



### **Sudan lifts ban on passport issuance after targeting specific individuals on unfounded presumptions of being RSF affiliates.**

The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) applauds General Abdul Fatah Abdul Rahman Al-Burhan, the chairperson of the Sudanese Sovereign Council and the high command of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), for lifting the ban on passport applications and renewals. During a meeting held on 08 February 2025, attended by political and civil rights actors in Port Sudan, Red Sea State (the current capital of the Sudanese administration), General Al-Burhan instructed the Passports and Immigration Department of the Interior Ministry to ensure that no Sudanese citizen is denied passports and identification documents. This directive was issued following multiple complaints from Sudanese citizens whose applications for the issuance and renewal of Sudanese passports had been overlooked due to their presumed political affiliations.

The ban discriminatively targeted political figures from various groups, including the Freedom for Change Coalition (FCC) and the Uma National Party, as well as other individuals, such as activists, presumed on unfounded grounds to be affiliates of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). For instance, **Ms. Sudam Maryam Elsadig Al-mahadi, the former Foreign Affairs Minister**, was among those discriminatively targeted by the passport issuing authorities during the ban.

### **Other developments**

Following the outbreak of the ongoing conflict between the SAF and RSF, many civilians have been unlawfully arrested, falsely charged, and subjected to summary trials in special courts that lack fair procedures based on unfounded suspicions of collaborating with or being affiliated with the RSF. These special courts are located in the Red Sea, Kassala, Al-Qadarif, River Nile, Northern Sudan, White Nile, and Blue Nile states. Most victims have faced charges for offenses such as crimes against the state under the Sudanese Penal Code of 1991, which carry severe penalties, including death and life imprisonment.

Additionally, human rights defenders have also been targeted with arbitrary arrests and incommunicado detention for performing their work, particularly those related to providing legal services to political figures presumed unfoundedly to support the RSF. For instance, on 07 September 2024, **Mr. Montasir Abdallah**, an advocate and human rights defender, was arrested on the main street shortly after leaving the prosecutor's office in Port Sudan, where he had filed an

application challenging the charges against a group of political actors, including Mr. Abdallah Hamdook, the former Sudanese Prime Minister, and several members of Taqqadoum. The political figures were charged with crimes against the state by the authorities in an attempt to impede their efforts to end the war. He has remained languishing in detention to this day.

**ACJPS, therefore, recommends the following:**

1. Sudanese authorities should reduce the hefty passport-issuing fees, which are currently 250 US Dollars for applicants living outside Sudan, most of whom are refugees.
2. General Al-Burhan should promptly instruct Sudanese authorities to stop assuming the political affiliation of Sudanese civilians and using it against them during service delivery.
3. Furthermore, Al-Burhan should order the immediate release of all civilians arbitrarily detained based on unfounded assumptions of affiliation to the RSF or other armed groups and for charges against them to be unconditionally dropped.
4. Sudanese authorities must ensure that special courts established in specific locations to try offenses related to crimes against the state or those carrying severe penalties guarantee the right to a fair hearing, especially during summary trials.
5. The repression of human rights defenders must end, and they should be permitted to perform their work in an environment free from harassment and intimidation, including through judicial means. Those arbitrarily detained, such as Mr. Montasir Abdallah, must be released immediately and unconditionally.
6. Sudanese authorities must uphold all the rights of citizens guaranteed under regional and international treaties ratified by Sudan, including the right to liberty and a fair trial.