

Sudan: Genocide 'against non-Arab groups' taking place in Darfur

By Oscar Rickett

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A newly released report from an international human rights organisation has concluded that a genocide is taking place against Black African (non-Arab) groups in Sudan's Darfur region.

The independent inquiry carried out by the Raoul Wallenberg Centre has found that there is "clear and convincing evidence" that the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary and its allied militias "have committed and are committing genocide against the Masalit," a Black African group.

The report, which cites the work of Middle East Eye on multiple occasions, also concludes that "the RSF and allied militias have committed and are committing direct and public incitement to genocide" and that all 153 states that have signed the Genocide Convention are "obligated to end complicity in and employ all means reasonably available to prevent and halt the genocide".

It goes on to say that there is "clear and convincing evidence" that Sudan, the United Arab Emirates, Libya, Chad, the Central African Republic (CAR) and Russia via the actions of the Wagner Group are "complicit in the genocide".

The UAE is the Sudanese paramilitary's main patron, with the supply of arms to the RSF also facilitated by Libyan commander Khalifa Haftar, and running overland from Chad and the CAR, as well as being flown out of airbases in Uganda.

The RSF has been at war with the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) since 15 April last year. The war has displaced over eight million people and has left 18 million "acutely food insecure", according to the UN's World Food Programme.

The paramilitary force has denied that it is being supplied by the UAE and rejected accusations that it is waging an ethnically motivated campaign of violence in Darfur.

As the inquiry notes, the RSF grew out of the Janjaweed militias, the "devils on horseback" employed by the government of Omar al-Bashir to violently quell uprisings in the first decade of the 21st century. The Janjaweed stand accused of responsibility for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Sudanese during those years.

In 2019, Hemeti, along with current army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, removed Bashir from power in response to a popular uprising against the autocrat. Two years later, in October 2021, the two men enacted a military coup to end a civilian power-sharing agreement, before going to war with one another in April 2023.

Atrocities in Darfur

In Darfur, the vast western region that serves as the RSF's powerbase, the paramilitary

group has been able to act almost completely without hindrance. Middle East Eye has reported throughout the war on the group's targeting of the Masalit in cities including el-Geneina and el-Fasher.

Women across Darfur - some as young as 12 - have been the victims of sexual assault perpetrated by men wearing RSF uniforms. At a meeting in Britain's parliament on Wednesday, Zaza el-Sheikh, a Sudanese doctor, said that she and colleagues had met and examined 895 Sudanese women in Egypt who had been raped by fighters and were now pregnant as a result.

The Raoul Wallenberg Centre argues that there is clear evidence to conclude that the RSF is continuing the ethnically motivated genocide perpetrated by the Janjaweed militias against non-Arab groups in Darfur.

In his foreword to the report Irwin Cotler, the chair of the Raoul Wallenberg Centre and a former Canadian justice minister writes, "As this report demonstrates in chilling detail, the same perpetrators, now under the flag of the RSF, are committing the same atrocities against the same targeted groups, fuelled by the same dehumanisation, demonisation, incitement, and oft-expressed intent to destroy the Masalit or non-Arab groups."

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