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**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

Written statement* submitted by Elizka Relief Foundation, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[3 February 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Armed Conflict and the Effect on Human Rights in the Sudan

Background:

The Sudan has entered into a spiral of armed conflict with the intensification of the ongoing fighting between the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces, battles that do not know an end line. The Sudan's brutal civil war is set to take an even uglier turn. After nearly ten months of fighting, the war is expanding eastward, threatening to engulf the country and push it into further long-term failure that will inevitably lead to increased waves of migration from the Sudan to various parts of the world.

Elizka Relief Foundation – through this statement- tackles the impact of the ongoing armed conflict in the Sudan since mid-April 2023 on the humanitarian situation in the Sudan, and concludes with a set of recommendations that contribute to stopping the raging war between the two parties and limiting the spread of weapons in the Sudan.

Human Rights Violations Resulting from Spread of Weapons in the Sudan:

1. Mass Killing:

After more than nine months of civil war in the Sudan, some parties are seeking to enter the conflict into a new stage, which is the stage of genocide. Day after day, armed clashes in the Sudan exacerbate the problems that the Sudan suffers from, especially on the economic and social levels. Perhaps the danger of the continuation of the armed conflict in the Sudan lies in the grave violations that have affected civilians in the Sudan. Between ten thousand and 15 thousand people were killed in one city in the West Darfur region of the Sudan during the year 2023, as a result of ethnic violence carried out by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces and allied Arab militias(1). The intervention of external actors who still providing military support to the Rapid Support Forces, is why conflict left more than 13,000 dead and about 26,000 injured since April 15(2).

2. Food Security:

As the armed conflict continues, the food security situation in the Sudan becomes more complicated, with facilities capable of producing food and food import facilities being disrupted. 17.7 million people across the Sudan, representing 37 percent of the population, suffer from high levels of acute food insecurity. The violent clashes and indiscriminate bombing near water stations led to a large number of them stopping work, depriving more citizens of the most important necessities of life(3). Moreover, the cost of living is skyrocketing and the inflation rate is estimated to exceed 300% by the end of the year, resulting in a food and essential goods shortage for millions of people.

3. Health:

The escalation of conflict on 15 April 2023 plunged the Sudan into a humanitarian crisis. Access to health care and other basic services has been disrupted and the health system is overwhelmed. Armed war has caused 70 percent of hospitals and medical centers in the main conflict areas to cease, with about 20 percent of medical institutions far from the conflict being severely affected(4). The number of suspected cases of cholera has increased by more than 100% over the past month, with nearly 8,300 suspected cases and more than 200 deaths reported, in nine states, as of December 24, 2023(5).

4. Gender-Based Violence:

The most disturbing and terrifying thing of all is the inhumane crimes against women in conflict areas. In the last week of September 2023, one emergency room received more than 10 cases of sexual violence in one day(6). The true number of cases is undoubtedly much higher, as many survivors find it difficult to report sexual violence due to shame, stigma, and fear of reprisal. Reporting violations and obtaining support has also become difficult, if not impossible, due to the lack of electricity and communication, as well as the lack of access to humanitarian aid due to the volatile security situation. Attacks on and occupation of health facilities also prevent survivors from seeking and obtaining emergency health care. It is worth noting that recorded cases of rape in various medical facilities have risen to 370 cases across Khartoum state and the Darfur region since the outbreak of war eight months ago, according to what was announced in mid-December 2023.

5. Forced Displacement:

One of the most harmful violations of armed conflict is displacement. The Sudan has become the largest internal displacement crisis in the world. The number of displaced people in the country exceeded 7.5 million, including 1.5 million who took refuge in neighboring countries, and children represent about half of the displaced(7). The conflict that spread to the city of Jazira in mid-December has exacerbated the trauma and displacement experienced by many and exacerbated fears about what comes next. between 250,000 and 300,000 people have fled Wad Madani and surrounding areas since the clashes began in December. many of them moving repeatedly to find temporary safety. This repeated displacement shows how devastating this conflict has been for the civilian population(8).

6. Education:

Another aspect that has been affected by armed conflict is education. The acts of sabotage affected all institutions of higher education and scientific research in Khartoum state and many other states, as these institutions were completely or partially affected. The number (104) governmental and private higher education institutions, research centers, and the National Fund for Student Welfare(9). An estimated 19 million children are out of school(10). One in every three children in the country has lost access to school due to increased violence and insecurity in their region, with at least 10,400 schools shuttered in conflict-affected areas(11).

The bottom line, the Sudan will continue to suffer economically and socially “due to successive crises, successive wars, intervention of external actors, armed sectarian and ethnic conflicts,” with which the living conditions of the citizens have worsened. With the lack of accurate estimates of the size of the Sudanese economy’s losses, the cost exceeds billions of dollars.

Recommendations:

1. Elizka Relief Foundation strongly condemns the ongoing violent fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, the ongoing human rights violations, and the risk of war crimes being committed in the Sudan; calls on the warring parties to an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, and to hold talks to reach an end to the current conflict.
2. Elizka Relief Foundation calls on the party to the conflict to implement the African Union project to silence the guns and maintain peace and security, and obligates it to form joint forces to protect civilians, collect and legalize the possession of weapons, impose the rule of law, respect and guarantee human rights, and joint security cooperation with some neighboring countries to extend security and control the borders to prevent organized crime. And cross-border, combating the phenomena of smuggling,

human trafficking, the spread of weapons, reducing armed conflicts, asylum, and displacement.

3. Elizka Relief Foundation urges civil society organizations to intensify their efforts to resolve the conflict in close cooperation with the African Union and the Human Rights Council to put an end to the current conflict as soon as possible.
4. Elizka Relief Foundation appreciates the efforts made to establish an Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan fact-finding mission in the Sudan and calls on it to take quick and concrete measures to prevent further atrocities and promote accountability for grave violations. These measures should include the imposition of an expanded arms embargo throughout the Sudan and focused sanctions on those involved in violating international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

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- (1) UN Report Says Ethnic Violence Kills Up to 15,000 in 1 Sudan City, Voa news, January 19, 2024, <https://bitly.ws/3ayXB>
 - (2) UN: More than 13,000 people killed in Sudan conflict since April 15, 2023, Zawya, January 22, 2024, <https://bitly.ws/3ayWx>
 - (3) International aid organizations suspend operations in Sudan after facilities looted, JURIST, 31 Dec 2023, <https://bitly.ws/3ayEU>
 - (5) Sudan: Cholera outbreak Flash Update No. 05 (as of 24 December 2023), Sudan, 7 Jan 2024, <https://bitly.ws/3ayTb>
 - (6) Khartoum: Women are not collateral damage! Perpetrators must be held accountable for rampant sexual violence in Sudan's capital, SIHA, OCT 2023, <https://bitly.ws/32gNv>
 - (7) Hundreds of vulnerable children evacuated for second time as Sudan war continues to put millions of children at risk, UNICEF, 27 December 2023. <https://bitly.ws/3ayIj>
 - (8) Displacement crisis in Sudan deepens as fighting spreads, UNHCR, 19 December 2023, <https://bitly.ws/3aDEi>
 - (9) Sudan: The War Affected the Education Institutions, teleSUR, Sep 01, 2023, <https://bitly.ws/USwf>
 - (10) Sudan's education crisis and its impact on learning in the region, UNICEF, <https://bitly.ws/3aza7>