



Sudan: Civilians violated as their bodies are used to celebrate a victory by SAF and their affiliates in Aljazeera State

The African Center for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) calls upon the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and its allied forces to cease violations against the civilians of Aljazeera State following the capture of the state from the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), who had been in control since December 2023. We further call upon the Sudanese authorities, the regional and international community to condemn such violations, investigate the incidents, and bring the perpetrators to book.

Introduction

Aljazeera is a very significant state to SAF as it is an agricultural hub. A few days after SAF captured the state, the population witnessed a systematic targeting of civilians accused of being affiliated with or collaborating with RSF while they (RSF) were in control of the state. ACJPS has monitored incidents of extrajudicial killings including slaughtering, drowning in the river Nile, and burning of civilian camps. The national army and their affiliates have also been accused of sexually violating women to celebrate their victory of capturing Aljazeera state.

Details of the violations

In early January 2025, SAF captured Aljazeera State and launched attacks on different groups of civilians such as Resistance Committee Members, medical personnel, activists, farmers from agricultural camps like Alshukaba and Taibah, and youth accused of collaborating with RSF. The violations involved the killing of approximately 300 people, more than 11 cases of sexual violence against women and girls and burning of the camps occupied by the Alshukabah Ajak and Almusbah groups. In Wad Madani, the capital of Aljazeera, the death toll is estimated at 150 victims many of whom were left on the streets after being slaughtered like animals, especially in the agricultural camp known as Alknabi.

On 14 January 2025, the SAF released a statement saying that the incidents and violations in Aljazeera were committed by individuals and not the army. However, the RSF General command, Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, tweeted that the SAF only managed to capture Aljazeera because of the support they got from the Ethiopian Tegra Front and Eritrean Islamic Front, which sent

troops. ACJPS was reliably informed that Ethiopian fighters mainly from the Tegri front have been seen alongside SAF soldiers in Aljazeera. This confirms the theory that SAF is supported by troops from the neighboring Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The committee investigating the crimes committed during the ongoing war (established by the office of the Sudanese Attorney General) published a list of 15 men accused of perpetrating the violations in Aljazeera. But the background and affiliations of the “suspects” i.e., whether or not they were affiliated with SAF, and other details were not provided. The committee also demanded that the suspects hand themselves over to the nearest police station within two weeks. However, the magnitude of the violations shows that they were highly organized and probably committed by more than 15 perpetrators.

In a video published on 17 January 2025 on social media, a SAF officer in full uniform with a rank of a major is seen assaulting a young Sudanese male civilian in the main street in Wad Madani while several people are watching. The victim was being beaten and kicked in the face as he bled profusely while some people from the crowd were begging the officer to stop. In a social media post by an alleged neighbor of the victim, it was stated that the victim is an electrical engineer who stayed in Wad Madani to take care of his elderly Father, who was unable to leave when the RSF captured the town. Because of his profession, the victim was forcefully recruited by the RSF to repair their solar system.

In another video published on 17 January 2025, a policeman is seen beating a woman and accusing her of collaborating with the RSF because she gave some fighters drinking water while they were in control of Aljazeera. The policeman is then heard talking to one of the SAF soldiers telling him to take the woman inside and rape her. Open-source information shows that the incident happened in Naim Allah village neighborhood in Alhush area in Aljazeera State.

Sometime in January 2025, Mr. Almesbah Abu Zid, posted on his social media platforms that everyone staying within RSF residential areas is a collaborator and an affiliate of RSF. Mr. Almesbah is a leader of an Islamic Jihadist group called Albra Ibn Malik and a supporter of the past regime, that is, the National Congress Party. Mr. Almesbah has previously been seen with officials of the former Al-Bashir regime. The announcement/post by Mr. Almesbah can be classified as hate speech which may result in ethnic conflicts.

Ethnically motivated attacks

There have been several incidents of ethnically motivated attacks committed by both warring parties and their allied militia in Aljazeera;

In Wad Madani, a group of residents originally from Eastern Sudan, from the Bai Amir tribe was arrested and later released following the intervention of tribal leaders.

The areas of Wad Rawah located in Eastern Aljazeera also witnessed its share of ethnic attacks particularly revenge killings by the RSF following defection by Mr. Abu Agla Keikal who surrendered his troops and joined SAF. Mr. Keikal is a former leader of one of the local militia groups in Aljazeera formed by SAF but after the outbreak of the war, he joined RSF. The ping pong games played by Mr. Keikal (moving from SAF to RSF and back to SAF) in the end only affected the civilians who were attacked in revenge missions. The attacks targeted mainly people from the Shukria tribe.

Following the incident, Manni Manawi, the Sudanese Liberation Movement (SLM) leader (currently fighting in support of the national army) tweeted "*We were concerned when we heard about the violations committed against the residents of Al-Kanabi. We contacted those who were familiar with the area and they confirmed that the violations took place against unarmed civilians with revenge motives, whatever the justifications, we will not accept a new series of ethnic massacre in the country, and the perpetrators must be arrested and brought to book*".

IDPs originally from Western Sudan and South Kordofan currently living in Aljazeera have also been targeted for their ethnicity.

Other developments

On 15 January 2025, the South Sudanese foreign affairs minister summoned the Sudanese Ambassador in Juba regarding the killing of South Sudanese refugees living in Aljazeera following its seizure by SAF. Before the outbreak of the war, there were approximately 800,000 South Sudanese refugees living in Sudan. It is reported at least 30 South Sudanese nationals were killed in Wad Madani in December 2023.

In Juba and other towns across South Sudan, masses took to the streets to protest against the killing of the South Sudanese Citizens in Aljazeera. During these demonstrations, shops owned by Sudanese along Tembra Street in Juba were looted and in Wau town in South Sudan, a young Sudanese physician was killed during the violent demonstration.

Because of these demonstrations, troops have been deployed around the Sudanese Embassy. There has also been an increase in hate speech on social media advocating for violence against Sudanese in South Sudan. On 16 January 2025, South Sudanese authorities announced a curfew in Juba town and the Sudanese nationals have been staying indoors to avoid being attacked and killed.

On 17 January 2025, Gen. Salva Kiir Mayardit, the South Sudanese President and the Minister of Internal Affairs both issued statements about the situation, calling for calm and urging the Sudanese authorities to bring the perpetrators to book.

On 08 January 2025, the Sudanese port was re-opened for the transportation of oil to South Sudan following an agreement between the two countries. The port had been closed following the outbreak of the April 15, 2023 war.

The economic situation in South Sudan was greatly affected by the closure of oil pipelines due to the Sudan war. The already bad situation has been further escalated by the event in Aljazeera.

Background

Since December 2023, Aljazeera State has witnessed grave human rights violations against civilians including forced recruitment by RSF, widespread looting, and sexual violations. Following an intense gunfight, SAF managed to disperse the RSF and forced them to retreat from Aljazeera. The population then organized themselves and formed defense groups which successfully resisted some attacks by RSF. However, the RSF then mobilized themselves and returned to the outskirts of Wad Al-Nora, surrounded and sieged the village. They later accessed the village and launched heavy attacks on the civilians resulting in mass killings of over 130 people and forced displacement of the residents to safer areas within Sudan and neighboring countries. It is difficult to ascertain the accurate number of victims and casualties in Aljazeera because of the internet shutdown and restrictions of private WiFi networks operated by RSF, making monitoring difficult.