Joint Statement Urging More Aid, Solidarity and Attention to Sudan Crisis

(New York, September 13, 2023) - We, the heads of over 50 human rights and humanitarian organizations are coming together to sound the alarm about Sudan, where a disaster is unfolding before our eyes. With fighting continuing across the country, brutal sexual violence rising, widespread deliberate and indiscriminate attacks on civilians, and journalists and human rights defenders being silenced, the country is no longer at the precipice of mass atrocities – it has fallen over the edge.

Since April, when open hostilities broke out in Sudan’s capital, more than five million people have been forced to flee their homes and hundreds of thousands of others may soon be forced to join them. Many are now living in camps with limited access to humanitarian assistance, few educational opportunities for their children, and almost no psychosocial support to help them cope with their traumatic experiences.

Inside Sudan, over 20 million people, 42 percent of Sudan’s population, now face acute food insecurity and 6 million are just a step away from famine. At least 498 children have died from hunger. Clinics and doctors have come under fire throughout the country, putting 80 percent of the country’s major hospitals out of service.

Hate speech, especially language urging the targeting of communities based on the color of their skin, is always alarming. But with an increasingly fractured social fabric, some fighters targeting civilians based on their ethnicity, and accounts from sexual violence survivors in Darfur who heard their rapists tell them that we hope you bear “our” babies – we fear the worst.

Twenty years after the horrors of Darfur shocked our conscience, we are failing to meet the moment. Thus far, mediation efforts have not deterred Sudan’s warring parties from continuing to commit egregious abuses. We urge a more unified approach that better represents the voices and perspectives of Sudan’s civilians, including women, youth, and representatives from the historically marginalized “periphery.”

We are committed to working together to urge more aid for, more solidarity with, and greater attention to the needs of Sudan’s civilians. The United Nations humanitarian appeal remains woefully underfunded – at about 25 percent of what is needed – and Sudan’s warring parties continue to undermine efforts to deliver aid safely. Donors should step up humanitarian funding, both for local and international organizations who are providing indispensable assistance in Sudan and neighboring countries.

The costs of inaction are mounting. The UN Security Council should move from talk to action and begin negotiations to pass a resolution that challenges the climate of impunity, reiterates that international law requires providing safe, unhindered humanitarian access, and redirects international efforts to better protect Sudan’s most vulnerable. The consequences of not acting are too grave to imagine.
Signatories (listed alphabetically)

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