

Sudan Army General Rules Out Ramadan Truce Unless RSF Leaves Civilian Sites

By Al Jazeera

Sudan general rejects truce after UNSC calls for cessation of hostilities during the Islamic holy month.

Senior Sudanese Armed Forces General Yasser al-Atta has said there will be no truce in Sudan during the Muslim holy month of *Ramadan* unless the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary group leaves the homes and sites of civilians.

The statement follows an appeal by the United Nations Security Council for a truce during Ramadan, which begins this week. The RSF said it welcomed the truce call.

Al-Atta's statement, issued on the army's official Telegram channel on Sunday, cited recent military advances by the army in Omdurman, part of Sudan's wider capital.

It said there could be no Ramadan truce unless the RSF complied with a commitment made in May last year at *Saudi and US-mediated talks in Jeddah* to withdraw from civilian homes and public facilities.

It also said Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, the RSF leader commonly known as *Hemedti*, should not play a role in Sudan's future politics or military.

The statement follows the *UNSC's appeal* for a respite from the 11-month-old conflict during Ramadan, which is expected to begin on Monday or Tuesday, depending on the sighting of the crescent moon.

Fourteen countries on the 15-member council on Friday backed the resolution proposed by the United Kingdom, with only Russia abstaining from the vote. The resolution called on "all parties to the conflict to seek a sustainable resolution to the conflict through dialogue".

Fighting between the army, led by General *Abdel Fattah al-Burhan*, and the *RSF* erupted in mid-April 2023.

Tens of thousands of people have since been killed, 8.3 million have been forcibly displaced, and the UN says nearly 25 million people – half of Sudan's population – *are in need of aid*.

The army has been on the back foot militarily for much of the conflict. In the first days of fighting, the RSF occupied large parts of the capital, Khartoum.

Guterres backs Ramadan truce

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has urged the warring sides for a truce following the adoption of the UK-drafted resolution by the UNSC on Friday. However, the mechanism for implementing the resolution remains unclear.

Sudan's UN ambassador, Al-Harith Idriss al-Harith Mohamed, told the council on Thursday that the president of the country's transitional council commended Guterres's truce appeal. However, he said the leader is "wondering about how to do this".

Welcoming the truce call, the RSF said in a statement on Saturday, "In embracing the proposed humanitarian ceasefire, we express our readiness to partake in discussions concerning the establishment of mutually agreed upon monitoring mechanisms."

"These mechanisms are crucial for ensuring the effective implementation of the ceasefire and for achieving the humanitarian objectives intended by this resolution."

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