹³⁶

5.1 THE WAR CRIME AND CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY OF RAPE

Rape, gang-rape and other forms of sexual violence are serious violations of international humanitarian law that amount to war crimes.¹³⁷ Rape constitutes a war crime when “the conduct took place in the context of and was associated with an armed conflict,” and the perpetrator was “aware of factual circumstances that established the existence of an armed conflict.”¹³⁸ The acts of rape and gang-rape perpetrated by RSF members against women and girls in Sudan that are documented in this report amount to war crimes, as they occurred in the context of an armed conflict which the perpetrators would have been aware of.

Rape may also amount to a crime against humanity when committed as “part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against [the] civilian population, with knowledge of the attack.”¹³⁹ An attack against a civilian population is defined as “a course of conduct involving the multiple commission” of acts referred to in Article 7(1) of the Rome Statute, such as murders and rapes among others,¹⁴⁰ whose primary target is the civilian population.¹⁴¹ Such an attack must be conducted “pursuant to or in furtherance of a State or organizational policy to commit such attack”¹⁴² such that isolated or random acts would not be prosecuted as crimes against humanity. Pursuant to the jurisprudence of international courts, such a policy “need not be formalized and may be inferred from a variety of factors which, taken together, establish that a policy existed.”¹⁴³ These factors may include: “(i) that the attack was planned, directed or organized; (ii) a recurrent pattern of violence; (iii) the use of public or private resources to further the policy; (iv) the involvement of the State or organizational forces in the commission of crimes; (v) statements, instructions or documentation attributable to the State or the organization condoning or encouraging the commission of crimes; and/or (vi) an underlying motivation.”¹⁴⁴ Finally, the attack against the civilian population must be either widespread or systematic. Widespread refers to “the large-scale nature of the attack and the number

¹³⁴ See for example, ICC, Elements of Crimes, Element 1, Article 7 (1) (g)-1 and Article 8(2)(e)(vi)-1(2). Coercive circumstances that negate consent include circumstances created by the perpetrator, such as fear of violence, duress, detention contexts, and the abuse of power. Consent is also negated when the perpetrator takes advantage of coercive circumstances that already exist, even if they are not of their own making, such as those already inherent to an armed conflict. For more on this, see Amnesty International, Rape and sexual violence: Human rights law and standards in the International Criminal Court (Index Number: IOR 53/001/2011) March 1 2011, [amnesty.org/download/Documents/32000/ior530012011en.pdf](https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/32000/ior530012011en.pdf)

¹³⁵ Special Rapporteur on Torture, Report: UN Doc. E/CN.4/1986/15 (19 February 1986), para. 119; UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment, Report: UN Doc. A/HRC/7/3, 15 January 2008, para. 3; CAT Committee, V.L. v. Switzerland, UN Doc. CAT/C/37/D/262/2005, 22 January 2007, para. 8.10; General Comment No. 4 on the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, paras. 57-61

¹³⁶ See, CEDAW, General Recommendation 30

¹³⁷ Additional Protocol II, Article 4(2)(e); Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(vi); ICRC Customary IHL Study, Rules 93 and 156.

¹³⁸ Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(vi); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Articles 8(2)(e)(vi)-1, paras. 3-4, and 8(2)(vi)-2, paras. 4-5.

¹³⁹ Rome Statute, Article 7(1)(g).

¹⁴⁰ Rome Statute, Article 7(1)(a); ICC Elements of Crimes, Introduction to Article 7, Alinea 3; ICC, Trial Chamber II, Judgment in the Katanga case, Case No. ICC-01/04-01/07, 7 March 2014, para. 1101; ICTR, Trial Chamber II, Judgment in the Kayishema et al. case, Case No. ICTR-95-1-T, 21 May 1999, para. 122.

¹⁴¹ ICC, Trial Chamber III, Judgment in the Bemba case, Case No. ICC-01/05-01/08-3343, 21 March 2016, para. 154; ICC, Trial Chamber II, Judgment in the Katanga case, Case No. ICC-01/04-01/07, 7 March 2014, paras. 1103-1105; ICTY, Appeals Chamber, Judgment in the Kunarac et al. case, Case No. IT-96-23 & IT-96-23/1-A, 12 June 2002, para. 91

¹⁴² Rome Statute, Article 7(2)(a).

¹⁴³ ICC, Trial Chamber III, Judgment in the Bemba case, Case No. ICC-01/05-01/08-3343, 21 March 2016, para. 154; ICC, Trial Chamber II, Judgment in the Katanga case, Case No. ICC-01/04-01/07, 7 March 2014, paras. 1103-1105; ICTY, Appeals Chamber, Judgment in the Kunarac et al. case, Case No. IT-96-23 & IT-96-23/1-A, 12 June 2002, para. 91.

¹⁴⁴ ICC, Trial Chamber III, Judgment in the Bemba case (previously cited), para. 154.

of victims”¹⁴⁵ whereas systematic describes “the organized nature of the acts of violence and the improbability of their random occurrence”.¹⁴⁶

As discussed in section 3 above, various international, regional and Sudanese organizations have documented that the RSF have repeatedly carried out acts of rape across Sudan since the onset of the ongoing conflict in April 2023, in a manner that was both widespread and systematic, which is possibly in line with an existing policy to attack the civilian population. For example, the UN FFM has established the existence of a large-scale attack by the RSF and its allied militias against the predominantly non-Arab civilian population, in particular, the ethnic Masalit, in El Geneina, West Darfur, and other areas along flight routes of civilians coming from El Geneina. On the basis of an examination of the evidence it gathered,¹⁴⁷ the UN FFM found that the attack was widespread and/or systematic in nature. It further found, on the basis of inferences drawn from the facts it collected, that the attack by RSF was carried out pursuant to or in furtherance of an organizational policy. On this basis, the UN FFM found reasonable grounds to believe that the RSF and its allied militias committed the crimes against humanity of murder; torture; enslavement; rape, sexual slavery, and acts of a sexual nature of comparable gravity, among others.¹⁴⁸

Acts of rape carried out in this context, where the perpetrator was aware of the wider context, may amount to a crime against humanity.

Since the onset of the conflict in April 2023, Amnesty International has documented numerous human rights and international humanitarian law violations in Sudan by the RSF.¹⁴⁹ Civilians were killed and injured in targeted attacks in West Darfur, where the RSF and allied militias carried out ethnically motivated attacks against the Masalit and other non-Arab communities, killing and injuring thousands of civilians and displacing hundreds of thousands.¹⁵⁰ The organization also documented conflict-related sexual violence by the RSF, including rape, and sexual slavery of over 33 women and girls¹⁵¹, and widespread looting of homes, businesses and public institutions, including hospitals, humanitarian organizations’ warehouses and banks.¹⁵²

The acts of rape documented in this report are a continuation of a pattern of violence by the RSF against the civilian population of Sudan, which has persisted throughout the course of the two years of the Sudan conflict. The evidence collected and reported by Amnesty International therefore suggests that these acts of rape may have been committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack by the RSF against the civilian population of Sudan. Indications that the RSF’s attack is pursuant to a state or organizational policy include that the killings and sexual violence are recurrent and repeated throughout the duration of the conflict, rape and other sexual violence is committed by the RSF in a coordinated manner (by multiple soldiers acting together), RSF soldiers commit rape and other sexual violence while in uniform and while using RSF vehicles, and perpetrators have faced little to no investigation or accountability by RSF leadership. Any single

¹⁴⁵ ICC, Pre-Trial Chamber III, Decision to authorise the opening of an investigation in the Cote d’Ivoire situation, Case No. ICC-02/11-14, 3 October 2011, para. 53: “The assessment is not exclusively quantitative or geographical, but must be carried out on the basis of the individual facts. Accordingly, a widespread attack may be the ‘cumulative effect of a series of inhumane acts or the singular effect of an inhumane act of extraordinary magnitude’.” See also, ICC, Trial Chamber IX, Judgment in the Ongwen case, Case No. ICC-02/04-01/05, 4 February 2021, para. 2681; ICC, Trial Chamber III, Judgment in the Bemba case, Case No. ICC-01/05-01/08-3343, 21 March 2016, para. 163; ICC, Trial Chamber II, Judgment in the Katanga case, Case No. ICC-01/04-01/07, 7 March 2014, para. 1123; ICC, Pre-Trial Chamber I, Decision of confirmation of charges in the Gbagbo case, Case No. ICC-02/11-01/11-656-Red, 12 June 2014, para. 222; ICTY, Trial Chamber III, Judgment in the Kordić et al. case, Case No. IT-95-14/2-T, 26 February 2001, para. 179

¹⁴⁶ ICC, Trial Chamber IX, Judgment in the Ongwen case, Case No. ICC-02/04-01/05, 4 February 2021, para. 2682; ICC, Trial Chamber II, Judgment in the Katanga case, Case No. ICC-01/04-01/07, 7 March 2014, para. 1123; SCSL, Trial Chamber II, Judgment in the Taylor case, Case No. SCSL-03-01-T, 18 May 2012, para. 553; ICC, Pre-Trial Chamber III, Decision to authorise the opening of an investigation in the Cote d’Ivoire situation, Case No. ICC-02/11-14, 3 October 2011, para. 54.

¹⁴⁷ For the factors the FFM considered to determine the existence of an attacks against a civilian population, see para 292 of the UN FFM Conference Room Paper, issued in October 2024. <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session57/A-HRC-57-CRP-6-en.pdf>

¹⁴⁸ See paras. 293 and 294 of the UN FFM Conference Room Paper, issued in October 2024. <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session57/A-HRC-57-CRP-6-en.pdf>

¹⁴⁹ Amnesty International ‘Death Came To Our Home’: War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>. Amnesty International, “Sudan: Urgent need for civilian protection in wake of escalating violence,” 30 October 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/10/sudan-urgent-need-for-civilian-protection-in-wake-of-escalating-violence/>; and Amnesty International, “Sudan: RSF must stop attacks on famine-stricken Zamzam camp,” 14 February 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/02/sudan-rsf-must-stop-attacks-on-famine-stricken-zamzam-camp/>

¹⁵⁰ Amnesty International ‘Death Came To Our Home’: War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>

¹⁵¹ See pages 27-28 of, Amnesty International ‘Death Came To Our Home’: War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>

¹⁵² Amnesty International ‘Death Came To Our Home’: War Crimes and Civilian Suffering In Sudan, 3 August 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>.

act of rape or other sexual violence carried out in this context, where the perpetrator was aware of the wider context, would amount to a crime against humanity.¹⁵³

In addition, the evidence collected by Amnesty International for this report suggests that rape itself may have been carried out by the RSF in a manner that was widespread, and possibly systematic, in line with a policy to attack the civilian population.

In particular, the following relevant factors demonstrate the widespread and systematic nature of the rape perpetrated by the RSF against the civilian population of Sudan:

- Many women have reported to Amnesty International and to others they had been raped by RSF soldiers. As noted in the methodology and in section 3 of the report above, Amnesty International has spoken to 16 survivors of sexual violence who reported rape and gang rape of 36 women and girls. Some of the survivors and others Amnesty International investigators spoke to also knew of multiple other cases of rape against women and girls by the RSF. Other entities as set out in this report have likewise between them documented hundreds of cases of sexual violence committed by the RSF. Service providers that Amnesty International spoke to referred to scores of survivors of RSF sexual violence that they gave psychosocial or other services to.
- The sexual violence by the RSF is not confined to a single locality, but is reported from numerous states and cities throughout Sudan, including Khartoum, Gezira, South, West and North Darfur. It is reported from the vast majority of areas where RSF have been active. RSF soldiers have carried out rape and forms of sexual violence in most of the areas they controlled since the start of the conflict in April 2023.
- In the cases documented by Amnesty International in this report, as described by survivors, RSF perpetrators did not appear to hide their actions from others, highlighting lack of fear of response. In some of the cases documented by Amnesty International, rape was committed by multiple perpetrators acting together while in uniform, and in some cases in front of victims, family members and other civilians.
- RSF soldiers committed the rape in various settings, in homes, on the road, in checkpoints, in hospitals and in other residential areas. In two cases, RSF perpetrators made it clear they were targeting women who they presumed were relatives of or were associated with current or former SAF soldiers with rape apparently used to punish them, as described in section 3 of this report.
- From early months the conflict, senior RSF leaders would have been aware of reports of widespread rape and other sexual violence being committed by RSF members in Sudan including through communication with Amnesty International.

However, as stated above, these attacks appear to have been tolerated by the RSF leadership. Despite the recurrence of sexual violence repeated throughout the two years since the onset of the conflict, as far as Amnesty International is aware, there appears to have been no effort to address and stop the widespread rape and other sexual violence carried out by the RSF soldiers.

RSF soldiers would have been aware that the rape they perpetrated was committed in the context of the RSF's widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population of Sudan.

As such, members of the RSF suspected of committing acts of rape in this context should be investigated for the crime against humanity of rape.

¹⁵³ ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7 (1) (g)-1. Rape is also a crime against humanity under customary international humanitarian law. See for example, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/72/10>.

5.2 THE WAR CRIME AND CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY OF SEXUAL SLAVERY

Sexual slavery occurs when a “perpetrator exercises any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, such as by purchasing, selling, lending, or bartering such a person or persons, or by imposing on them a similar deprivation of liberty” and “the perpetrator caused such a person or persons to engage in one or more acts of a sexual nature.”¹⁵⁴ The phrase “powers attaching to the right of ownership” should be interpreted as “the use, enjoyment and disposal of a person who is regarded as property, by placing him or her in a situation of dependence which entails his or her deprivation of any form of autonomy.”¹⁵⁵ Factors to be taken into account when determining whether “powers attaching to right of ownership” have been exercised over a person include “detention or captivity and their respective duration; restrictions on freedom to come and go or on any freedom of choice or movement; and, more generally, any measure taken to prevent or deter any attempt at escape.”¹⁵⁶ There is no requirement of a minimum duration of enslavement and evidence of formal imprisonment or detention is not required to establish the imposition of a “similar deprivation of liberty.”¹⁵⁷ In the two cases of sexual slavery documented by Amnesty International in this report, RSF members exercised powers attaching to the right of ownership over women in Sudan by holding them captive for several days thereby “imposing on them a deprivation of liberty,” and repeatedly subjecting these women to “acts of a sexual nature” – namely rape.

Sexual slavery constitutes a war crime when “the conduct took place in the context of and was associated with an armed conflict” and “the perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established the existence of an armed conflict”.¹⁵⁸ The acts of sexual slavery perpetrated by RSF members against women and girls in Sudan that are documented in this report amount to war crimes, as they occurred in the context of an armed conflict which the perpetrators would have been aware of.

As discussed above, the evidence collected and reported by Amnesty International since April 2023 suggests that the acts of sexual slavery documented in this report may have been committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack by the RSF against the civilian population of Sudan. Where the RSF perpetrators were aware of this wider context, the commission of sexual slavery may amount to a crime against humanity.¹⁵⁹

Rape, and sexual slavery, would both constitute forms of torture. Perpetrators should therefore also be investigated for the war crime and possible crime against humanity of torture.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁴ Rome Statute, Article 7 (1)(g) And 8(2)(e)(vi); International Criminal Court, Elements of Crimes, Articles 7(1)(g)-2, 8(2)(e)(vi)-1, paras. 3-4, and 8(2)(vi)-2, paras. 4.

¹⁵⁵ International Criminal Court, The Prosecutor v. Germain Katanga, Case ICC-01/04-01/07, Trial Chamber II judgment, 7 March 2014, para. 975. See also International Criminal Court, Office of the Prosecutor, Policy on Slavery Crimes, December 2024, para. 68.

¹⁵⁶ ICC, The Prosecutor v. Germain Katanga, Trial Chamber II judgment (previously cited), para. 976.

¹⁵⁷ International Criminal Court, The Prosecutor v. Dominic Ongwen, Case ICC-02/04-01/15, Trial Chamber IX judgment, 4 February 2021, paras 2714-2715.

¹⁵⁸ Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(vi); ICC, Elements of Crimes, Articles 8(2)(e)(vi)-1, paras. 3-4, and 8(2)(vi)-2, paras. 4-5; Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Additional Protocol II), Articles 4(2)(e) and (f); ICRC Customary IHL Study, Rules 93, 94 and 156.

¹⁵⁹ ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7 (1) (g)-2 Crime against humanity of sexual slavery.

¹⁶⁰ ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7 (1) (f) Crime against humanity of torture and Article 8 (2) (c) (i)-4 War crime of torture; see also, Rape as a form of torture: The experience of the committee against torture, accessible here: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Women/SR/RapeReport/Others/204-gaer-general.pdf>

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the RSF

- Immediately end all acts of rape, gang-rape, sexual slavery and all other forms sexual violence.
- Ensure prompt, effective, thorough, independent, impartial, and transparent investigations into all credible allegations of rape, gang-rape, sexual slavery and all other forms sexual violence against women and girls documented in this report, and wherever there is sufficient admissible evidence, ensure that fighters and commanders suspected of being criminally responsible for these serious human rights and international humanitarian law violations are brought to justice in fair trials in civilian courts without recourse to death penalty. Ensure full reparations for survivors of rape, gang-rape, sexual slavery and all other forms sexual violence.
- Ensure support for protection, care, treatment, and psycho-social support mechanisms for survivors of sexual violence including comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services in all areas under your control.
- Ensure full respect for international law, including by enforcing a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual violence and immediately ensure its implementation. This should include the suspension from active duty of any soldiers or commanders suspected of ordering or committing sexual violence, pending the completion of prompt, impartial, independent and effective investigations.
- Immediately allow and facilitate full, rapid, and safe access to humanitarian aid in all areas under your control, including crossline and cross-border, and in compliance with international law. This should include facilitating the provision of the supplies and staff necessary for comprehensive clinical management of rape and provision of services to survivors.
- Ensure safe passage for women and girls and other civilians wanting to leave areas affected by violence and allow safe exit for those fleeing violence to seek safety and protection inside Sudan and in other countries.
- Fully cooperate and support all ongoing accountability efforts including the work of both the UN Human Rights Council and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' Fact-Finding Missions to Sudan and facilitate their access to the territories under your control.

To the Sudanese authorities, including the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Social Welfare

- Ensure support for protection, care, treatment, and psycho-social support mechanisms for survivors of sexual violence including comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services.
- Ensure the facilitation of full, rapid, and safe access to humanitarian aid, including crossline and cross-border, and in compliance with international law. This should include facilitating the provision of the supplies and staff necessary for comprehensive clinical management of rape and provision of services to survivors.

- Ensure prompt, effective, thorough, independent, impartial, and transparent investigations into all credible allegations of rape, gang-rape, sexual slavery and all other forms sexual violence against women and girls documented in this report, and wherever there is sufficient admissible evidence, ensure those suspected to be criminally responsible for these serious human rights and international humanitarian law violations are brought to justice in fair trials in civilian courts without recourse to death penalty. Ensure full reparations for survivors of rape, gang rape, sexual slavery and all other forms sexual violence.
- Re-engage the Office of the UN's Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Sexual Violence in Conflict and seek their assistance to strengthen accountability and other prevention measures to address conflict-related sexual violence as well as access to and the provision of comprehensive services, in line with the Framework of Cooperation signed between Sudan and the Office of the SRSG in March 2020.

To Sudan's international partners, including the EU, KSA, UK, US, and others

- Publicly call on all the warring parties and particularly the RSF to end widespread rape and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls.
- Increase emergency funding for humanitarian response in Sudan, as well as in refugee camps in neighbouring countries. Ensure specific support for putting in place protection, care, treatment, and support mechanisms for survivors of sexual violence. Ensure enough funding is directed towards providing essential services including psychological and trauma services to survivors of sexual violence.
- Ensure that the situation of women and girls in Sudan and in particular, the ongoing conflict-related sexual violence, is at the centre of discussions and efforts aimed at addressing the Sudan conflict.
- Call on parties to the conflict in Sudan to end all attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure and ensure unhindered and immediate humanitarian access including facilitating the provision of the supplies and staff necessary for comprehensive clinical management of rape and provision of services to survivors.
- The United States should reinstate all humanitarian aid and programming to address the crisis in Sudan, and to ensure that the resources for all programs addressing conflict-related sexual violence be expeditiously disbursed without any delays.
- Open safe and legal pathways and ensure protection and support for people fleeing Sudan. Refrain from returning Sudanese nationals to Sudan or to any third country where they may be at risk of being returned to Sudan.

To the United Nations Security Council

- Immediately call on all the warring parties and particularly the RSF to end widespread rape and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls. Call for the scaling up of humanitarian funding and response including to local women-led initiatives providing safe spaces, psychosocial support, and medical care to survivors.
- Invite survivors of sexual violence and organizations responding to the sexual violence crisis in Sudan to brief the Council.
- Request for a comprehensive and immediate briefing from the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict following her visit to Sudan.
- Expand the arms embargo regime that currently applies to Darfur to the rest of Sudan – given the significant escalation of the violence and its impact on civilians, and the flagrant violation of the existing embargo by various actors who are fuelling the Sudan conflict. The expansion of the arms embargo must be accompanied by a comprehensive and effective mechanism to prevent international sales and other illicit transfers of arms to Sudan. Ensure that adequate human and other resources are allocated to the UN Panel of Experts and the UN Secretariat to conduct investigations to help ensure compliance with the UN arms embargo on Sudan.

- Considering the current conflict, provide additional resources to the ICC investigations, and expand the Darfur conflict referral to the ICC to also include investigation and prosecution of crimes committed under international law, in the rest of Sudan including those committed in the context of the current conflict.
- 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 UNSC to hear and respond to updates on the sexual and gender-based violence crisis in the country.

To the UN Human Rights Council

- Renew the mandate of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan during the September 2025 session and ensure it has the necessary resources and support to document, collect, and preserve evidence of crimes, including conflict related sexual violence.

To the African Union Peace and Security Council

- Publicly call on all the warring parties and particularly the RSF to end widespread rape and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls.
- Convene a special briefing session on the role of conflict-related sexual violence in the ongoing conflict in Sudan, and the lack of accountability for it as one of the root causes of the conflict.
- Call on the warring parties to cooperate and support all ongoing accountability efforts including the work of both the UN Human Rights Council and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' Fact-Finding Missions to Sudan and facilitate their access to the territories under their control.
- Ensure that the Joint Fact-Finding Mission to Sudan has the necessary resources and support to effectively undertake its mandate of documenting and collecting evidence of crimes and gross human rights violations.
- Support and work with the UN Security Council to expand and enforce the arms embargo regime that currently applies to Darfur to the rest of Sudan – given the significant escalation of the violence and its impact on civilians, and the flagrant violation of the existing embargo by various actors who are fueling the Sudan conflict.

To the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

- Ensure its Joint Fact-Finding Mission to Sudan comprehensively investigates and reports on conflict related sexual violence, including by inviting survivors of sexual violence and organizations responding to the sexual violence crisis in Sudan to brief the Fact-Finding Mission.
- Renew the mandate of the Joint Fact-Finding Mission to Sudan upon the expiry of its mandate and ensure that it ultimately publishes a report of its findings and recommendations.

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info@amnesty.org



+44 (0)20 7413 5500

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“THEY RAPED ALL OF US”

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SUDAN

The escalating conflict in Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) that erupted in April 2023 is having a heavy toll on civilians and continues to decimate the country. The conflict has been particularly devastating for Sudanese women and girls. This report shows that the RSF have carried out widespread conflict-related sexual violence including rape, gang rape and sexual slavery across towns and villages in Sudan to humiliate, assert control, and to forcefully displace families and communities. These violations amount to war crimes and possible crimes against humanity.

Survivors of sexual violence have suffered both physical injuries and psychological trauma. It is also difficult for them to access health facilities and the police because of the fighting and for fear of stigmatization and reprisals. Survivors demand justice and accountability, and urgent access to medical treatment, care and protection from further violations.

The international response to the suffering of Sudanese women and girls has been reprehensible. It is time for Sudan’s international and regional partners to put more pressure on the warring parties to end sexual violence, ensure justice accountability and provide support mechanisms for survivors of sexual violence, including comprehensive sexual and reproductive health