

July 19, 2024

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Re: Protection and Relocation Needed for Sudan's Displaced Populations in Danger

We write to you as U.S. refugee and immigrant advocacy organizations with grave concern for the rapidly deteriorating situation facing refugees in the Sudan crisis.

Since June 24, 2024, more than 136,000 people, including refugees, have been displaced from locations across Sennar State after armed clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF).¹ Prior to this escalation, localities such as Sennar, Sinja, and Ad Dinder hosted people previously displaced from Khartoum or Al Jazirah. This escalation has significantly exacerbated civilian suffering, created protection risks, and resulted in increased violations of international humanitarian law.² Ethiopian refugees in Gedaref state are also threatened by the violence nearing their camps in eastern Sudan.³

Meanwhile, the situation remains "tense and unpredictable" in El Fasher in North Darfur, where continued clashes between the SAF and RSF are trapping civilians in contested areas.⁴ Sudan's hunger crisis and risk of famine is rapidly escalating with no end in sight due to a lack of humanitarian access in besieged areas like El Fasher.⁵

With the latest surge in violence, we call upon the United States government to use all available sources of leverage to ensure that populations affected by the ongoing violence in Sudan are provided assistance and access to safety and protection, including relocation, where appropriate. To that end, **we urge that the United States and all relevant stakeholders ensure that:**

- All warring parties uphold their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law.
- All warring parties allow safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance to affected populations through all crossline and cross-border routes.

¹ "DTM Sudan Flash Alert: Conflict in Sinja, Ad Dinder, and Sennar localities, Sennar." Displacement Tracking Matrix (Sudan)—International Organization for Migration. July 3, 2024. <https://mailchi.mp/iom/dtm-sudan-flash-alert-conflict-in-sinja-ad-dinder-and-sennar-localities-sennar-update-005>.

² "Sudan: Conflict in Sinja, Sennar State – Flash Update No. 02." Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs." July 4, 2024. <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-conflict-sinja-sennar-state-flash-update-no-02-4-july-2024-enar>.

³ Teferra, Tsehaye. "Re: Immediate Protection and Repatriation Needed for Ethiopian Refugees Facing Imminent Danger in Sudan." Ethiopian Community Development Council. July 5, 2024.

⁴ "DTM Sudan Flash Alert: Conflict in Al Fasher (Al Fasher Town), North Darfur." Displacement Tracking Matrix (Sudan)—International Organization for Migration. July 4, 2024. <https://mailchi.mp/iom/dtm-sudan-flash-alert-conflict-in-al-fasher-al-fasher-town-north-darfur-update-040>.

⁵ "Failure of the international community could leave millions at risk of famine in Sudan." Sudan INGO Forum. July 4, 2024. <https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/statements/failure-of-the-international-community-could-leave-millions-at-risk-of-famine/sudan.pdf>.

- The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), governments, and other relevant stakeholders facilitate safe and dignified relocation where possible.
- The international community prioritizes funding for the humanitarian response in Sudan, including by delivering on recent pledges, so the Sudan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan and the Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan are adequately funded to address the scale of needs.
- All relevant stakeholders work toward the full voluntary and safe repatriation of refugees and displaced populations to their home countries.

We recognize the United States' leadership role in funding the humanitarian response in Sudan.⁶ We will continue to support the United States' ongoing efforts to ensure that the Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of Sudan, particularly for the ability of civilians to safely and voluntarily leave besieged areas, is fully realized.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)

Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC)

Amnesty International USA

Center for Gender & Refugee Studies

Church World Service

Global Refugee

Human Rights First

International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)

Islamic Relief USA

Rainbow Railroad

Refugee Congress

Refugee Council USA

The Episcopal Church

We Are All America (WAAA)

World Relief

⁶ "Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield Announces Nearly \$203 Million in Additional Humanitarian Assistance for Sudan and Neighboring Countries." United States Mission to the United Nations. July 18, 2024.

<https://usun.usmission.gov/ambassador-linda-thomas-greenfield-announces-nearly-203-million-in-additional-humanitarian-assistance-for-sudan-and-neighboring-countries/>.

The America Team for Displaced Eritreans
Health Professionals Network for Tigray
Human Rights Concern - Eritrea (HRCE)
Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants
International Center of Kentucky
International Institute of Akron
International Institute of Los Angeles
International Institute of New England
Lao Family Community Development Inc.
Nationalities Service Center
Northern Nevada International Center
Pacific Gateway Center
The Children's Village
YMCA of Greater Houston

CC:

Tom Perriello, U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan

Ambassador Julieta Valls Noyes, Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

Elizabeth Campbell, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

Sarah Cross, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration