
Causes and Consequences of the Sudanese Conflict

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Abstract

The current bloody armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) under the military commandship of General Abdelfatah Al-Burhan – the Commander-in-chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Head of the Sudan's Sovereignty Council, and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) commanded by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo resulted in gross violations of human rights, severe humanitarian crisis, further destabilization in the Republic of the Sudan and it endangered the sovereignty and existence of this nation-state which is a significant country famous for its cultural diversity.

This conflict, which began in 2023, caused widespread destruction of basic infrastructure, internal and external displacement of Sudanese civilians and alien residents, and regrettable losses of human lives (civilians and combatants). The violence exacerbated the country's economic challenges, disrupted governance structures, worsened the already fragile political transition following the 2019 Civil-backed Sudanese Revolution and threatened the sovereignty and nationhood of the Republic of the Sudan.

This in mind, this paper explores the origins, causes, conflict actors and the impact of this underway armed conflict on Sudan's political, economic and social fabric. Furthermore, it highlights the key challenges which are posed by the ongoing armed violence and suggests pathways towards a lasting peace, national stability and sustainable development in the Sudan through recommendations for conflict mitigation, conflict management, conflict resolution, post-conflict development and human positive mentality transformation. The main findings indicate that the SAF-RSF armed conflict has far-reaching consequences, not only for Sudan's internal stability but also for the wider region as this harmful conflict is a dysfunctional armed conflict.

Key Terms: Causes, consequences, Sudan and conflict.

Introduction:

Sudan has long been a troubled country which is beset by internal armed conflicts, so the recent destructive clashes and urban military engagements between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) represent a continuation of this turbulent and volatile history of armed conflict and harmful violence in the Republic of the Sudan.

The SAF-RSF armed conflict, which began on April the 15th 2023, exacerbated political instability, instilled hostility and animosity in the people, threatening the fragile peace which was achieved after the 2019 fall of the military regime that was led by the Islamist-backed dictator, President Omar Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir (The President of Sudan from 1989 to 2019) and his then powerful military junta or the Islamic Front (The National Salvation Revolution) - the later National Congress Party which had been ruling the Republic of the Sudan since June the 30th 1989, as Wani Igga (133) wrote it.

The Major Internal Conflict Actors:

The main actors of the ongoing armed conflict in the country are the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) which are the regular and official military of the Republic of the Sudan and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) which are paramilitary troops that are as heinous as the Liyu Police paramilitary forces of the Somali Regional State in Ethiopia, in the era of Abdi Omar aka Abdi-iley, that committed crimes against humanity and were infamous for limitless human rights violations in the said regional state like the Janjaweed militia did in Darfur Region, where human rights abuses and crimes were also committed.

In addition to the two above said conflict actors, a former rebel faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North which is led by the Sudanese politician, Mr Malik Agar, is fully aligned with the Sudanese Armed Forces.

The Sudan Liberation Army (SLA-MM) which is politically led by Minni Arko Minnawi – the ex-rebel commander from Darfur, is with SAF and backing the government troops; while the Justice

and Equality Movement led by the former Sudanese rebel leader from Darfur, Gibril Ibrahim, is also with the Sudanese Armed Forces and supports President Burhan in one way or another. In contrast to the afore-mentioned minor conflict actors, a rebel faction group which is also called Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North that is led & commanded by Abdelaziz Al-Hilu – a leftist and secularist rebel commander, is in alliance with the Rapid Support Forces for the sake of self-determination for his marginalized community in South Kordofan State and Blue Nile State in the currently troubled and war-torn Republic of Sudan.

The Umma Party (UP), the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) and the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) are also minor conflict actors since each of these political actors has its own interest-based and resource-based aims. Some other sleeping cells and fifth columnists can be hidden conflict actors. Also, the remnants of National Congress Party and other underground Islamists can have their own political influence and agendas in this conflict. Therefore, the raging armed conflict in the currently troubled Republic of the Sudan has direct major conflict actors and minor conflict actors. The conflict actors who involve in this continuing Sudanese conflict are both internal and external conflict actors who have their hidden agendas and aspired interests. Thus, the political layers of this deadly conflict are thick, vague and abysmal.

Root Causes:

This destructive armed conflict stems from divergent and competing power interests between the top leadership of the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces that are still fighting over the leadership of the Sudan which is a conflict-prone country. The position, interest and need (PIN) of the conflict actors are incompatible with each other since RSF is the product of the Sudanese conflict and was created by the Sudanese Armed Forces with the administrative orders and directions of then Sudanese President Al-Bashir.

As will be explained in the background of this paper, the main cause of this devastating armed conflict is clash of interests – unsatisfied human need - and its main drivers are chronic *greed* and *grievance* between the two said actors.

The other main factor which created multiple external enemies for the Republic of Sudan is the Sudanese educative contribution to propagation of Islamic civilization and academic development of the global students because Sudan gave full scholarships to thousands of students from all over the world, refusing to be a yes-man for the powerful Western countries. So, the geopolitics of the Sudan clashed with the geopolitics and mentality of the said nations. Since Sudan is a great nation which is located in a strategic position, full of natural resources, this is another factor behind this evil armed conflict.

The other cultural factor behind this armed conflict as a root cause is the mental superiority of the Northern Arab tribes such as the *Jaaliyin*, *Shagiyin* and *Dongolawiin*. These three tribes share a perception of elite domination. Thus, their political superiority complex instills political inferiority complex into the other Sudanese tribes in all over the country, who feel political marginalization as a result of the political domination of the said three tribes. In the era of Al-Bashir, when the researcher was in Sudan, most of the top military positions, bureaucracy and leadership of the country were occupied by influential figures from the North. Therefore, the researcher believes that all the armed conflicts in Darfur, Nuba Mountains and Eastern Sudan were ignited by the political sidelining and exclusion of the citizens who live there.

The other factor which has a negative role in the protracted conflicts in Sudan is the military rule with the recurrent military coups. This factor makes Sudan a lifetime police state and hinders any democratic and civilian governance.

The other major factor which ignites conflict of interest among the Sudanese elites and political forces is the Sudanese constitution. Historically, Sudan lacks stable and all-inclusive constitutional

framework and this causes political instability in the country. All the interim constitutions which were enacted since the independence of Sudan in 1956, failed to suit the ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of all the Sudanese people (Johnson, 2016).

Consequences:

This catastrophic armed conflict resulted in thousands of human deaths, mass internal displacement, huge external deracination, economic devastation, psychological trauma and disruption of the efforts towards democratic governance in the Republic of the Sudan which is a rich country that is marred by protracted wars with addition of authoritarianism and concurrent coup d'états. 50,000 people are missing since the eruption of this bloody armed conflict and 4000 prisoners of wars (POWs) were released from RSF-controlled detention centres in the Jebel Aulia area (Sudan Tribune, 2025).

This paper aims at examining and analysing the root causes, conflict drivers, conflict dynamics and consequences of this widespread armed conflict, analysing its impact on Sudan's sovereignty, socio-economic conditions, political processes and the overall security of the East African Region. By understanding the root causes and consequences, this study offers insights into functional solutions for achieving lasting peace, sustainable stability and all-inclusive security which will positively contribute to the rebuilding of the Republic of the Sudan. Therefore, this paper will enrich the knowledge and practicality of the regional mediators, international arbitrators and local negotiators who are part and parcel of the Sudanese peace-making, peace-building and peace-keeping processes. It supports national reconciliation for all the different Sudanese local political stakeholders and conflict actors.

It aims at providing policy-makers and policy-implementers with a resourceful information about the underpinning causative factors which are behind the prolonged violence and the protracted military operations in this African state. It equips peace practitioners, conflict analysts and

expert on conflict studies with mechanism to mitigate and manage the destructive conflict which has been continuing in all over the Republic of Sudan for the elapsed three years.

Background:

An armed Conflict is an altercation between two warring parties with opposing interests, which cannot comply with each other. The armed conflict between such conflict actors is usually dysfunctional and the root cause of their armed confrontations can be a resource-based factor or an interest-based factor. This in mind, the Sudanese armed conflict has a long history, in-depth conflict driving factors such as ideology, culture and mindset, and major and minor conflict actors with very varying political agendas and opposing ambitions.

From 1821 to 1885, North Sudan and South Sudan were occupied and ruled by Turkey. From 1899 to 1947, South Sudan was ruled by the Anglo-Egyptian rule as a condominium. During the condominium rule, the North Sudanese were not allowed to travel to South Sudan because the Close District Ordinance was fully in place in the South, and the North and the South were two different/ separate entities under the British rule. Igga (2008, pp. 59 – 63).

This factor with the addition of cultural and ideological differences between the South Sudanese folks and the North Sudanese people resulted in the establishment of *Anyanya* which was a South Sudanese rebel faction that was formed in 1955. The formation of this rebel armed front resulted from the Torit Mutiny which erupted on August the 18th 1955. Daud (2018, p. 35). The main root cause of the Torit Mutiny was a xenophobic rumor which was being circulated by some South Sudanese who hated the North Sudanese for they accused them of past slave trade, marginalization and also Islamization of Southerners. Many teachers and civil servants from the North were killed in cold blood by South Sudanese as a result of the above said baseless rumor.

Speaking about the slave trade in Africa, Lt. General Wani Igga (59) wrote:

The first consignment of Africans to be exported to Latin America was shipped from Lisbon in 1501 and the direct export of Africans from West Africa to America did not commence until the 1520's... Between 16th and 19th centuries, it is estimated that 50 million Africans were forcefully transported to America, with another three million from East Africa going to India, the Middle East and the Indian Ocean Islands... In Bahr el Ghazal region of Southern Sudan, the Arabs traded slaves through a notorious slave dealer by name Zubeir Rahama by 1856 up to 1876, he terrorised the area. Slave trade as I mentioned earlier is still rampant today as it is being practised by Arab Bagara tribes in the counties of Aweil, Bentiu, Abyei and Gogrial. These figures, though imprecise, do not include the people who died enroute or during slave raids, as these are impossible to estimate, but could be thrice that.

Taking the above discourse of General Wani Igga as an example, the dark-skinned Sudanese do assume that the Northern Arab Sudanese involved in the slave trade and they still bear that ethnic-based hateful grudge against them. Thus, the slave trade which was first abolished by Denmark in 1802, is still believed to be existing in Africa by black Africans like General Wani Igga.

The Anyanya Rebel Movement:

As Daud once again wrote (38), when the Republic of Sudan gained its independence from the British colonial power on January the 1st 1956, Prime Minister Ismail Al-Azhari (The First Sudanese Prime Minister) inherited an ongoing armed conflict from Britain. It was between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the *Anyanya* rebel group which had been warring with the government of Sudan from 1955 to 1972, where many lives were lost. That conflict ended peacefully on February the 27th 1972 when *Addis*

Ababa Peace Accord was ratified by the Anyanya Leader General Joseph Lagu from the South Sudanese Madi minority tribe and the then Sudanese President, Colonel Jaafar M. Numeiry. He was later overthrown from the seat by a military junta.

According to Alamin (2025), half a million Sudanese citizens lost their lives between 1955 to 1972. They were murdered owing to the armed conflict that was between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Anyanya rebel movement.

The SPLA Rebel Group:

In 1983, SPLM/A which was a South Sudanese rebel front was formed and it had been fighting with the Government of Sudan from 1983 to 2005. That rebel faction which was led and commanded by Colonel John Garang De Mabior from the Dinka tribe, signed a peace agreement with the Government of Sudan. This peace accord is known as the *Naivasha Peace Agreement* or the *Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)*. The *Naivasha Peace Agreement* resulted in the following peaceful plebiscite from January the 9th to January the 15th 2011 by which 99% of the South Sudanese voters who participated in that referendum voted for South Sudan's secession from the Republic of Sudan. The outcome of the above said plebiscite allowed South Sudan to gain its long-awaited independence from the Sudan on July the 9th 2011. When the said historical event took place in the Sudan, the researcher was living in Khartoum and it was the year that he graduated from the University of Juba.

As Alamin once again wrote, two million Sudanese nationals were killed between 1983 to 2002. The lives of the said number of victims were caused because of the prolonged and bloody armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the armed insurgency - Sudan People's Liberation Army.

The Justice and Equality Movement:

In 2003, while the researcher was in Khartoum, the Darfurian rebel front, Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), was established in Darfur. This armed movement was led and commanded by Dr.

Khalil Ibrahim who was finally killed in action by the Sudanese Armed Forces in December 2011. Justice and Equality Movement launched its first military offensive on Al-Fashir Airport in Western Sudan on April the 26th 2003. That armed conflict resulted in gross violations of human rights and crimes against humanity in Darfur Region. To date, Sudan National Liberation (SNL) which is an offshoot of JEM and is led by Abdelwahid Al-Noor from the Fur tribe, is still at war with the Sudanese Armed Forces. Thus, Darfur Conflict is still slowly going on in Darfur Region.

As Alamin once more penned, 300.000 Sudanese citizens were killed between 2003 and 2008. They lost their lives on account of the armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Darfurian rebel groups in Western Sudan.

The Rapid Support Forces:

The Rapid Support Forces were originally established as an offshoot of the *Janjaweed* militia, which was notorious for its role in the Darfurian Armed Conflict, where it committed atrocities against the Darfurian civilians (Flint & de Waal, 2008). The Janjaweed which is the predecessor of RSF, was commanded by Muse Hilal who was accused of committing ethnic cleansing and also gross violations of human rights in Darfur Region (Reliefweb, 2008).

The Rapid Support Forces were formalized as a state-sponsored paramilitary force by President Omar Al-Bashir in 2013 and his own aim was to aid SAF in controlling internal unrest, as the Sudanese Armed Forces were battling with Darfurian armed rebel fronts: *Justice and Equality Movement* (JEM) under the leadership of Gibril Ibrahim Mohamed and the *Sudan Liberation Movement* (SLM) under the administrative top leadership of Mr Abdelwahid Al-Noor who is a secularist Darfurian lawyer and an influential rebel leader.

The relationship between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces has always been tenuous, marked by their competition for power and national resources, but tensions escalated after the 2019 ousting of the Sudanese

President Omar Hassan Ahmed (Al-Bashir) and his military junta.

Following the forceful removal of the long-time Sudanese President, Field Marshal Omar Hassan (Al-Bashir), a transitional government was formed, composed of military and civilian leaders, in an attempt to guide Sudan toward democratic ruling. However, the power-sharing arrangement was unstable, culminating in a military coup led by General Al-Burhan in October 2021. RSF, although initially aligned with SAF, began positioning itself as an independent power broker, leading to friction between Al-Burhan and Hemedti over the control of the military and political leadership of the Sudan.

By 2023, these tensions erupted into an open armed conflict when negotiations over the integration of RSF into SAF, as part of a broader security reform process, broke down. RSF rejected SAF's leadership and both sides resorted to violence. The conflict has been particularly destructive, targeting cities such as Khartoum and other major cities in the Sudan. This full violence resulted in a further deterioration of an already fragile nation-state (Johnson, 2023).

As the Sudanese academician and military expert Dr. Mohamed Suleiman (2025) who contributed to the primary data of this paper believes, RSF is the most dangerous rebel group in the history of the Sudanese rebellion and no Sudanese insurgents, prior to RSF, caused the massive destruction which RSF caused in the Sudanese capital city – Khartoum. According to him, RSF didn't only rebel against the Government of Sudan and President Burhan but it committed the worst atrocity in Sudan, attacked the Sudanese people, looted the public and private properties, raped the Sudanese women and girls and had entirely annihilated all the urban or rural infrastructure of the Sudanese public.

History of Sudanese Military Coups:

Apart from the armed rebellions in Sudan, the political history of this country is marred by repeated military coups and recurrent social upheavals. In 1958, General Ibrahim Abboud

overthrew the civilian government of Prime Minister Abdallah Khalil (Collins, 2008). It was the first military coup. In 1969, Colonel Jaafar Mohamed Numeiry toppled the civilian government headed by Ismail Al-Azhari. In 1971, Major Hashim Al-Atta attempted to oust Numeiry (Willis, 2014). So, this was a communist-backed failed coup. In 1985, General Abdel Rahman Swar Al-Dahab overthrew President Jaafar Mohamed Numeiry (Johnson, 2016). In 1989, Brigadier Omar Hassan Ahmed (Al-Bashir) ousted the democratically elected government which was led by Prime Minister Sadik Al-Mahdi (Flint & de Waal, 2008). As the researcher was told by different Sudanese colleges, that coup was engineered with Al-Bashir by the influential Sudanese scholar and philosopher, Dr. Hassan Al-Turabi. In 2019, General Abdelfatah Al-Burhan ousted his former boss, Field Marshal Omar Hassan Ahmed (Al-Bashir) who ruled Sudan for 30 years (The International Crisis Group, 2021). Thus, the Republic of Sudan became a truly turbulent theater of bloody military coups and a hot spot of armed conflicts because of different conflict factors and underlying chronic conflict drivers. These factors made Sudan to become a police state ruled by military dictators.

The Appointment of a Civilian Prime Minister:

After all the above written political scenarios and dictatorial military regimes, the appointment of Dr. Kamil El Tayeb Idris as the new Sudanese civilian Prime Minister heralds as a political gesture of a goodwill. Dr. Kamil who was appointed as the Prime Minister of the Republic of Sudan by the Sudanese Head of State and military chief, Abdelfatah Al-Burhan, on May the 19th 2025, (Aljazeera, 2025), is the first Sudanese civilian prime minister since the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) recaptured the country's capital city – Khartoum from RSF. He is a Nubian who hails from the Danagala clan. He is a Northern academician who is from Zorad Village in northern direction of Dongola city in the northern part of the Republic of Sudan (El-shikh, 2025). Despite the tried experience of this seasoned statesman and Sudanese scholar, the researcher

believes that the Sudanese political ambience is still full of military influence and there are a lot of political hindrances and negative economic challenges ahead of this appointed former United Nations' official.

Typology of the Conflict:

The armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces is both an interest-based armed conflict and a resource-based armed conflict, as it is based on two causative factors: *power struggle* for leadership between the conflict actors and lucrative *gold trade* in Sudan.

It is an interest-based conflict because General Abdelfatah Al-Burhan and Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo fought over the top leadership of the country as each one of them aspired to the presidency of the country by force - by the barrel of the gun – since both leaders' conflict is a lose-lose type of conflict.

General Abdelfatah Al-Burhan who is a Northerner that hails from the Jaalia Arab clan which is a politically influential and economically powerful clan in the Sudan, is rivaling for the presidency of the country on behalf of his dominant northern clan and with the mechanism of his high level military career in the Sudanese Armed Forces; while Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo who is a Westerner that belongs to the Rizeigat Arab clan in Darfur Region, is trying to challenge General Abdelfatah Al-Burhan despite being a callow smuggler who lacks basic formal education and any reliable military career.

This bloody armed conflict is a resource-based armed conflict because gold trade adds fuel to the flames of this ongoing armed conflict as gold is a commodity of conflict (Baldo & Soliman, 2025). Thus, the gold trade in the Sudan attracts external prospectors and smugglers who sponsor the Rapid Support Forces logistically and militarily as a result of their interest-based aspirations and resource-based inclinations, as the researcher was informed by his Sudanese colleagues who were interviewed for the sake of this very study.

The Sudan's Accusation against the UAE:

Although the United Arab Emirates denies, the Sudanese government accuses UAE of cooperating with the Rapid Support Forces because of gold trade, as UAE is a gold hub in the Persian Gulf. In reference to this issue, 'Sudan filed a case with the International Court of Justice and accused UAE of complicity of the genocide committed by RSF's combatants in Darfur' (France 24, 2025).

The RSF's drone attacks which targeted Port Sudan on May the 6th 2025, was also accused of the United Arab Emirates' involvement by the Sudanese Government. Sudan suspected that those attacks were masterminded by the UAE that it strongly believes that it logically and militarily supports RSF and the drones flew from the UAE'S logical center in Bosaso – the commercial city of Puntland State of Somalia (Agenzia Fides, 2025). If this accusation is true, Puntland State of Somalia ashamed Somalia and cooperated with RSF, without the knowledge of the Federal Government of Somalia, because all the Somali people are indebted to the Government of Sudan and are grateful for the educational assistance, moral support and the political friendship of Sudan for the Somali public during the hard time of the chronic Somali conflict. Therefore, the researcher vigorously denounces the said aggression and encourages Somalia to play a leading role in the Sudan's conflict resolution.

Sudan's Accusation against General Khalifa Haftar:

The other external conflict actor who is accused of his negative involvement in the Sudanese armed conflict is the Libyan rebel commander Major General Khalifa Haftar. This insurgent alien leader is accused of supplying RSF with weapons, ammunition and trained combatants (Middle East Monitor, 2025).

The Problem Statement:

The current Sudanese Armed Conflict, which erupted in April 2023, as has been mentioned above, plunged Sudan into a dire political crisis, aggravated insecurity, destroyed the Sudanese

culture of peace, resulted in an economic collapse, intensified widespread violence, crippled the essential services such as healthcare, education and food supply in urban centres, created interest-based political animosity and personal hostility among the Sudanese military commanders, worsened the already fragile political situation in Sudan, which has been grappling with decades of concurrent civil strives and external aggressions that threatened and are still threatening the peace and stability not only in the Sudan, but across the region and also the wider African continent.

In summary, the Sudanese armed Conflict is a multifaceted crisis with devastating human costs and impacts, requiring immediate attention from both the national conflict stakeholders and the International Community in order to prevent further escalation of military engagement and to pave the way for a sustainable peace and normalization of life all over this war-ravaged country. Certainly, this brewing armed conflict will have negative impacts on the neighboring countries such as Chad, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia and South Sudan.

Objectives:

This educative paper aims at achieving the following main objectives:

- To thoroughly investigate the major root causes and the main drivers of the armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) for the sake of conflict analysis.
- To carefully assess the socio-economic and humanitarian impacts of this armed conflict on the Sudanese civilians and their way of lives.
- To examine the political implications of this armed conflict on Sudan's democratic transition, administrative change and future governance.
- To explore the role of the regional bodies and international conflict actors in either exacerbating or mitigating this three-year conflict.
- To equip policy-makers with fruitful guidelines on peace-building.

- To provide recommendations for the sake of conflict resolution, peace-building and also long-term national stability in the greater Sudan.

Methodology:

The methodology which this paper applied and the author used for the collection of both the primary data and the secondary data in this paper is a descriptive and analytical qualitative methodology augmented with the solid familiarity of the researcher with the Sudanese conflicts and local politics.

The primary data which this paper contains is based on three main sources: various distant interviews which were conducted with victimised Sudanese acquaintances in Sudan who suffered at the hands of the Rapid Support Forces, former Sudanese university class-mates of the author who are outside of the Sudan and the political knowledge and observation of the researcher who had been living as a university student and had been working in Khartoum for many years. This allowed the author of this paper to be familiar with the Sudanese local political composition, armed conflicts and all conflict actors.

The secondary data in this paper was collected from the immense literature which was written about the armed conflict in the Sudan by the international media outlets, reports which were published by the international organizations, the local Sudanese media at the national level and at the state level as well as any other sources that were at the disposal of the researcher, which were seen contributive to this paper. In this regard, the secondary data was quoted from journal articles, online articles, policy papers, analytical reports, printed works and also different academic peace and conflict studies. The discussed works were written by different scholars and academicians. Most of the quoted secondary data in this study was written by different writers and researchers who are experts in the Sudanese political history and armed conflicts. Therefore, the secondary data is a relevant to this conflict analysis.

Significance of this Study:

This academic paper is very significant for the contemporary global peace studies and conflict resolution. It is an academic contribution and a scholarly donation from a peace practitioner and human rights advocate who holds master degree in Peace and Development Studies, and is familiar with the root causes of the prolonged Sudanese armed conflict and conflict stakeholders. It will be beneficial to the mitigation, management and reconciliation of the ongoing Sudanese armed conflict. It is a handy paper and a timely study which will equip all the concerned actors with useful insights, tips and information. Therefore, this paper empowers peace specialists with up-to-date academic contributions which will brief them on the ins and outs of this lethal conflict.

Findings

The author of this analytical paper found out that the armed conflict between the SAF and RSF has profound negative effects on Sudan, impacting its political, economic and social existence as well as the sovereignty of Sudan.

In addition, the researcher discovered that the ongoing violence has exacerbated Sudan's already fragile political situation and the armed conflict disrupted the efforts to create a civilian-led government after the 2019 Sudanese Civil Revolution and negatively ended the expected hopes of a democratic transition in the Sudanese presidency and institutional system.

It was realized by the researcher that both the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces seek control of the central government, leaving little room for meaningful and reliable Sudanese peace negotiations (International Crisis Group, 2023). This indicates that this conflict annihilated the country.

The paper found out that the absence of a civilian leadership and a viable peace process have led to a power vacuum, which increases the likelihood of Sudan descending into a prolonged civil strife which harms the Sudanese stability.

The researcher uncovered that the Sudan's economy, which was already declining and collapsing due to the effects of decades of protracted armed conflicts and mismanagement, has been further crippled by the ongoing violence as there is a magnitude of destruction of key public infrastructure such as the airports, the bridges, the hospitals, the research centres, the educational institutions and the private businesses. This paralyzed the economic activities in major cities like Khartoum (United Nations, 2024). The conflict has also disrupted agricultural production, resulting in food insecurity across the country. In addition, the fighting has led to the suspension of international aid and investment in Sudan, further worsening the economic crisis. This factor indicates how far is the negative impact of this conflict.

The paper unveiled that the raging armed conflict has caused a severe humanitarian disaster in Sudan, with thousands killed and millions displaced. The United Nations estimates that over 2.5 million people were forced to flee from their homes, either to the neighbouring countries or are internally displaced persons in camps in the Sudan (UNHCR, 2024). Therefore, the widespread violence and bloody military confrontations have left civilians vulnerable to attacks of the rebel groups, with reports of war crimes and human rights abuses, including sexual violence, robbery, burglary, banditry, broad daylight mugging of civilians and the targeting of healthcare facilities. The humanitarian situation in the Sudan is dire, with many people lacking access to the basic necessities such as food, clean water and medical care or services.

According to Sudanese citizens who were interviewed by the researcher through the WhatsApp on July the 20th 2025, with the augment of the social media outlets, most of the human rights violations and crimes against humanity were committed by the combatants and the commanders of the Rapid Support Forces, as this insurgent is at war with the Sudanese Army.

The researcher located that the armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and RSF has

also had significant regional implications, threatening the stability and security of the neighboring countries such as South Sudan and Chad, where the influx of the refugees and the possibility of cross-border insurgencies are raising concerns about the potential for regional spillover (Prunier, 2023). Thus, international actors, including the African Union, the United Nations and the foreign Arab and Non-Arab governments, have attempted to mediate peace talks but their efforts have been hampered by the intransigence of both the SAF's top leadership and the RSF's top leadership.

The researcher came to know that the Sudanese Armed Forces became morally active and psychologically motivated since they captured the symbolic Republican Palace in Khartoum from the Rapid Support Forces on March the 21st 2025 (Daily Sabah, 2025). In addition to this, the landing of General Abdelfatah Al-Burhan at Khartoum International Airport on March the 26th 2025, after the airport was captured and cleared by SAF, encouraged the Sudanese people and had also boosted their own morale (Aljazeera, 2025).

In addition, the researcher confirmed that the Revolutionary Awakening Council (RAC) which is led by Musa Hilal – the Former Leader of Janjaweed – is cooperating with the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) in its fight against RSF. Muse Hilal is once again back to the political stage and military theater.

Last but not least, the researcher unearthed that SPLM-N which is an armed rebel faction commanded by Abdelaziz Al-Hilu, is operating in the Nuba Mountains. This insurgent group is struggling for the rights of the marginalized communities in South Kordofan State and its political cadres have a good relationship with the Republic of South Sudan which seceded from the Republic of the Sudan in 2011. Also, Abdelaziz Al-Hilu is in alliance with Rapid Support Forces as he is the deputy of Hemedti. In addition to this, there is a new faction called the Sudan People's Liberation Movement – Revolutionary Democratic Current (SPLM – RDC) which is led by Yassir Arman (Sudan Tribune, 2025). Yassir

Arman who is a controversial Sudanese politician and former SPLA cadre and commander, has a good relationship with the Republic of South Sudan and he is against the Sudanese government. This indicates that the ongoing armed conflict in the Sudan is being flared up by multiple interest groups or fronts – both internal actors and external actors.

Also, the researcher unearthed that the Sudan National Liberation (SNL) which is a splinter front led by Abdelwahid Al-Noor, as has been mentioned in other page of this paper, is fighting against the Sudanese Armed Forces and is also against the political domination of the Rapid Support Forces. This armed front that has a base of military operation at Jebel Marra area in the center of Darfur Region, is part of the protracted Sudanese armed conflict. As this very study proves, Abdelwahid Al-Noor who adamantly advocates for complete secularism, democracy and political federalism in Sudan, rejects any peace deal with the Government of Sudan because he demands justice and transitional justice for the Darfurians victims of the chronic Darfur Conflict.

Finally, the researcher discovered that the Sudanese public will never accept Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti) as their leader because majority of the Sudanese people believe that he lacks the national credibility of a leader. All the contacted Sudanese respondents, including Darfurians from his region, agree with Dr. Suleiman that RSF's Leader has destroyed Sudan with the cooperation of aliens for the sake of his own personal resource-based interest. This in mind, the ongoing armed conflict between RSF and SAF is far from reaching a political solution in the near future as this conflict has negative internal actors and harmful external actors with completely opposing interests. Moreover, the mentalities of Hemedti and Burhan are totally incompatible.

Conclusion:

The armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces has plunged Sudan into a deep political crisis,

subverted the country's institutional infrastructure, deteriorated the Sudanese social solidarity, worsened its humanitarian situation, damaged the economic conditions and also threatened the sovereignty of the Sudan's nation-state.

The political ambitions of the military factions such as RSF have come at the expense of the Sudanese civilian lives and hampered the country's future prospects and expectations for all-inclusive democracy. Without decisive action to end this conflict, the situation in the Sudan could escalate further, threatening regional stability and security, while the two main causative factors and drivers of this armed conflict are: intra-Arab power struggle and gold trade ambitions. Despite this, the Republic of the Sudan which is now seeking regional cooperation in order to ensure its national security, accuses the United Arab Emirates of supporting RSF in the instability in the Sudan in general and in the genocide against the Masalit ethnic group in Darfur and sued UAE to the International Court of Justice for this crime against humanity and other human rights violation committed by RSF (Sudan Tribune, 2025).

The protracted armed conflict paved the way for the ill involvement of all the internal conflict stakeholders and the external interest groups in the ongoing Sudanese armed conflict, giving the enemies of Sudan the opportunity to destroy Sudan and annihilate the cultural diversity of the Sudanese people.

In conclusion, the ongoing Sudanese armed conflict is both interest-based conflict and resource-based conflict which made the Republic of Sudan to be in the spotlight, forcing the Sudanese civilians to flee the country due to the magnitude of the military engagements between the occurring conflict actors – the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

Recommendations:

In order to achieve a lasting peace, a comprehensive stability and a reliable security in

the Sudan, the following useful recommendations are proposed:

Ceasefire and Negotiations: Immediate cessation of hostilities is critical, followed by internationally mediated peaceful negotiations between the SAF and RSF. These talks should aim at gaining a comprehensive peace agreement which addresses Sudanese power-sharing arrangements and security sector reform for the sake of a conclusive and whole-hearted conflict resolution.

Inclusive Political Process: Any peace process should be included civilian stakeholders and marginalized ethnic groups in the Sudan as to ensure a democratic transition and social transformation. International actors should pressure both of the fighting actors to allow for a civilian-led government as part of a long-term peace strategy and rebuilding of the national institutions.

Therefore, all the Sudanese political parties such as: the National Congress Party (NCP), the Umma Party (UP), the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP), the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM), the Sudan People's Liberation Movement North (SPLM-N), the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC) as well as all the other Sudanese political actors should come together and be hand in hand in order to save this important country, restore law and order peacefully, unite the Sudanese people and then rebuild the fallen nation.

Humanitarian Assistance: International organizations, such as the United Nations and the Red Cross, should be allowed unimpeded access in order to deliver aid to the victimized Sudanese civilians who are in need of a humanitarian relief and global assistance. A coordinated international conflict response is required to provide food, medical supplies and protection to the psychologically and physically affected Sudanese populations whose properties were destroyed by the warring combatants in all the major cities.

Accountability and Justice: Mechanisms for accountability should be put in place in order to

address the war crimes and the human rights abuses which were committed by the conflict actors during the protracted armed conflict. Transitional justice, including reparations for victims, will be vital for communal reconciliation and psychological healing of wounds. Thus, those who committed war crimes with impunity have to be brought to justice.

Regional and International Cooperation: Neighboring countries and regional bodies such as the African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and international bodies like the Arab League, EU and the United Nations should play leading and positive roles in peacebuilding efforts, given their vested interest in Sudan's sustainable stability in order to end the prolonged and the cut-throat armed conflict and create tranquility.

Suspension of External Meddling: All the accused external actors and would be accused meddlers should suspend their animosity, ill intentions and meddling with the Sudanese internal affairs for the sake of peace, bearing in mind that global stability and regional cooperation are better than interest-based hostility. Doing so, will surely contribute to a lasting peace in Sudan.

Promotion of Sudanese-Sudanese cultural acceptance: The culture-based superiority complex and inferiority complex among the Sudanese Arabs and Non-Arabs should be replaced with all-inclusive acceptance and cultural equality in order to enhance culture of peace and eradicate ethnic-based animosity and culture-based hostility. Doing so will contribute to the cultural inclusiveness and traditional unity of the Sudanese communities in Sudan. All in all, the researcher encourages a positive attitude and an honest behavior.

Eradication of poverty: The marginalized ethnic groups, in all over Sudan, should be given an access to the natural resources of the country. Surely, elimination of relative poverty, absolute poverty, generational poverty and situational will contribute to the sustainable peace in this great nation-state. As we all know that poverty is a

negative factor which drives armed conflicts in many war-torn African countries. So, enhancement of the livelihood, education, health service, financial standard and economic status of the all the marginalized communities in this country will promote a sustainable peace.

Political empowerment of the marginalized regions: The marginalized regions such as Darfur, Blue Nile State and the Nuba Mountains should be politically empowered by the current civil government of Dr. Kamil El Tayeb Idiris. The improvement of the political power-sharing status of the regions which are lagging behind the other Sudanese regions will reduce the political turmoil and economic challenges which have been existing in these important regions.

Constitutional Stabilization: Since the Republic of Sudan has no all-accepted national constitution from 1956 to 2025, the researcher recommends that the Republic of Sudan should have all-enacted national constitution. If this is done, the researcher strongly believes that constitutional stabilization will positively contribute to the political transformation and social stability of Sudan. This factor will also enhance the economic development and the social inclusivity of the multi-cultural diversity of the Sudanese public positively.

Military De-politicization: Sudanese military should be far from politics and entrusted to the national defense since Sudan suffers because of a military rule.

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