



## COI QUERY

Country of Origin	Sudan
Main subject	Rapid Support Forces
Question(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><a href="#">Are there any reports on the cooperation between the Rapid Support Forces/Janjaweed and the Sudanese intelligence services (NISS) in the period of April 2019 – March 2020?</a><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><a href="#">Introductory note on the Rapid Support Forces</a></li></ul></li><li><a href="#">Is there any information on members of particular ethnic groups, religions or professions being targeted by the Rapid Support Forces/Janjaweed in Darfur and the Two Areas (South Kordofan and Blue Nile) in the period of April 2019 – March 2020? If yes, is there any information on the means of monitoring of such people?</a><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><a href="#">Targeting by the RSF</a></li><li><a href="#">Examples of incidents attributed to the RSF in the reference period</a></li><li><a href="#">Monitoring by the RSF</a></li></ul></li></ol>
Date of completion	2 June 2020
Query Code	Q10-2020
Contributing EU+ COI units (if applicable)	--

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The target audience is caseworkers, COI researchers, policymakers, and decision making authorities. The answer was finalised on 2 June 2020. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this answer.



## COI QUERY RESPONSE

### 1. Are there any reports on the cooperation between the Rapid Support Forces/Janjaweed and the Sudanese intelligence services (NISS) in the period of April 2019 – March 2020?

The 30-year long rule of president Omar al-Bashir in Sudan ended in April 2019.<sup>1</sup> Between 12 April and 17 August 2019, Sudan was ruled by a Transitional Military Council (TMC)<sup>2</sup>, which was replaced by a joint military and civilian sovereign council afterwards.<sup>3</sup>

Under the rule of president al-Bashir, the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) were acting as the Sudanese intelligence service<sup>4</sup>, reportedly with impunity.<sup>5</sup> NISS were accused of committing numerous human rights abuses in the reference period<sup>6</sup>, including 'arbitrary arrests and detentions, acts of torture, threats and intimidation, and other acts of harassment mainly targeting human rights defenders, lawyers, political opponents and other dissenting voices.'<sup>7</sup>

After their formal creation in 2013, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) were initially put under the command of the NISS and later they were made accountable directly to the president.<sup>8</sup> Sources reported on cases where members of RSF and NISS attacked protesters in Sudan together, including in Khartoum on 3 June 2019, where more than 120 people were reportedly killed by the RSF.<sup>9</sup>

In July 2019, the NISS was replaced by the General Information Service (GIS) whose duties were restricted to intelligence activities.<sup>10</sup> International Crisis Group suggested that in this period, many former NISS members moved to work directly with the RSF.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Al Jazeera, Sudan protest leaders, military sign transitional government deal, 17 August 2019, [url](#); BBC, Sudan profile - Timeline, 10 September 2019, [url](#)

<sup>2</sup> Al, They descend on us like rain: Justice for victims of protest crackdown in Sudan, 10 March 2020, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>3</sup> Al Jazeera, Sudan protest leaders, military sign transitional government deal, 17 August 2019, [url](#); DW, Sudan protesters, military form new transitional council, 20 August 2019, [url](#); VOA News, Sudan Forms 11-Member Sovereign Council, Headed by Military Leader, 20 August 2019, [url](#)

<sup>4</sup> PHR, "Chaos and Fire", An Analysis of Sudan's June 3, 2019 Khartoum Massacre, March 2020, [url](#), p. 3; USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Sudan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>5</sup> FIDH and ACJPS, Will There Be Justice For Darfur?, Persisting impunity in the face of political change, Fact-finding mission report, December 2019, [url](#), p. 29; USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Sudan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>6</sup> ACJPS, Torture in Sudan: Justice and Prevention, Priorities for change following the end of al-Bashir regime, 25 April 2019, [url](#), p. 1; FIDH and ACJPS, Will There Be Justice For Darfur?, Persisting impunity in the face of political change, Fact-finding mission report, December 2019, [url](#), p. 29; HRW, Sudan, Events of 2019, 14 January 2020, [url](#)

<sup>7</sup> FIDH and ACJPS, Will There Be Justice For Darfur?, Persisting impunity in the face of political change, Fact-finding mission report, December 2019, [url](#), p. 29

<sup>8</sup> BBC News, Sudan crisis: The ruthless mercenaries who run the country for gold, 20 July 2019, [url](#)

<sup>9</sup> Al, They descend on us like rain: Justice for victims of protest crackdown in Sudan, 10 March 2020, [url](#), p. 26; RVI (Rift Valley Institute), Mobilization and Resistance in Sudan's Uprising, January 2020, [url](#), p. 6; PHR, "Chaos and Fire", An Analysis of Sudan's June 3, 2019 Khartoum Massacre, March 2020, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>10</sup> USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Sudan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 2; Sudan Tribune, Sudan's military reforms security services, 30 July 2019, [url](#); Xinhuanet, Sudan issues decree to restructure national security body, 30 July 2019, [url](#)

<sup>11</sup> ICG, Safeguarding Sudan's Revolution, 21 October 2019, [url](#), pp. 16-17



## Introductory note on the Rapid Support Forces

Sources indicate that the RSF were formed from former Janjaweed militias<sup>12</sup> in order to suppress non-Arab rebellion in Darfur.<sup>13</sup> Members of the RSF come from the Arabic Rizeigat tribe in Darfur.<sup>14</sup> A July 2019 article by BBC stated that all commanders of the RSF are Arabs from Darfur and all generals share the name Dagolo.<sup>15</sup> RSF are reportedly also known as Da'ama even though this information could not be corroborated.<sup>16</sup>

The RSF were formally created as a new paramilitary force in Sudan in 2013<sup>17</sup> and they were later integrated into Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) in January 2017.<sup>18</sup> Under the al-Bashir rule, the task of the RSF was to protect the president from any coup attempt<sup>19</sup> and to suppress anti-government protests.<sup>20</sup>

Human Rights Watch (HRW) described the RSF as 'the paramilitary force established in 2013 which carried out highly abusive counter insurgency campaigns in Darfur, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile.'<sup>21</sup> One source described the RSF as 'Janjaweed 2.0', referring to a fact that members of former Janjaweed were transformed into a new force under the governmental forces.<sup>22</sup> Another source described the RSF as 'a hybrid of ethnic militia and business enterprise'.<sup>23</sup> RSF reportedly control gold mines in Darfur<sup>24</sup> that replaced oil as a crucial part of Sudanese economy.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> AI, Sudan: Fresh evidence of government-sponsored crimes in Darfur shows drawdown of peacekeepers premature and reckless, 11 June 2019, [url](#); DW, Militiamen in Sudan raped men and women, says eyewitness, 9 June 2019, [url](#); FIDH, Will There Be Justice For Darfur?, Persisting impunity in the face of political change, Fact-finding mission report, December 2019, [url](#), p. 13

<sup>13</sup> DW, Militiamen in Sudan raped men and women, says eyewitness, 9 June 2019, [url](#); PHR, "Chaos and Fire", An Analysis of Sudan's June 3, 2019 Khartoum Massacre, March 2020, [url](#), p. 4; UNSC, Letter dated 10 January 2019 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 10 January 2019, [url](#), para. 128

<sup>14</sup> BBC News, Sudan crisis: The ruthless mercenaries who run the country for gold, 20 July 2019, [url](#); Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 11; PHR, "Chaos and Fire", An Analysis of Sudan's June 3, 2019 Khartoum Massacre, March 2020, [url](#), p. 18;

<sup>15</sup> BBC News, Sudan crisis: The ruthless mercenaries who run the country for gold, 20 July 2019, [url](#)

<sup>16</sup> PHR, "Chaos and Fire", An Analysis of Sudan's June 3, 2019 Khartoum Massacre, March 2020, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>17</sup> BBC News, Sudan crisis: The ruthless mercenaries who run the country for gold, 20 July 2019, [url](#)

<sup>18</sup> ICG, Safeguarding Sudan's Revolution, 21 October 2019, [url](#), p. 14; UNSC, Letter dated 10 January 2019 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 10 January 2019, [url](#), para. 130

<sup>19</sup> Al Jazeera, Who are Sudan's RSF and their commander Hemeti?, 6 June 2019, [url](#); Foreign Policy, The Man Who Terrorized Darfur Is Leading Sudan's Supposed Transition, 14 May 2019, [url](#)

<sup>20</sup> ACLED, The Rapid Support Forces and the Escalation of Violence in Sudan, 2 July 2019, [url](#); AI, Sudan: Remove Rapid Support Forces from Khartoum streets immediately, 6 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>21</sup> HRW, "They Were Shouting 'Kill Them'", Sudan's Violent Crackdown on Protesters in Khartoum, November 2019, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>22</sup> Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>23</sup> BBC News, Sudan crisis: The ruthless mercenaries who run the country for gold, 20 July 2019, [url](#)

<sup>24</sup> BBC News, Sudan crisis: The ruthless mercenaries who run the country for gold, 20 July 2019, [url](#); Carleton University and The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Sudan: Freedom, peace, and justice, 6 January 2020, [url](#), p. 22

<sup>25</sup> AP NEWS, A new strongman in Sudan? Experts aren't so sure, 6 August 2019, [url](#); Carleton University and The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Sudan: Freedom, peace, and justice, 6 January 2020, [url](#), p. 6



It should be noted that the head of the RSF, Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, also called Hemedti, currently serves as a deputy in the transitional government of the sovereign council that came to power in August 2019.<sup>26</sup> Hemedti was described as ‘the most powerful man in the security forces’ in Sudan by the International Crisis Group.<sup>27</sup>

The RSF have been accused of committing human rights violations in Darfur, South Kordofan and the Blue Nile.<sup>28</sup> Between July 2018 and February 2019, Amnesty International (AI) accused the RSF of committing ‘war crimes and other serious human rights violations’ in Darfur’s Jebel Marra region, including destruction of some 45 villages, killings, looting, forced displacement and sexual violence against civilians.<sup>29</sup> This happened despite a ceasefire declared in January 2019<sup>30</sup>, which did not stop fighting between the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid (SLA-AW) and the SAF including the RSF.<sup>31</sup> It should be noted that attacks by the RSF on civilians in Jebel Marra were reported also in 2018.<sup>32</sup> According to AI, the RSF ‘have committed atrocities with impunity for years’ in Darfur.<sup>33</sup> HRW stated that ‘[t]he RSF has a well-documented record of abuses committed in Darfur, Southern Kordofan, and Blue Nile.’<sup>34</sup>

Describing the situation in Sudan in 2019, the US Department of State (USDOS) stated that ‘[i]n Darfur and the Two Areas, paramilitary forces and rebel groups continued to commit killings, rape, and torture of civilians throughout the year. Local militias maintained substantial influence due to widespread impunity.’<sup>35</sup> The RSF were widely held responsible for violent attacks against the protesters in Khartoum on 3 June 2019.<sup>36</sup> In their 2020 report, the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC)<sup>37</sup> stated that the RSF ‘continues to be a destabilizing force’ in Sudan.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> HRW, Sudan: Justice Needed for Protester Killings, 17 November 2019, [url](#); PHR, “Chaos and Fire”, An Analysis of Sudan’s June 3, 2019 Khartoum Massacre, March 2020, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>27</sup> ICG, Safeguarding Sudan’s Revolution, 21 October 2019, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>28</sup> Al Jazeera, Who are Sudan’s RSF and their commander Hemedti?, 6 June 2019, [url](#); Foreign Policy, The Man Who Terrorized Darfur Is Leading Sudan’s Supposed Transition, 14 May 2019, [url](#); USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Sudan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>29</sup> AI, Sudan: Fresh evidence of government-sponsored crimes in Darfur shows drawdown of peacekeepers premature and reckless, 11 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>30</sup> HRW, Sudan, Events of 2019, 14 January 2020, [url](#)

<sup>31</sup> AI, Human Rights in Africa: Review of 2019 - Sudan, 8 April 2020, [url](#)

<sup>32</sup> ACJPS, Attacks by Sudanese government forces on civilians in Jebel Marra in South Darfur, 18 April 2018, [url](#)

<sup>33</sup> AI, Sudan: Fresh evidence of government-sponsored crimes in Darfur shows drawdown of peacekeepers premature and reckless, 11 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>34</sup> HRW, Sudan: Prioritize Justice, Accountability, 23 August 2019, [url](#)

<sup>35</sup> USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Sudan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>36</sup> AI, They descend on us like rain: Justice for victims of protest crackdown in Sudan, 10 March 2020, [url](#), p. 26; RVI, Mobilization and Resistance in Sudan’s Uprising, January 2020, [url](#), p. 6; PHR, “Chaos and Fire”, An Analysis of Sudan’s June 3, 2019 Khartoum Massacre, March 2020, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>37</sup> To learn more about the source, see: OSAC, Who we are, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>38</sup> OSAC, Sudan 2020 Crime & Safety Report, 30 April 2020, [url](#)



**2. Is there any information on members of particular ethnic groups, religions or professions being targeted by the Rapid Support Forces/Janjaweed in Darfur and the Two Areas (South Kordofan and Blue Nile) in the period of April 2019 – March 2020? If yes, is there any information on the means of monitoring of such people?**

### Targeting by the RSF

In the reference period, sources reported on attacks by members of the RSF in Darfur (predominantly) and the Two Areas on a variety of groups, including (but not limited to) other armed actors (governmental and non-governmental), IDPs and civilians (women, men and children), students, protesters, health workers, farmers, and non-Arab ethnic groups, as illustrated below.

In April 2019, the African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) released a report on torture in Sudan that found that amongst persons targeted for torture in Sudan are ‘human rights defenders, women, political activists, lawyers, journalists, trade unionists, students and other groups’.<sup>39</sup> The source further noted that even though the NISS were mostly held responsible for torture, ‘[m]embers of the army and paramilitary forces have also been extensively implicated in torture in the course of military campaigns in Southern Sudan, Kordofan, the Blue Nile region and Darfur.’<sup>40</sup>

In a July 2019 report, the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) suggested that the RSF have been involved in violence against the civilians, including sexual violence, as well as fighting against other security forces in Sudan. The source noted that ‘the RSF has been responsible for more reported fatalities and more instances of violence against civilians than the military and police combined’, referring to the protests that began in Sudan in December 2018.<sup>41</sup> A June 2019 article by Deutsche Welle (DW) suggested that the RSF committed violence against other members of the security forces if they have shown support to the protesters.<sup>42</sup>

A UK Home Office fact-finding mission in Sudan conducted in August 2018 observed that ‘the Janjaweed and rebels still have a presence in rural Darfur; they attack villages and sexually assault women.’<sup>43</sup> In January 2020, The New Humanitarian stated that the IDPs they have interviewed in North Darfur are afraid to return to their homes because they fear the Janjaweed. The same source noted that ‘[t]oday, Darfur is crawling with RSF troops, who patrol towns like El Fasher in armoured trucks bristling with mounted machine guns. But IDPs say they do little to protect them from the Arab tribes who occupy their lands.’<sup>44</sup> Similarly, Eric Reeves, a Sudan analyst who has been writing about the country for 20 years, wrote in June 2019 that ‘[a]ttacks by the RSF on peaceful civilians continue in

<sup>39</sup> ACJPS, Torture in Sudan: Justice and Prevention, Priorities for change following the end of al-Bashir regime, 25 April 2019, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>40</sup> ACJPS, Torture in Sudan: Justice and Prevention, Priorities for change following the end of al-Bashir regime, 25 April 2019, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>41</sup> ACLED, The Rapid Support Forces and the Escalation of Violence in Sudan, 2 July 2019, [url](#)

<sup>42</sup> DW, Militiamen in Sudan raped men and women, says eyewitness, 9 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>43</sup> UK Home Office, Report of a fact-finding mission to Khartoum, Sudan, Conducted between 10 and 17 August 2018, November 2018, [url](#), p. 53

<sup>44</sup> New Humanitarian (The), Sudan’s revolution runs aground in Darfur, 8 January 2020, [url](#)



Darfur and South Kordofan, and there is no evidence that Hemeti [Hemedti] is using his now immense (and growing) power to restrain these forces. Very recent reports (May 9, 2019) of violence against demonstrators have specifically pointed to the RSF as the responsible party.<sup>45</sup>

In relation to protests in Khartoum on 3 June 2019, security forces reportedly violently suppressed demonstrations in Kordofan, Darfur, and Blue Nile States as well.<sup>46</sup> Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), a global NGO investigating and documenting human rights violations, observed that the 'RSF forces specifically targeted doctors and other health care workers with harassment, intimidation, and violence on June 3.'<sup>47</sup> In August 2019, HRW reported that the RSF 'has led most of the attacks on protesters' in Sudan since April 2019.<sup>48</sup>

Sources indicate that non-Arab ethnic groups in Sudan<sup>49</sup> were subjected to racial discrimination and were even called 'slaves'.<sup>50</sup> An article by Open Democracy finds that the RSF have committed ethnic cleansing of 'African Sudanese' in Darfur.<sup>51</sup> A January 2019 report by the Waging Peace, a human rights organization working against human rights violations in Sudan, quoted sources that indicate that people from certain ethnic groups were automatically presumed to belonging to armed opposition and they have been reports of armed raids, destruction of property, looting and sexual violence based on this ground.<sup>52</sup> Ethnic groups targeted on the ground of perceived connection to the rebel groups in Darfur included Fur, Massalit and Zaghawa<sup>53</sup>, as well as Tunjur and Burgo.<sup>54</sup> Sources indicate that the RSF have been committing sexual violence against women in Darfur.<sup>55</sup>

Eric Reeves noted that:

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<sup>45</sup> Reeves, E., UNAMID Withdrawal and International Abandonment: Violence in Darfur 2017 –2019, a statistical analysis, 28 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>46</sup> PHR, "Chaos and Fire", An Analysis of Sudan's June 3, 2019 Khartoum Massacre, March 2020, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>47</sup> PHR, "Chaos and Fire", An Analysis of Sudan's June 3, 2019 Khartoum Massacre, March 2020, [url](#), pp. 22-23

<sup>48</sup> HRW, Sudan: Prioritize Justice, Accountability, 23 August 2019, [url](#)

<sup>49</sup> According to the sources consulted by the ACCORD in their 2017 report on Darfur, non-Arab ethnic groups in Darfur include Fur, Masalit, Zaghawa, Fellata, Berti, Jebel, Mima, Bargo, Sambat, Mararit, Tama, Tunjur, Barno, Gimir, Dajo, Kanein, Birgid, Erenga, and Kanein. ACCORD, Darfur, COI Compilation, September 2017, [url](#), p. 46

<sup>50</sup> BT, BTI 2020 Country Report Sudan, 29 April 2020, [url](#), p. 11; Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 12; PHR, "Chaos and Fire", An Analysis of Sudan's June 3, 2019 Khartoum Massacre, March 2020, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>51</sup> Open Democracy, In this new Sudan, will the elite protesters stand up for suffering Darfur?, 15 August 2019, [url](#)

<sup>52</sup> Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>53</sup> Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 27; FIDH and ACJPS, Will There Be Justice For Darfur?, Persisting impunity in the face of political change, Fact-finding mission report, December 2019, [url](#), p. 36; University of London, SOAS, Darfuri migration from Sudan to Europe, From displacement to despair, August 2018, [url](#), p. 49

<sup>54</sup> Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 27

<sup>55</sup> Carleton University and The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Sudan: Freedom, peace, and justice, 6 January 2020, [url](#), p. 8; Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 12; FIDH and ACJPS, Will There Be Justice For Darfur?, Persisting impunity in the face of political change, Fact-finding mission report, December 2019, [url](#), p. 22; UK Home Office, Report of a fact-finding mission to Khartoum, Sudan, Conducted between 10 and 17 August 2018, November 2018, [url](#), p. 53





‘Although Arab groups have suffered from significant violence at various points over the sixteen years of the Darfur conflict, particularly inter-tribal violence in East Darfur—and continue to suffer from violence in some areas—the genocidal ambitions of the Khartoum regime’s counter-insurgency campaign against Darfuri rebel groups has been directed overwhelmingly at non-Arab/African tribal groups.’

The same source further noted that ‘while ethnicity is an enormously complex issue in Darfur, the fact remains that ethnic identity is highly significant and has become even more salient over the past fifteen years, particularly in ethnic self-identification. It is not accidental that the victims of militia and regular force attacks are overwhelmingly from the Fur, Massalit, Zaghawa, Berti, Bergid, Tama tribes.’<sup>56</sup>

The same source further noted that RSF have committed not only actual physical violence against the civilians, but also expropriation of land and deliberate destruction of the agriculture.<sup>57</sup> In January 2019, it was reported that pro-government militias conducted violations in Darfur based on ethnicity that included raiding, looting, kidnapping and driving inhabitants out of their properties.<sup>58</sup> One source indicated that the IDPs involved in activities such as farming or wood gathering were especially targeted by ‘bandits and pro-Government forces’.<sup>59</sup> An article by Open Democracy from August 2019 indicated that the RSF in Darfur ‘continue plundering natural resources, looting livestock and ethnically cleansing the non-Arab population’.<sup>60</sup>

A December 2019 report from a joint fact-finding mission by FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights) and ACJPS (African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies) stated that members of the RSF were confiscating goods from civilians and were selling them for their own profit. They were also found to be occupying land and asking farmers to pay money to be able to do plantation work.<sup>61</sup> The same source noted that in other areas of Darfur apart from Jebel Mara, ‘cases of killings, rape and other forms of sexual violence, acts of torture, looting, mainly targeting civilians, continue to be reported throughout the region.’<sup>62</sup>

Commenting on the situation in Darfur, Eric Reeves wrote in December 2019:

‘Many thousands of farms and farmlands have been violently destroyed or seized by Arab militias and marauders; billions of dollars of livestock, crops, and possessions have been

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<sup>56</sup> Reeves, E., UNAMID Withdrawal and International Abandonment: Violence in Darfur 2017 –2019, a statistical analysis, 28 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>57</sup> Reeves, E., UNAMID Withdrawal and International Abandonment: Violence in Darfur 2017 –2019, a statistical analysis, 28 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>58</sup> Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>59</sup> Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 14

<sup>60</sup> Open Democracy, In this new Sudan, will the elite protesters stand up for suffering Darfur?, 15 August 2019, [url](#)

<sup>61</sup> FIDH and ACJPS, Will There Be Justice For Darfur?, Persisting impunity in the face of political change, Fact-finding mission report, December 2019, [url](#), p. 28

<sup>62</sup> FIDH and ACJPS, Will There Be Justice For Darfur?, Persisting impunity in the face of political change, Fact-finding mission report, December 2019, [url](#), p. 22



destroyed or seized; many thousands of villages have been wholly or partially destroyed, often including vital water sources and irrigation systems. Displaced farmers seeking to return to or work their farms are constantly subject to extreme violence, including murder, rape, and kidnapping.’<sup>63</sup>

In the reference period March to December 2019, the RSF members were accused of unlawful detention, torture and extrajudicial killings, as reported by the UN Security Council (UNSC).<sup>64</sup> In the same period, the same source reported on incidents where IDPs in Darfur were attacked, their properties looted and they were forcibly expelled from their villages by ‘Arab nomads’, allegedly supported by the RSF.<sup>65</sup> The Darfur Network for Monitoring and Documentation (DNMD), an NGO dedicated to protect human rights in Darfur, stated that ‘[f]or years, the RSF have harassed the civilians in villages and towns of Gereida in South Darfur, and have committed multiple crimes against the IDPs, including killing, rape, looting, and forced displacement. Armed pastoralists have targeted IDPs by releasing their livestock on the farms to disrupt their agricultural crops.’<sup>66</sup>

Covering the period of April-June 2019, the Sudan Consortium, a coalition of NGOs promoting a peaceful end to human rights violations in Sudan, reported on continued attacks against civilians in Delami County in Nuba Mountains. Almost all the violations were attributed to the SAF rather than the RSF, according to the source.<sup>67</sup> No corroborating info on the said attacks could be found amongst consulted and used sources in the time restraints for drafting this query response.

According to Jerome Tubiana, a researcher on Sudan quoted by Al Jazeera in relation to June 2019 protests in Khartoum, the RSF’s ‘targets in Khartoum are not the usual non-Arab marginalised people from the peripheries, but include urban, middle-class, educated people, with connections to the elite and the al-Bashir regime.’<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Reeves, E., What Will Be Remembered? History and the Darfur Genocide, 31 December 2019, [url](#)

<sup>64</sup> UNSC, Letter dated 10 January 2019 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 14 January 2020, [url](#), paras. 120-122

<sup>65</sup> UNSC, Letter dated 10 January 2019 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 14 January 2020, [url](#), paras. 127-130

<sup>66</sup> Darfur Network for Monitoring and Documentation, Human rights violations against farmers and civilian by armed militias in the Darfur region, 21 November 2019, [url](#)

<sup>67</sup> Sudan Consortium, Human Rights Update: April – June 2019, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>68</sup> Al Jazeera, Who are Sudan’s RSF and their commander Hemeti?, 6 June 2019, [url](#)





Sources state that the RSF have as a part of Sudanese security forces enjoyed immunity<sup>69</sup> and acted with impunity.<sup>70</sup> According to the December 2019 FIDH report, 'no RSF member has ever faced prosecution for alleged involvement in serious human rights violations.'<sup>71</sup>

### Examples of incidents attributed to the RSF in the reference period

It should be noted that 'many cases in Darfur remain invisible and under-reported due to lack of access to some parts of the region', as stated by the UN in June 2019.<sup>72</sup>

Below is an illustrative list of reported incidents attributed to the members of the RSF and involving civilians in the reference period in Darfur. No reports on specific incidents involving civilians by the RSF in the Two Areas could be found amongst consulted and used sources in the time restraints for drafting this query response.

- In May 2019, HRW reported that the RSF used violence against protesters in Nyala in South Darfur, as well as in Zalingei, Central Darfur.<sup>73</sup>
- In June 2019, the UN reported on 47 persons killed, 186 injured and 163 arrested in relation to protests in Darfur in the previous three months. The source further reported on 'intensified harassment of civilians and looting of houses and livestock by Rapid Support Forces'.<sup>74</sup>
- On 9-10 June 2019 in Deleig in Central Darfur, multiple attacks on villages by the RSF reportedly caused 11 deaths and burnt houses and business, as reported by the FIDH. The source described similar incidents as 'frequent'.<sup>75</sup>
- On 13 June 2019, it was reported that at least nine civilians were killed and twenty wounded after a shooting by the RSF on the market in Deleij.<sup>76</sup>
- On 22 July 2019, suspected RSF members raided Kabra village in North Darfur over a camel dispute. Six locals were killed and seven wounded.<sup>77</sup>
- On 24 July 2019, the RSF were accused of committing violations against the civilians in North Darfur, including attacks on farms and returned IDPs.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>69</sup> FIDH and ACJPS, Will There Be Justice For Darfur?, Persisting impunity in the face of political change, Fact-finding mission report, December 2019, [url](#), pp. 28-29; HRW, Sudan: Prioritize Justice, Accountability, 23 August 2019, [url](#); UNSC, Letter dated 10 January 2019 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 10 January 2019, [url](#), para. 68

<sup>70</sup> AI, Sudan: Fresh evidence of government-sponsored crimes in Darfur shows drawdown of peacekeepers premature and reckless, 11 June 2019, [url](#); Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 12; FIDH and ACJPS, Will There Be Justice For Darfur?, Persisting impunity in the face of political change, Fact-finding mission report, December 2019, [url](#), p. 28; UK Home Office, Report of a fact-finding mission to Khartoum, Sudan, Conducted between 10 and 17 August 2018, November 2018, [url](#), p. 53

<sup>71</sup> FIDH and ACJPS, Will There Be Justice For Darfur?, Persisting impunity in the face of political change, Fact-finding mission report, December 2019, [url](#), p. 29

<sup>72</sup> UN News, UN suspending handover of camps in Darfur, peacekeeping chief tells Security Council, 14 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>73</sup> HRW, Sudan's Transition Hasn't Ended Abuses in Darfur, 8 May 2019, [url](#)

<sup>74</sup> UN News, UN suspending handover of camps in Darfur, peacekeeping chief tells Security Council, 14 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>75</sup> FIDH and ACJPS, Will There Be Justice For Darfur?, Persisting impunity in the face of political change, Fact-finding mission report, December 2019, [url](#), p. 22

<sup>76</sup> Al Jazeera, Sudan: UN says it confirmed 17 deaths in Darfur region violence, 13 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>77</sup> Dabanga, Six villagers – including children – killed in North Darfur attack, 22 July 2019, [url](#)

<sup>78</sup> Dabanga, Rebels 'repel militia attack' in Darfur's Jebel Marra, 24 July 2019, [url](#)



- In a context of the conflict in Jebel Marra, the United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) recorded violations against 84 children committed between June and September 2019 by various actors including RSF.<sup>79</sup>
- On 15 September, a student was killed during a robbery by gunmen wearing RSF uniforms near Mershing in South Darfur. When local people went to report the incident to the police and the GIS, one was killed and two others wounded. The police station was burned down following killing of another two people the next day.<sup>80</sup>
- On 5 October 2019, two underage girls were raped by men identified as members of the RSF in Central Darfur (Nertiti).<sup>81</sup>
- On 20 October 2019, attacks in the IDPs were reported in Gereida in South Darfur.<sup>82</sup>
- On 29 and 31 October 2019, the DNMD recorded several attacks on farmers by the RSF with fatalities in Darfur.<sup>83</sup>
- A November 2019 article by the DNMD reported that the RSF committed violations against ‘farmers and civilians’ in Darfur.<sup>84</sup>
- In November 2019, four women were sexually assaulted by the RSF in North Darfur (Kutum village).<sup>85</sup>
- Between 15 October 2019 and 31 January 2020, UNAMID recorded five clashes over land with 70 deaths. The most serious incident took place in West Darfur on 29 December 2019, when IDPs were attacked by Arab tribesmen supported by members of the RSF. On 30-31 December, they attacked 21 villages with returnees near El Geneina. Estimated 65 persons were killed and 54 injured.<sup>86</sup>
- In January 2020, fighting between Arab and non-Arab ethnic groups in El Geneina in West Darfur reportedly caused 70 deaths. The RSF were responsible for the violence, according to the local sources, as reported by the Sudan Tribune.<sup>87</sup>
- The UNSC reported that some 90 violations and abuses with 152 victims were documented in Darfur in the period of 15 October 2019 - 22 January 2020. The violations were perpetrated by persons only described as ‘Arabs’, unidentified actors and SAF including the RSF.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> UNSC, Special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, 15 October 2019, [url](#), para. 18

<sup>80</sup> UNSC, Letter dated 10 January 2019 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 14 January 2020, [url](#), para. 53

<sup>81</sup> UNSC, Letter dated 10 January 2019 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 14 January 2020, [url](#), para. 116

<sup>82</sup> DNMD, Human rights violations against farmers and civilian by armed militias in the Darfur region, 21 November 2019, [url](#)

<sup>83</sup> DNMD, Human rights violations against farmers and civilian by armed militias in the Darfur region, 21 November 2019, [url](#)

<sup>84</sup> DNMD, Human rights violations against farmers and civilians by armed militias in the Darfur region, 21 November 2019, [url](#)

<sup>85</sup> UNSC, Letter dated 10 January 2019 from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 14 January 2020, [url](#), para. 120

<sup>86</sup> UNSC, Special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 12 March 2020, [url](#), para. 11

<sup>87</sup> Sudan Tribune, Stop Darfur’s Bleeding, 7 January 2020, [url](#)

<sup>88</sup> UNSC, Special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence, 12 March 2020, [url](#), para. 25



## Monitoring by the RSF

No information on the monitoring capabilities by the RSF in the reference period could be found amongst consulted and used sources in the time constraints.

Information below on the governmental monitoring during the rule of al-Bashir could be of relevance.

The USDOS report covering 2019 indicated that the government monitored its citizens and that it 'conducted surveillance in schools, universities, markets, workplaces, and neighborhoods.'<sup>89</sup> The source further stated that '[t]his type of activity appeared to have ceased, or been dramatically reduced', since the sovereign council came to power.<sup>90</sup> Similarly, the same source wrote that 'there were credible reports the Bashir regime and the TMC monitored private online communications' while the sovereign council 'generally respected internet freedom'.<sup>91</sup>

Commenting on the situation in 2019, Freedom House wrote that '[u]nchecked surveillance of ICTs is a grave concern in Sudan, where the government is known to actively monitor communications on social media platforms and surveil online activists and journalists during politically sensitive periods. The NISS regularly intercepts private email messages with the aid of sophisticated surveillance technologies.'<sup>92</sup> According to the same source, service providers in Sudan were required to collect the data of their customers and share it with the government.<sup>93</sup>

Sources indicate that the Sudanese government under al-Bashir used a surveillance system called Remote Control System (RCS).<sup>94</sup> A February 2014 study by The Citizen Lab<sup>95</sup> found that 'RCS's capabilities include the ability to copy files from a computer's hard disk, record skype calls, e-mails, instant messages, and passwords typed into a web browser. Furthermore, RCS can turn on a device's webcam and microphone to spy on the target.'<sup>96</sup> No information on the use of the RCS or similar technology by the sovereign council could be found amongst consulted and used sources in the time constraints.

In August 2018, UK Home Office conducted a fact-finding mission in Sudan which in relation to the monitoring quoted an official from the British embassy who stated that: 'There is general monitoring

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<sup>89</sup> USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Sudan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>90</sup> USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Sudan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>91</sup> USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Sudan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 22

<sup>92</sup> Freedom House, Freedom on the net 2019, Sudan, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>93</sup> Freedom House, Freedom on the net 2019, Sudan, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>94</sup> Advox, The right to privacy in Sudan: A call to enact a data protection act, November 2019, [url](#); Citizen Lab, Mapping Hacking Team's "Untraceable" Spyware, 17 February 2014, [url](#); Freedom House, Freedom on the Net 2017 - Sudan, 14 November 2017, [url](#)

<sup>95</sup> The Citizen Lab writes about themselves: "The Citizen Lab is an interdisciplinary laboratory based at the Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy, University of Toronto, focusing on research, development, and high-level strategic policy and legal engagement at the intersection of information and communication technologies, human rights, and global security." See: Citizen Lab (The), About the Citizen Lab, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>96</sup> Citizen Lab, Mapping Hacking Team's "Untraceable" Spyware, 17 February 2014, [url](#)



of all Sudanese by the government... [but] thought that it was not interested in Darfuris unless they were in some way politically active or having ties to rebel groups.'<sup>97</sup>

Another interviewee from civil society stated that NISS monitors social media and can obtain further personal information after obtaining a person's phone. The source noted that 'NISS monitoring is not sophisticated enough to be able track people from one region to another.'<sup>98</sup> The report further found that 'Darfuris who are suspected of links with rebel groups may experience greater monitoring than other groups; it is unclear, however, if Darfuris generally are subject to greater monitoring than other groups. The government monitors social media and may be able to tap mobile phones, and track people via their phones. However, the evidence about its exact capabilities is limited.'<sup>99</sup>

The Waging Peace organisation noted that '[o]ne form of discrimination suffered by Darfuris is their targeting for surveillance and monitoring activities, including within the diaspora.'<sup>100</sup> Two Sudan experts interviewed by the source concluded that the Darfuris 'may come under surveillance, especially if they live in IDP camps in Darfur, are university students and/ or political activists'.<sup>101</sup> Another interviewed expert suggested that surveillance seems to be 'aimed at ending or preventing any, often imaginary, humanitarian or family support to conflict area's.'<sup>102</sup>

An August 2018 report by the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London indicated that 'close surveillance' by the government was one of the reasons for the Darfuris to emigrate, noting that the IDPs and students were especially affected.<sup>103</sup>

Sources reported on cases where young Darfuri boys were asked by the authorities to spy on their relatives.<sup>104</sup> Sources also indicate that Christians were subjected to surveillance during the rule of al-Bashir.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> UK Home Office, Report of a fact-finding mission to Khartoum, Sudan, Conducted between 10 and 17 August 2018, November 2018, [url](#), pp. 78-79

<sup>98</sup> UK Home Office, Report of a fact-finding mission to Khartoum, Sudan, Conducted between 10 and 17 August 2018, November 2018, [url](#), p. 79

<sup>99</sup> UK Home Office, Report of a fact-finding mission to Khartoum, Sudan, Conducted between 10 and 17 August 2018, November 2018, [url](#), p. 163

<sup>100</sup> Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 22

<sup>101</sup> Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 22

<sup>102</sup> Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 22

<sup>103</sup> University of London, SOAS, Darfuri migration from Sudan to Europe, From displacement to despair, August 2018, [url](#), p. 16

<sup>104</sup> Crowther, M., Risks on return for Darfuris in Sudan, In: Waging Peace, January 2019, [url](#), p. 22; University of London, SOAS, Darfuri migration from Sudan to Europe, From displacement to despair, August 2018, [url](#), p. 16

<sup>105</sup> Sat7, New freedom for a growing church in Sudan, September 2019, [url](#); USCIRF, 2020 Annual Report, April 2020, [url](#), p. 81; USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Sudan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 20; World Watch Monitor, Khartoum keeps 5 Christian leaders under daily surveillance, 11 April 2016, [url](#)



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