

**African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights**  
**79th Ordinary Session**  
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**ORAL STATEMENT ON WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SUDAN**

*Honourable Commissioners ,*

*The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), the African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) and the Sudanese Human Rights Monitor (SHRM), wish to draw your attention to the dire and precarious situation of women and girls in Sudan.*

One year on from the start of the conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, fighting and attacks on civilians have spread to multiple regions, including Darfur, Khartoum, South Kordofan and Aj Jazirah State, prompting a dramatic deterioration of the humanitarian situation. Sudan now has the highest rate of internal displacement in the world, with over 10.7 million people uprooted from their homes, including 9 million internally displaced, and over 20 million facing severe hunger, according to the UN. Neighboring countries such as Chad have also been affected by the spill-over effects of the conflict, with IOM reporting 682,136 people displaced from Sudan into Chad as of 29 January 2024.

Women and girls often bear the brunt of conflicts, facing heightened risks of violence, displacement, and deprivation. This reality is starkly evident in the Sudanese conflict. The outbreak of armed conflict has led to a significant increase in all types of sexual and gender-based violence, including mass rapes, gang rape, and sexual slavery. According to ACJPS and SHRM findings, reports of intimate-partner violence and trafficking in persons are becoming increasingly common. The economic fallout of the conflict has further marginalized women, depriving them of livelihood opportunities and forcing many into situations where they are at risk of sexual exploitation and abuse. The devastating psychological impact this has had on women in Sudan cannot be overstated.

Local and first responders, often women themselves, have played an invaluable role in providing targeted protection and support, including access to safe shelters, psychosocial support, and limited reproductive health services. They have done so in an increasingly challenging environment, characterized by the shutdown of most hospitals and lack of access to the necessary medical supplies, closure of the civic space, attacks on freedom of expression, rising militarisation and continuous disruption of communication. More than 22 health facilities are out of service, and those still functioning are experiencing a scarcity of medications, including those prescribed in cases of sexual violence. Alarmingly, since 2 April 2024, the few operating health facilities in North Darfur State have *completely* run out of medication for sexual violence survivors. It is imperative, therefore, that support be intensified and empowerment to local actors be increased to effectively respond to the needs of women and girls on the ground.

We urge the ACHPR to:

- Highlight the plight of women and girls affected by the conflict in Sudan by issuing a specific resolution calling on all actors to play their respective roles to alleviate the impact of the conflict on them.
- Join ongoing efforts to push for support and empowerment to local actors to be able to continue offering medical and lifesaving support to victims of sexual and gender-based violence.
- Develop a mechanism for real time monitoring the unfolding situation in Sudan, with a focus on the plight of civilians and to develop appropriate responses by the Commission, and working in close support and collaboration with civil society, the UN FFM, the ICC and other international mechanisms mandated to document human rights violations in Sudan, including by advocating for these entities to have access to Sudan and neighboring countries and have the necessary resources to carry out their work effectively.
- Urge for long-term sustainable solutions that address the root causes of SGBV and discrimination in Sudan, including promoting women's participation in upcoming mediation, peacebuilding and decision-making processes.

We urge you, Honourable Commissioner's, to prioritize the situation of women and girls in Sudan and to take concrete actions to address their needs and protect their rights. Their voices must be heard, and their rights must be respected and upheld.

We thank you.