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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

Fuelling the conflict in the Sudan: weapons, fighters and external support networks

Report of the independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan*

Summary

The mission finds that external support is sustaining military operations and expanding the capabilities of the parties to the conflict in the Sudan, with grave consequences for civilians. Increasingly sophisticated drone capabilities have enabled both parties to strike far beyond immediate front lines, yet greater technical capability has not brought greater protection for civilians. The mission documented attacks affecting civilians, hospitals, schools, markets and displacement sites, including attacks that may amount to war crimes.

Behind these operations lie wider networks of weapons, fighters, training and logistical support. The mission finds reasonable grounds to believe that a transnational network is supplying the Rapid Support Forces with weapons, logistics, training and foreign personnel, including Colombian contractors involved in advanced weapons and drone systems. Externally trained fighters were identified as participating in operations in Zamzam camp and El Fasher. Foreign-supplied drones have also expanded the long-range strike capabilities of the Sudanese Armed Forces, although the mission's findings on external support to the Sudanese Armed Forces remain preliminary.

External support warrants heightened scrutiny where it sustains operations involving serious violations and international crimes, including in El Fasher, where the mission previously documented war crimes, crimes against humanity and conduct displaying the hallmarks of genocide. The mission calls upon States to enforce the Darfur arms embargo and to suspend transfers of weapons, drones and components and military assistance where there is a substantial risk of their use in serious violations. It calls upon the Security Council to extend the embargo throughout the Sudan. The mission reiterates its previous calls for civilian protection, accountability across the full chain of responsibility and support for victims and survivors

* The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.

I. Mandate, cooperation and protection concerns

1. In the present report, the independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan (hereinafter referred to as the mission) examines the impact of expanded military capabilities, particularly long-range drones, the conduct of hostilities and civilian protection in the Sudan and the role of external support in sustaining and prolonging the conflict. The report is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 60/3 of 6 October 2025,[1] in which the Council renewed the mission's mandate and expressed concern at the mission's findings that there are reasonable grounds to believe that both the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces have committed violations of international law amounting to war crimes and that the Rapid Support Forces have also committed crimes against humanity. The Council condemned all forms of external interference, called for an end to material support to both parties and urged all States and entities to respect and enforce the Darfur arms embargo.[2]

2. Following its urgent debate of 3 July 2026, the Human Rights Council requested the mission to conduct an urgent inquiry into the situation in and around El Obeid.[3] It encouraged the mission to update the Council on the outcome of the inquiry at its sixty-third session and to update the General Assembly at its eighty-first session.

3. In preparing the report, the mission obtained extensive expert advice and first-hand accounts from witnesses and survivors and is grateful for their cooperation and courage in sharing their experiences. It carried out two expert consultations on 5 June 2026 and 17 August 2026 regarding the flow of weapons in the Sudan and its impact on the protection of human rights. The mission applied its established methodology and the "reasonable grounds to believe" standard of proof.[4]

4. The mission remains concerned by the deteriorating protection environment and the harassment and intimidation of survivors, experts, victims, witnesses and others perceived as cooperating with documentation and accountability efforts, including with the mission. Stakeholders described fear of surveillance, arrests, reprisals and threats against journalists, lawyers and human rights defenders inside and outside the Sudan by both parties. Telecommunications disruptions imposed by the parties and limited connectivity also constrained the ability of people in the Sudan to connect with the outside world.

5. The mission continued engaging with international and regional entities, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, the African Union Special Envoy on the Prevention of Genocide and other Mass Atrocities, the Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination, the Panels of Experts on the Sudan, Libya and South Sudan, and the International Criminal Court.

6. The mission conducted several activities with the African Union Joint Fact-Finding Mission on the Human Rights Situation in Sudan, including a side event in Geneva, in March 2026, and a joint statement marking the anniversary of the conflict, on 13 April 2026. In Banjul, both missions participated in joint public and confidential civil society events on 12 and 13 May 2026 and issued a joint declaration on 12 May 2026.[5]

7. The mission also engaged with Member States, including Chad, Colombia, Ethiopia, Libya, Panama, Somalia, South Sudan and the United Arab Emirates, regarding allegations that entities, some of which are registered in these States, were supporting the parties to the conflict. Chad, Colombia and the United Arab Emirates provided written and oral responses,

[1] Human Rights Council resolution 60/3, para. 21.
[2] Ibid., para. 20.
[3] Human Rights Council resolution 62/1, para. 17.
[4] See A/HRC/60/22 and A/HRC/57/23.
[5] See the joint declaration on the Sudan adopted by the Joint Fact-Finding Mission of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Human Rights Situation in the Sudan and the United Nations independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan.

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for which the mission is grateful. No substantive response was received from Ethiopia, Libya, Somalia or South Sudan, while Panama requested additional time to respond.

8. Despite repeated efforts, the Sudan continued not to cooperate with the mission. On 14 June 2026, the mission sent a note verbale to the Government of the Sudan through the Permanent Mission in Geneva, requesting a meeting and reiterating its request to visit the Sudan. In accordance with standard practice, on 28 August 2026, the mission also shared the final draft of the present report with the Government of the Sudan. No response was received.

9. The mission also sought information from the Rapid Support Forces, including through letters dated 18 May and 12 August 2026 requesting meetings with its leadership and responses to outstanding and additional questions.[6] On 8 June 2026, the Rapid Support Forces proposed a round-table discussion. The mission confirmed its readiness to engage. No further response was received.

II. Legal framework

10. The applicable legal framework is set out in previous mission reports.[7] The parties are bound by international human rights law, international humanitarian law, including common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II), and customary international law. International criminal law also applies, and the situation in Darfur since 1 July 2002 is subject to the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.

11. Common article 1 of the Geneva Conventions requires States to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law. Relevant legal frameworks governing external military support, where applicable, include the Arms Trade Treaty and international and regional conventions on mercenaries, including the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries, and the Organization of African Unity Convention for the elimination of mercenarism in Africa.

12. The sanctions regime imposed by the Security Council in relation to Darfur, including the arms embargo under resolutions 1556 (2004) and 1591 (2005), is binding on all States. Corporations and private military and security companies providing military, logistical, intelligence or training support may incur responsibilities under applicable international and domestic law, while their personnel may incur individual criminal responsibility.

13. The mission has identified foreign individuals and entities involved in networks that provide weapons, foreign fighters and other military or logistical support to the parties. It publicly names only those designated by the relevant Security Council sanctions committee. The mission maintains confidential dossiers on these and other individuals, which may be shared for accountability purposes, consistent with its mandate.

14. Accountability efforts continue before the International Criminal Court and in several domestic jurisdictions.[8] The Office of the Prosecutor announced that it is accelerating its efforts concerning crimes committed in El Geneina and El Fasher.[9]

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[6] See the conference room paper of the independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan containing information supplementing the report "Sudan: hallmarks of genocide in El Fasher", available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/regular-sessions/session62/list-reports.

[7] See A/HRC/61/77, A/HRC/60/22 and A/HRC/57/23. See also the conference room paper of the independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan on the findings of its investigations into violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and related crimes, committed in the Sudan in the context of the conflict that erupted in mid-April 2023, available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/regular-sessions/session57/list-reports.

[8] See, for example, Legal Action Worldwide, "Sudan – First war crimes complaint against the RSF filed in Kenya", 9 June 2026.

[9] International Criminal Court, "Statement of Deputy Prosecutor Nazhat Shameem Khan to the United Nations Security Council on the Situation in Darfur, pursuant to Resolution 1593 (2005)", 20 January 2026.

Advance edited version

III. Redefining battlefields: the impact of advanced drone capabilities

15. The use of technological advances, particularly expanded drone capabilities, has changed the nature of the conflict, extending the geographical reach of hostilities and prolonging fighting without apparent lull, including during the rainy season.

16. Initially, the Sudanese Armed Forces retained an aerial advantage through conventional aircraft and military infrastructure, while the Rapid Support Forces relied primarily on mobile ground forces. By the period 2025–2026, both parties possessed systems capable of surveillance and attacks across front lines and at considerable distance from their ground forces, ranging from shorter-range multirotor drones to reusable fixed-wing systems and one-way attack platforms. Evidence indicates that externally sourced systems, components, personnel and munitions enabled this expansion.

17. Rapid Support Forces drones were used extensively in operations around El Fasher[10] and in attacks on Merowe Dam, Port Sudan, Omdurman, Khartoum and El Obeid while the locations were under Sudanese Armed Forces control. Drone operations have also been documented in Blue Nile State. More recently, aerial operations by the Sudanese Armed Forces, including using drones, reached locations deep inside areas of Darfur held by the Rapid Support Forces, including in Al-Da'ein and Nyala.

18. Aerial attacks, including by drones, on transport routes and essential infrastructure compounded the effects of siege or isolation, displacement and degraded essential services. Damage to electricity, fuel, water, transport and health infrastructure extended the consequences beyond the immediate strike site by disrupting interconnected systems on which civilian survival depends.

19. Expanded drone warfare altered the geographical distribution and persistence of civilian exposure to hostilities. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights documented more than 1,000 civilians killed in drone strikes between January and May 2026.[11] The mission has collected evidence and previously reported on attacks affecting health facilities, schools, places of worship, markets, displacement sites, civilian gatherings, including weddings and funerals, and energy infrastructure.[12]

20. The emblematic cases presented below illustrate these patterns, including expanded geographical reach, successive attacks and impacts on interconnected civilian infrastructure. They also show how drone operations compounded existing vulnerabilities linked to siege and isolation, displacement, restricted movement and degraded essential services. The cases are illustrative rather than exhaustive.

IV. Drone attacks

A. Rapid Support Forces

1. El Obeid: infrastructure degradation and interconnected civilian harm

21. El Obeid illustrates how repeated drone attacks have progressively degraded essential infrastructure, in a city already under severe strain and partial siege. Between May and July 2026, attacks damaged or disrupted electricity and fuel infrastructure, affecting water supply, healthcare, transport and other essential services. Successive disruptions compounded one another, reducing the capacity of remaining services and infrastructure to compensate.

[10] See A/HRC/61/77. See also the conference room paper of the independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan containing information supplementing the report "Sudan: hallmarks of genocide in El Fasher".

[11] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Deputy High Commissioner Dabo: Sudan cannot be forgotten", 15 June 2026.

[12] A/HRC/60/22, paras. 71–114.

Advance edited version

22. El Obeid, capital of North Kordofan State and base of the Fifth Infantry Division of the Sudanese Armed Forces, remained under Sudanese Armed Forces control as pressure by the Rapid Support Forces intensified in June 2026. Witnesses described near-daily drone attacks affecting military positions, residential areas, fuel supplies, and electricity and water infrastructure, and causing civilian casualties and further disruption to essential services.

23. Satellite imagery identified damage caused between 25 May and 25 June to the main electricity substation, numerous fuel stations and the Grand Market in El Obeid, assessed as being consistent with aerial bombardment. El Obeid already faced chronic water scarcity, with the potable water supply largely dependent on electrically powered pumping and treatment. Witnesses reported that attacks affecting electricity disrupted water services, forcing residents to reduce water consumption and increasingly rely on rainwater and unsafe sources.

24. Repeated attacks on fuel stations and tankers disrupted civilian transport and commercial activity and reduced the fuel available for generators serving hospitals and water services. The effects therefore extended beyond fuel supply to other essential services. Witnesses described hospitals struggling to sustain oxygen supplies, dialysis, blood storage and emergency surgery. Pressure on these services was compounded by displacement into El Obeid.

25. The mission documented attacks on tanker-type vehicles. In late June 2026, a drone struck an empty tanker near Dar al-Fikr school. Witnesses described the vehicle as stationary and non-functional for years and reported civilian casualties, including a schoolgirl who later died from a severe head injury.

26. The mission has reasonable grounds to believe that intensified Rapid Support Forces drone operations in June 2026 repeatedly affected electricity, fuel and other infrastructure serving El Obeid, aggravating existing constraints on water, healthcare, transport and civilian movement. Where such infrastructure constituted military objectives, reasonably foreseeable civilian harm resulting from disruption to it remained relevant to the conduct of the attack, particularly where successive attacks and documented consequences made those effects increasingly apparent.

2. Kalogi: successive attacks through the casualty response chain

27. The Kalogi attacks illustrate how successive drone strikes extended civilian harm beyond the initial strike, affecting responders, casualty evacuation and access to medical care.

28. On 4 December 2025, a drone struck Nabaa al-Hanan kindergarten in Kalogi, South Kordofan State, then under Sudanese Armed Forces control, while young children and a teacher were preparing for a school ceremony. Residents and parents gathered to assist the injured. Shortly after, a further strike hit the same location or its immediate vicinity, killing and injuring responders.

29. Casualties were taken to Kalogi rural hospital, approximately 600 metres away. A further strike occurred as wounded persons and relatives arrived, close to a vehicle transporting wounded persons, killing its driver and occupants. Witnesses described severe burns and blast injuries among the children and responders. The attacks killed 114 people, including some 60 children, and injured 35.[13] Schools remained closed for several months following the attacks, while the hospital ceased operating for approximately 45 days because staff and residents feared further strikes.

30. Witness accounts and other information available to the mission indicated no military use of the kindergarten and no use of the hospital for acts harmful to the enemy at the time of the attacks.

[13] World Health Organization, “WHO warns of dangerous escalation of attacks on health care in Sudan”.

Advance edited version

31. Accordingly, the mission has reasonable grounds to believe that the Rapid Support Forces carried out successive drone attacks, striking Nabaa al-Hanan kindergarten, civilians responding to the initial strike and Kalogi rural hospital, killing and injuring large numbers of civilians, including children.

3. Kulba displacement site, Kadugli: renewed exposure after displacement

32. By late October 2025, Kadugli, the capital of South Kordofan State, remained under siege, with access to food, healthcare and other essential supplies severely constrained. On 31 October, a drone struck the former premises of the International Organization for Migration in Kulba, which were being used to shelter displaced families. Witnesses described fire, damage to nearby houses and multiple civilian casualties. A medical worker reported that seven children were injured, five of whom subsequently died. Another witness described a displaced relative whose leg was severed in the attack.

33. Available information indicated no military use of the premises, with witnesses reporting no Sudanese Armed Forces presence at or near the site; the mission obtained no information to indicate military use at the time of the attack. The mission therefore finds that the premises retained their civilian character at the time of the attack.

34. The mission has reasonable grounds to believe that a Rapid Support Forces drone struck the former premises of the International Organization for Migration being used to shelter displaced families, killing at least five civilians, including children, and injuring others.

4. Other attacks affecting concentrations of civilians

35. The mission documented additional drone attacks attributed to the Rapid Support Forces, affecting concentrations of civilians and essential infrastructure across Kordofan and elsewhere in the Sudan, including Omdurman, Khartoum and Blue Nile. In South Kordofan, attacks occurred amid prolonged siege and isolation in Dilling and Kadugli, held by the Sudanese Armed Forces, where access to food, healthcare and humanitarian assistance was already severely constrained.

36. In February 2026, drones struck Al-Shartai health centre in Kadugli, causing civilian casualties. On 15 January 2026, a drone struck Dilling market, killing at least 12 civilians and injuring others. The attack occurred while Dilling was under prolonged siege, which had severely restricted access to food, fuel, medicine and healthcare. The mission found reasonable grounds to believe that the strike formed part of a broader pattern of Rapid Support Forces drone operations affecting civilian areas and infrastructure in the city.

37. The mission also received evidence of repeated attacks affecting schools, medical facilities, fuel and water infrastructure, markets and residential areas across South and North Kordofan, particularly from late 2025 onwards, following the capture by the Rapid Support Forces of El Fasher and Babanusah.

Conclusion

38. The above-mentioned attacks occurred where civilians were already affected by siege, isolation and restricted access to essential services. By extending attacks to concentrations of civilians and infrastructure, drone operations deepened existing vulnerabilities through persistent aerial exposure. Attacks on El Obeid, Omdurman and Khartoum North in 2026 indicate that these patterns extended beyond Kordofan.

B. Sudanese Armed Forces

1. Al-Da'ein teaching hospital: extended aerial reach and loss of referral capacity

39. Al-Da'ein, the capital of East Darfur State, lies approximately 400 kilometres from areas of active ground fighting in Kordofan. Its teaching hospital served as the principal public referral facility for more than two million people across East Darfur.

Advance edited version

40. On 20 March 2026, the first day of Eid al-Fitr, successive aerial strikes hit the hospital while patients, relatives and medical personnel were present. A medical worker reported two strikes a few minutes apart. The first struck the emergency area, including the pharmacy, blood bank and laboratory. A further strike occurred after responders began assisting the injured, causing additional casualties and prompting some to withdraw for fear of further strikes. Witnesses described severe blast injuries, fire and extensive casualties, including bodies identified only by clothing or personal effects.

41. The hospital was rendered non-functional, disrupting emergency, intensive, surgical, maternity, paediatric and other specialized care and thus removing critical referral capacity from communities already facing severe shortages of functioning health facilities. Patients requiring specialized care subsequently faced travel of more than 150 kilometres to the next referral hospital.

42. Satellite imagery identified at least three direct impact points within the hospital complex and no comparable visible damage to nearby police or government buildings. The mission also examined reports that wounded Rapid Support Forces fighters were treated at the hospital and that vehicles were positioned outside. The mission obtained no information indicating that the hospital was used to store weapons, to launch attacks or for other military uses.

43. Taken together, the evidence provides reasonable grounds to believe that the Sudanese Armed Forces carried out successive drone strikes on Al-Da'ein teaching hospital, killing at least 70 people, injuring 146 and rendering the hospital non-functional. The attack illustrates the expanded reach of Sudanese Armed Forces drone operations into territory held by the Rapid Support Forces and the consequences for major civilian infrastructure.

2. Abu Zaima market: civilian commercial activity exposed to drone attack

44. On 6 June 2026, munitions struck a small metal-roofed shop inside Abu Zaima market in Hamrat al-Sheykh, North Kordofan, where adolescents and young men rented and played video games. Witnesses described that civilians had gathered inside and around the premises and reported hearing a drone over Abu Zaima for approximately 30 minutes before the strike. The shop was destroyed and an adjoining bakery damaged. Nine bodies were reportedly recovered at the site, while three injured persons subsequently died. Witnesses reported no armed personnel, military positions or other apparent Rapid Support Forces presence in or near the market at the time.

45. The mission has reasonable grounds to believe that the Sudanese Armed Forces carried out the drone strike on civilian commercial premises in Abu Zaima market while civilians were present.

3. Yabus market: civilian harm and disruption of essential services

46. Yabus, in southern Blue Nile State near the Ethiopian border, was a stronghold of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement – North Al-Hilu faction and was subjected to repeated aerial attacks by the Sudanese Armed Forces in 2026.

47. On 29 or 30 March 2026, a drone attack attributed to the Sudanese Armed Forces struck the main market and the nearby water pump area. Witness testimony and other information received by the mission, including photographs and video footage of munition remnants, indicate that at least two munitions struck the densely populated area. One struck the main market, extensively damaging shops and market infrastructure, while another struck near the water pump area, killing at least 13 civilians and injuring others, including women and children. The attack also damaged an adjacent medical facility, while the market remained closed for several weeks, disrupting local commerce and access to services.

48. On the basis of currently available evidence, the mission has reasonable grounds to believe that the Sudanese Armed Forces carried out the drone attack on Yabus market and the nearby water pump area, causing civilian casualties and disrupting commerce and essential services.

Advance edited version

4. Other attacks affecting civilian concentrations

49. The mission documented further drone attacks attributed to the Sudanese Armed Forces on locations with a substantial or readily foreseeable civilian presence. The cases below are illustrative and summarized briefly.

50. On 8 April 2026, a strike on a wedding gathering in Kutum, North Darfur State, reportedly killed around 30 civilians. On 27 April, a drone strike on Al-Hamidiya camp for displaced persons in Zalingei killed at least five civilians and injured 12 others.

51. On 2 August, a drone struck a customary court session in Ghara al-Zawiya village, North Darfur, attended by many civilians, including community leaders, elders and minors. A substantial number were killed or injured. Witnesses described the court as a long-standing community dispute-resolution mechanism and reported no military activity or military presence at or near the site. Some reports indicated that two individuals described as Rapid Support Forces officers were among those killed; the mission could not independently verify their status. Even if established, their presence alone would not, in the absence of evidence of military activity or use, deprive the gathering of its civilian character or make the court premises a military objective.

Conclusion

52. Taken together, these cases indicate a pattern in which drone operations of the Sudanese Armed Forces exposed civilians and civilian infrastructure across multiple regions to the effects of aerial attack, causing casualties and disrupting essential services.

C. Differentiated impact on women and children

53. The mission found that drone attacks interacted with pre-existing gender inequalities, displacement and barriers to essential services to produce differentiated harm for women and girls. Women and children were repeatedly among those killed and injured in drone attacks documented by the mission.

1. Impact on maternal health

54. Drone attacks on health facilities and critical infrastructure disrupted maternal health services. In El Obeid, attacks affecting electricity and other infrastructure reduced already limited healthcare capacity, while the maternity hospital suspended operations after a nearby drone strike damaged operating theatres and the pharmacy. Health personnel described shortages of medicines, qualified staff and specialized obstetric services, increasing risks of maternal and neonatal deaths where emergency care, blood products or emergency surgery were delayed or unavailable.

55. Repeated attacks also compounded maternal health risks by disrupting access to obstetric care. Health professionals reported increases in miscarriages, stillbirths and pregnancy complications during periods of repeated aerial attack, which they associated with acute stress, restricted movement and delayed access to care.

2. Impact on children

56. Drone attacks had particular consequences for children, both as direct victims and through damage to the civilian infrastructure necessary for their survival and development. Children were repeatedly among those killed and injured in attacks attributed to both parties.

57. Attacks affecting hospitals, schools, water systems and displacement sites also disrupted healthcare, immunization, education, safe water and shelter, while prolonged displacement and interrupted schooling heightened protection risks, including child marriage, exploitation and other forms of gender-based harm, particularly for girls.

Advance edited version

D. Conclusion

58. The mission finds that expanded and diversified drone capabilities have altered the geographical reach and civilian consequences of hostilities. Greater range and operational persistence have enabled both parties to strike far beyond front lines, reducing the practical protection afforded by distance. In the cases it investigated, the mission documented civilians struck in places of residence, refuge and education, markets, medical facilities and community gatherings, including where a substantial civilian presence was readily foreseeable.

59. The consequences extended beyond the point of impact. Fear of further strikes delayed rescue and evacuation in some cases, while severe explosive injuries occurred where timely medical care was already constrained. Repeated attacks also eroded the civilian systems on which survival depended, compounding the effects of conflict and deprivation. Drone strikes also caused extensive damage to bodies, thus complicating identification and burial of the dead and causing extreme distress to survivors, relatives and medical personnel.

E. Violations of international humanitarian law and war crimes

1. Rapid Support Forces

60. The mission finds reasonable grounds to believe that the Rapid Support Forces carried out the drone strikes documented above, including those affecting El Obeid, Nabaa al-Hanan kindergarten, Kalogi rural hospital and the Kulba displacement site. It identified no military use that would have deprived the kindergarten or the displacement site of their civilian protection or the hospital of its special protection.

61. The mission finds that these attacks failed to comply with the obligations of target verification and precautions in attack. Where civilian or protected objects were themselves the objects of attack, the attacks also violated the principle of distinction. The repeated strikes affecting Kalogi rural hospital indicate a failure to respect the special protection afforded to medical units.

62. The mission finds reasonable grounds to believe that the Rapid Support Forces committed serious violations of international humanitarian law. Its directing of attacks against civilian objects, hospitals or educational facilities may amount to war crimes.[14]

2. Sudanese Armed Forces

63. The mission finds reasonable grounds to believe that the Sudanese Armed Forces carried out the drone strikes documented above affecting Al-Da'ein teaching hospital, Abu Zaima market and Yabus market.

64. The mission established the civilian character of the affected locations and identified no military objectives at the immediate impact sites. It finds reasonable grounds to believe that the attacks were inconsistent with the principles of distinction and precaution.

65. The mission finds reasonable grounds to believe that Al-Da'ein teaching hospital retained its protected status. Treating wounded Rapid Support Forces members did not remove the protection afforded to the sick and wounded hors de combat under common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and Protocol II Additional thereto.

66. Taken together, these and other documented incidents provide reasonable grounds to believe that members of the Sudanese Armed Forces committed serious violations of international humanitarian law. Where civilian objects were intentionally targeted, such conduct may amount to war crimes.

[14] International Committee of the Red Cross, "Customary Rules of International Humanitarian Law", International Humanitarian Law Databases , rules 7, 15 and 16, available at https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/customary-ihl/v1.

Advance edited version

V. Networks that enable the continuation and escalation of hostilities

67. The mission continued to receive information indicating that external actors have helped sustain the conflict through the provision of arms and military equipment, financial and logistical support, foreign fighters and other assistance. This support enabled military operations during which serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law were committed, some of which may amount to international crimes. The relationship between external support and military operations is particularly significant in Darfur, including El Fasher, where the mission found that actions by the Rapid Support Forces and allies displayed the hallmarks of genocide, and increasingly in Kordofan.[15]

68. In resolution 60/3, the Human Rights Council condemned the external interference fuelling the conflict and reiterated the mission's call for a halt to material support to both parties and for all States and entities to respect and enforce the Darfur arms embargo established under Security Council resolution 1556 (2004) and subsequent resolutions.[16]

69. In the present report, the mission focuses on external support to the Rapid Support Forces. This reflects evidence arising from its investigations into violations and international crimes associated particularly with the takeover of El Fasher and the subsequent atrocities. The mission subsequently obtained substantial, converging information concerning external networks supplying the Rapid Support Forces with weapons, advanced military technology, foreign fighters, financing and other forms of support. The nature, scale and apparent continuity of this support, and its nexus with Rapid Support Forces operations in areas where the mission documented grave violations and international crimes, warranted closer examination of these external networks and their possible contribution to the commission or facilitation of such violations.

70. The mission is also concerned by increasing information regarding external support to the Sudanese Armed Forces, including the acquisition and deployment of advanced weapons and technologies capable of materially affecting the conduct of hostilities and civilian protection. Such support may engage international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international criminal law, including where external assistance contributes to the commission of violations or international crimes. The mission is therefore expanding its investigations to examine external support to the Sudanese Armed Forces, including the sources, nature, scale and use of that support. The investigation is in its initial phase and the information below is consequently preliminary.

71. The mission will continue to investigate support to all parties in accordance with its mandate and evidentiary standards and will report further where the evidence permits.

A. Rapid Support Forces

1. External support networks

72. Evidence verified by the mission, including from witnesses with first-hand information, provides reasonable grounds to believe that a transnational network facilitated the military operations of the Rapid Support Forces through interconnected air, land and maritime supply routes linking individuals and entities located in the United Arab Emirates, Chad, south-eastern Libya, and Puntland, in Somalia.

73. Evidence indicates that locations in Chad, south-eastern Libya and Puntland functioned as transit and logistical hubs through which weapons, personnel and other military supplies were moved into areas controlled by the Rapid Support Forces. The mission also obtained evidence linking individuals and entities based in the United Arab Emirates to elements of these supply arrangements, as detailed below. This support played an important

[15] See A/HRC/61/77. See also the conference room paper of the independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan containing information supplementing the report "Sudan: hallmarks of genocide in El Fasher".

[16] Human Rights Council resolution 60/3, para. 20.

Advance edited version

role in increasing the capacity of the Rapid Support Forces to sustain operations in Darfur, Kordofan and other regions in the Sudan, of which the emblematic cases above are a few examples.[17]

2. Weapons, drones and logistical support

74. The mission received credible information indicating that, from at least April 2025 to after the takeover of El Fasher, weapons, military equipment and other supplies transferred to the Rapid Support Forces included material consistent with equipment previously exported to the United Arab Emirates.

75. Witnesses with first-hand knowledge and other independent sources described artillery systems (including Norinco AH-4 155 mm howitzers), air defence systems (including FK-2000 systems), radars, armoured vehicles, Land Cruisers, uniforms, ammunition, weapons and medical supplies transferred through regional routes involving Boosaaso in Puntland, Benghazi, Kufrah and Jufrah (Libya) and Chad before reaching areas controlled by the Rapid Support Forces. Authenticated imagery corroborated these accounts, confirming the presence of Norinco AH-4 155 mm howitzers among equipment recaptured by the Sudanese Armed Forces after they retook Khartoum and of FK-2000 systems in Dubeybat on at least 10 February and 7 July 2026.

76. Witnesses also informed the mission of drone-related equipment that had been transferred through regional routes to the Rapid Support Forces, including CH-95 reconnaissance and strike drones, electronic warfare capabilities and associated technical support. Witnesses with first-hand knowledge described boxes containing weapons and ammunition being offloaded from aircraft at Nyala Airport and subsequently distributed to Rapid Support Forces camps.

77. Multiple sources identified Nyala Airport as a principal entry point for supplies into the territory controlled by the Rapid Support Forces. The mission also received information indicating that members of the Rapid Support Forces, supported by Colombian contractors, launched drones from Nyala against areas controlled by the Sudanese Armed Forces, including in Kordofan and Khartoum States. The mission further obtained evidence of drone command and control stations on the Nyala Airport runway that had reportedly been imported through the same routes and repeatedly targeted by Sudanese Armed Forces missiles between April and July 2025.

78. The mission compared weapons systems identified by witnesses among reported imports with authenticated imagery and footage. Several reported systems were consistent with weapons and military equipment documented at operational sites of the Rapid Support Forces.

79. The mission verified footage of drone remnants consistent with CH-95/FH-95 systems at multiple locations across the Sudan, including El Fasher, Nyala and El Obeid. Verified footage recorded in El Obeid on 28 February 2026 showed a downed drone, assessed as an FH-95, on the roof of a civilian house in the city centre. On the same day, at least nine people were killed and several others injured in a series of drone attacks on El Obeid. These alleged transfers are significant because they sustained the capacity of the Rapid Support Forces to conduct hostilities, while some of the capabilities supplied or supported were used in operations affecting civilians and civilian objects.

3. Transit and facilitation

80. Multiple sources identified locations in Chad as a logistical corridor through which personnel and supplies moved towards Nyala and other areas of Darfur controlled by the Rapid Support Forces. Witnesses with first-hand knowledge described recurring cargo flights to Chad originating from locations in the United Arab Emirates and onward movement of military supplies and personnel, including foreign contractors, into areas controlled by the Rapid Support Forces in the Sudan.

[17] See S/2025/239 (the final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan).

Advance edited version

81. Witnesses, relevant experts, verified video and satellite imagery and other evidence identified locations in south-eastern Libya, particularly Benghazi, Kufrah and Jufrah, as hubs for foreign personnel and military supplies destined for the areas controlled by the Rapid Support Forces. Benghazi, Kufrah and Jufrah were described as hubs receiving weapons, vehicles, fuel, food supplies and military personnel prior to onward transfer to the Sudan, with support from Libyan National Army battalions, including the Subul al-Salam battalion.[18]

82. The mission also obtained evidence of training facilities in Benghazi and Kufrah, where Rapid Support Forces fighters received specialized technical training in the operation and maintenance of weapons, including AK-47 rifles, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and DShK heavy machine guns. Foreign trainers, including Colombian nationals, provided technical instructions. Training lasted up to three months, after which participants were deployed to Rapid Support Forces operations in Kordofan, Darfur and elsewhere. Foreign trainers reportedly accompanied groups for at least a month following deployment to provide advice.

83. Jufrah reportedly hosted a military camp, where fighters from the Sudan, Chad and other countries received training for deployment with the Rapid Support Forces. Jufrah further functioned as a transit hub for personnel travelling between Benghazi and the Sudan. Verified open-source material identified Rapid Support Forces fighters trained in Libya, who subsequently participated in the attacks on Zamzam camp in April 2025 and El Fasher in October 2025.

84. The evidence identified Boosaaso as a recurring logistical hub and transit point used by external actors, including individuals and entities based in the United Arab Emirates, for personnel and cargo destined for areas controlled by the Rapid Support Forces. Sources described Ilyushin 76 cargo flights linking Boosaaso, Kufrah, Benghazi and Chad, from which cargo and personnel were subsequently transferred to the Sudan. Witnesses further reported that individuals and entities based in the United Arab Emirates maintained facilities in Boosaaso, including a military base through which foreign contractors transited.

4. Recruitment of Colombian contractors

85. Since at least August 2024, the recruitment and deployment of foreign contractors, particularly Colombian nationals, has been a significant component of the transnational support network for Rapid Support Forces operations. Multiple sources described a structured system through which former Colombian military personnel were recruited, trained and deployed to support the Rapid Support Forces. Estimates of the number of Colombian contractors varied considerably, ranging from 350 to 2,000 individuals. Based on credible independent sources, including information indicating that recruitment of Colombian contractors for deployment to the Sudan remains ongoing, the mission assesses that the total number may be closer to 2,000 individuals.

86. Witness testimony and documentary evidence enabled the mission to identify key entities, including some registered in Colombia and the United Arab Emirates, as being linked to this transnational network and working closely together in the recruitment process and subsequent deployment to the Sudan of Colombian contractors. The mission obtained credible evidence indicating that these entities played a significant role in facilitating recruitment, contracting, transportation and deployment arrangements.

87. The mission also received information that some contractors were not informed at the time of recruitment that they would be deployed to the Sudan, while others reportedly received lower salaries than stipulated in their contracts.

[18] See S/2026/224 (the final report of the Panel of Experts on Libya).

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88. The founder of one of the key entities, Colonel Álvaro Andrés Quijano Becerra, was based in Abu Dhabi, while his wife, Ms. Claudia Viviana Oliveros Forero, coordinated recruitment in Colombia. They were both sanctioned by the relevant Security Council sanctions committee on 28 April 2026 for their role in recruiting and deploying former Colombian military personnel to the Sudan.[19]

89. While Colombia acknowledges the involvement of Colombian entities and individuals in recruiting contractors for deployment to the Sudan, the United Arab Emirates has disputed any claims that entities and individuals under its jurisdiction were involved.

5. Transit routes, training and operational deployment

90. Witnesses described multiple routes used to deploy Colombian contractors to the Sudan. Initial groups reportedly went through the United Arab Emirates, Boosaaso and Benghazi before crossing southern Libyan desert corridors into Darfur.[20] Subsequent groups reportedly also travelled via Boosaaso or the United Arab Emirates, transiting through Chad before entering the Sudan via Nyala Airport. Witness testimony indicates that upon arrival in Dubai or Abu Dhabi, they were transported to a military-style facility in Ghayathi, United Arab Emirates, for about two months of military training by instructors from different countries alongside members of the Rapid Support Forces. The training reportedly covered drone operations, indirect fire systems, air defence systems and other advanced weapons systems.

6. Role in training, drone operations and advanced weapons systems

91. Witnesses reported that Colombian contractors played a significant role in operating and maintaining surveillance, strike and one-way attack drones, supported artillery deployment and other advanced weapon systems and provided intelligence support, technical maintenance and military instruction. Many were stationed in camps in and around Nyala, including at Nyala Airport, where they operated drones and air defence systems.

92. In some cases, Colombian contractors remained responsible for operating and maintaining drone systems without transferring their operation to members of the Rapid Support Forces. Witnesses indicated that some remained embedded alongside the systems during operations because the necessary technical expertise was not widely available within Rapid Support Forces ranks. Drone controllers were reportedly recovered from a building in the Al-Thawra neighbourhood of El Fasher identified as having been used by Colombian contractors to launch drones.

93. Colombian contractors also reportedly provided specialized training in drones and other advanced weapons systems at camps in and around Nyala and in Kufrah and Benghazi in south-eastern Libya.

7. Presence and operational role in El Fasher

94. Several sources indicated that Colombian contractors, particularly members of the Desert Wolves battalion, were present in and around El Fasher before, during and after its takeover by the Rapid Support Forces. They were reportedly deployed to support military operations to seize the city and surrounding areas. Verified open-source material identified Spanish-speaking, light-skinned contractors operating alongside Rapid Support Forces units in Darfur during this period. Witness testimony indicates that Colombian nationals were captured in the El Fasher area before the takeover, in possession of loitering munitions, surveillance drones and armed drones. Other sources indicated that Colombian contractors operated artillery systems, drone platforms and other technical equipment during the offensive.

[19] See the list of sanctioned individuals available at https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1591/materials/summaries.

[20] See S/2026/224 (the final report of the Panel of Experts on Libya).

Advance edited version

8. Other foreign fighters

95. Witnesses also reported fighters from South Sudan, Chad and Ethiopia, including women, serving primarily in front-line rather than technical roles. They were identified by witnesses in El Fasher and elsewhere on the basis of language, accent and, in some cases, uniforms.

96. Witness testimony, corroborated by photographic, video and documentary evidence, indicates that foreign fighters, drone operators, technicians and military specialists were integrated into Rapid Support Forces operations, particularly in the use and support of advanced weapons systems and other technical capabilities.

Conclusion

97. Viewed collectively, the evidence provides reasonable grounds to believe that the Rapid Support Forces have benefited from a transnational support network involving weapons and other military materiel, logistical assistance, training and foreign personnel.

98. The mission has reasonable grounds to believe that private companies, intermediaries and associated individuals operating across multiple countries, including Colombia, the United Arab Emirates, Chad, Libya and Somalia, facilitated elements of this support network.

99. The support sustained Rapid Support Forces military operations during a conflict marked by serious violations of international humanitarian law, international human rights law and the commission of international crimes. This was particularly clear in El Fasher.

100. The nature, scale and persistence of external support raise serious concerns regarding compliance with the Darfur arms embargo and other applicable international law obligations. They warrant further investigation, including by competent national authorities, regarding the responsibility of individuals and entities that knowingly provided assistance that contributed to international crimes.

B. Sudanese Armed Forces

101. The mission's investigation into external support to the Sudanese Armed Forces and its impact on respect for international law obligations remains preliminary. Investigations into the origin of these systems, transfer modalities and the entities and States involved are ongoing.

102. Available evidence indicates that, since late 2023, the Sudanese Armed Forces have significantly expanded their drone capabilities through foreign-supplied systems, which has enhanced reconnaissance and precision-strike capabilities.

103. The mission verified open-source imagery and footage of drone strikes and downed drones in Kordofan and Darfur attributed to the Sudanese Armed Forces, from January 2026 onwards. Technical analysis identified features consistent with Bayraktar Akıncı combat drones, including twin-turboprop propulsion components, distinctive propeller assemblies, munition-release mechanisms and manufacturer markings on recovered wreckage. Footage from Nyala, South Darfur State, on 8 January 2026, and Al-Farshaya, South Kordofan, on 24 January 2026, was assessed as likely depicting Akıncı platforms. As this system is not manufactured in the Sudan, its documented presence indicates the use of foreign-supplied military equipment in long-range precision-strike operations.

104. The mission also received images related to the attack on Yabus market on 29 or 30 March 2026, which military experts assessed as depicting components consistent with Yiha III loitering munitions. The same munition type was identified in verified open-source footage relating to other incidents attributed to the Sudanese Armed Forces, including a strike in Abu Zabad, West Kordofan State, on 6 July 2026. This further indicates use of foreign-supplied drones by the Sudanese Armed Forces.

105. Based on the available information, the mission has reasonable grounds to believe that the Sudanese Armed Forces used foreign-supplied drones and loitering munitions in attacks

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that struck civilian objects, including Yabus market in Blue Nile, and may amount to a serious violation of international humanitarian law and a war crime.

106. The use of foreign-supplied drones by the Sudanese Armed Forces in Darfur, including in Nyala, raises concerns regarding compliance with applicable obligations regarding arms transfers and with the Darfur arms embargo. Continued transfer of weapons, drones or military assistance therefore requires heightened due diligence. States and entities involved in such transfers should refrain from supplying military materiel where there is a foreseeable risk that it could be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian law and should ensure full compliance with applicable international obligations, including, where applicable, the Arms Trade Treaty.

107. The mission is continuing its investigation into this matter.

C. Responsibility of external actors

1. Corporate entities and the provision of logistical support and foreign personnel

108. The International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries and the Organization of African Unity Convention for the elimination of mercenarism in Africa require States Parties to prohibit and suppress mercenary activities, including recruitment, financing, training, organization and support.

109. The mission found that foreign contractors performed combat support and specialist functions, while associated companies and intermediaries supplied weapons, military materiel, logistical support and technical services. These activities supported the Rapid Support Forces during a period marked by widespread and publicly documented violations of international humanitarian law, international human rights law and international crimes.

110. Under international law, aiding and abetting entails knowingly providing practical assistance, encouragement or moral support that substantially contributes to the commission of a crime.[21] The assistance need not be indispensable to the commission of the crimes; it is sufficient that it materially enabled, facilitated, sustained or enhanced the capacity of the perpetrators to engage in the criminal conduct.

111. Corporations and private military and security companies supplying arms, military services or logistical support in contravention of Security Council resolutions 1556 (2004) and 1591 (2005) may be implicated in violations of the applicable sanctions regime. Under the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct, businesses operating in conflict-affected environments are expected to undertake heightened human rights due diligence to identify, prevent and mitigate adverse impacts linked to their operations and business relationships.

112. The mission finds reasonable grounds to believe that entities and associated individuals operating across several States were involved in the recruitment, financing, transportation, training and deployment of foreign fighters and the provision of military supplies, logistical support and technical services to the Rapid Support Forces, materially contributing to that group's operational capabilities. The evidence indicates that this support sustained Rapid Support Forces military operations during a period marked by serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law and international crimes.

2. Engagement with States

113. Through its investigation, the mission identified recruitment, financing, contracting, transit and logistical activities supporting the Rapid Support Forces through the territory of several States, including Chad, Colombia, Libya, Somalia and the United Arab Emirates. It

[21] See, for example, *Prosecutor v. Anto Furundžija,* Case No. IT-95-17/1-T, Judgment , 10 December 1998, Trial Chamber, paras. 209–249; *Prosecutor v. Duško Tadić,* Case No. IT-94-1-A, Judgment, 15 July 1999, Appeals Chamber, para. 229; and *Prosecutor v. Momčilo Perišić,* Case No. IT-04-81-A, Judgment, 28 February 2013, Appeals Chamber, paras. 26–28 and 48.

Advance edited version

also identified foreign fighters of Ethiopian and South Sudanese nationality. States are required to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law in all circumstances. This obligation requires them not only to refrain from contributing to violations, but also to exercise due diligence and take all reasonable measures within their power to prevent violations where there is a clear risk that violations will be committed, to bring ongoing violations to an end and to prevent further violations where they have already occurred. The gravity of the violations and the foreseeable risk of their recurrence has been well documented, including in the mission's reports on the Sudan since 2024. States must take appropriate measures to ensure accountability, including, as applicable, by investigating and prosecuting individuals suspected of being responsible.

114. The mission sought information from the States concerned regarding activities identified within or through their territories and summarizes their positions below.

3. Position of the States concerned

(a) Chad

115. In its response of 16 June 2026 to the mission's request for information of 20 May 2026, and during a meeting with the mission on 18 June 2026, Chad reaffirmed its commitment to the sovereignty of the Sudan, international law and strict neutrality in the conflict. Chad stated that it had strengthened border surveillance and security measures to prevent the infiltration of armed elements, the recruitment of Chadian nationals and illicit trafficking of weapons, ammunition and other military materiel. It further stated that it had no knowledge of weapons, drones or military equipment being transferred through its territory and rejected allegations that its territory or facilities had been used to provide military support to any party to the conflict.

116. The mission appreciates the cooperation of Chad and acknowledges the considerable humanitarian and security challenges it faces, including the large-scale arrival of refugees and difficulties in monitoring long borders.

117. Evidence indicates, however, that private actors and transnational networks used portions of Chadian territory, particularly remote border areas, for transit and logistical activities. While recognizing the security, humanitarian and resource constraints faced by Chad, the mission notes that the use of Chadian territory and transit routes formed part of external support networks benefiting the Rapid Support Forces. It encourages Chad to fully investigate these concerns, take measures to prevent and halt these illicit activities and continue strengthening border monitoring, and calls upon the international community to assist in these efforts.

(b) Colombia

118. In its response of 8 May 2026 to the mission's request for information of 21 April 2026, and during meetings in Geneva on 10 September 2025 and 16 June 2026 between the mission and the Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, Gustavo Gallón Giraldo, Colombia reiterated its opposition to mercenarism and its concern over the participation of Colombian nationals in foreign armed conflicts, including in the Sudan. It described measures, including an inter-institutional coordination mechanism established in June 2025, prevention campaigns and assistance to affected nationals and their families. Colombia referred to the March 2026 visit by the Working Group on the use of mercenaries, steps towards accession to the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries and efforts to strengthen domestic criminal legislation. It noted that three Colombian nationals had been listed under the Security Council's sanctions regime for the Sudan and that it was implementing the applicable measures. Colombia further expressed readiness to cooperate with the Sudan through information-sharing, legal cooperation and dialogue between military authorities to support investigations, accountability and prevention.

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119. The mission welcomes the cooperation of Colombia, the measures it is taking to address mercenary-related activities, including efforts to strengthen prevention, regulation and accountability, and its stated commitment to criminalize mercenary-related activities under domestic law. At the same time, the evidence indicates that networks involving Colombian nationals have recruited, contracted, transported and deployed personnel to support Rapid Support Forces operations in the Sudan, including through private companies and intermediaries operating across multiple jurisdictions.

120. The mission found no information indicating that the Government of Colombia directed, controlled, supported or endorsed such activities and therefore makes no findings of State responsibility. However, the mission finds reasonable grounds to believe that private entities and individuals operating from or through Colombia have participated in the recruitment, financing, contracting or deployment of foreign personnel supporting the Rapid Support Forces. The mission encourages Colombia to continue investigating such activities and to cooperate with relevant international accountability mechanisms.

(c) United Arab Emirates

121. In its responses of 24 February and 19 June 2026 to the mission's request for information on the alleged supply of weapons and mercenaries through or with the involvement of entities registered in the United Arab Emirates, and during meetings with the mission on 26 February and 19 June 2026, the United Arab Emirates rejected allegations that it provided military, logistical, financial or political support to the Rapid Support Forces. It maintained that it had remained neutral throughout the conflict, had not supplied arms or ammunition and had not recruited, financed or facilitated the deployment of foreign fighters to the Sudan. It further emphasized its commitment to international law, compliance with Security Council resolutions, support for peace initiatives and its provision of humanitarian assistance to the Sudan and neighbouring countries.

122. The United Arab Emirates maintained that allegations of arms transfers, recruitment of foreign fighters and support to the Rapid Support Forces were unfounded and based on unverified or unreliable information. It stated that the 2025 report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan[22] did not establish that the United Arab Emirates had supplied weapons to the Rapid Support Forces. It also stated that it conducted investigations into allegations relating to entities under its jurisdiction and found no evidence linking such entities to mercenary activities or individuals reportedly deployed in the Sudan. The United Arab Emirates maintained that the allegations formed part of what it characterized as a false media campaign led by the Sudanese authorities in Port Sudan.

123. The United Arab Emirates informed the mission of its legal and regulatory frameworks governing arms transfers, private security companies, anti-money-laundering, corporate conduct and international crimes. It highlighted the existence of domestic legislation criminalizing war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, including provisions for the exercise of extraterritorial jurisdiction in certain circumstances. It also stated that corporations registered in the country may incur criminal liability for offences committed by their representatives, directors or agents.

124. The mission takes note of these submissions and welcomes the stated commitment of the United Arab Emirates to compliance with international law, the regulation of private actors and accountability for unlawful conduct. It also acknowledges the humanitarian assistance provided by the United Arab Emirates.

125. Based on the totality of the evidence, however, the mission finds that individuals and entities operating from, registered in or linked to the United Arab Emirates have played a significant role in networks involved in the recruitment, financing, transportation and deployment of foreign military contractors and the provision of military-related support benefiting the Rapid Support Forces.

126. Given the evidence that some of the activities occurred over an extended period, related to the activities of entities registered in the United Arab Emirates and involved

[22] A/HRC/60/22.

Advance edited version

operations within that country's jurisdiction, the mission considers that further and stronger measures should be taken by the United Arab Emirates to prevent, investigate and halt activities conducted from its territory that might foreseeably contribute to violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and to international crimes in the Sudan.

127. The mission notes the stated commitment of the United Arab Emirates to preventing misuse of its territory for unlawful purposes and its assertion that robust regulatory and enforcement mechanisms are available to address such conduct. The mission further notes that, in April 2026, the United Arab Emirates initiated proceedings concerning alleged transfers of military materiel linked to the conflict in the Sudan. Although those proceedings concern alleged support to the Sudanese Armed Forces rather than to the Rapid Support Forces, they indicate the availability of domestic mechanisms capable of examining comparable conduct.

128. The mission recommends that the United Arab Emirates investigate allegations concerning companies, intermediaries and individuals involved in supplying military materiel, logistical support, training, financing or foreign personnel to parties to the conflict, in particular the entities and individuals identified above, and, where appropriate, that it take effective enforcement action.

(d) Non-responsive States: Ethiopia, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan

129. The mission sent requests for information to Ethiopia, Libya and Somalia on 11 June 2026 and to Panama and South Sudan on 5 August 2026 but received no substantive responses. Libya responded on 16 June, stating that the Permanent Representative was unavailable to meet, but did not address the request for information. South Sudan responded informally on 7 August, requesting more time, which was granted, but provided no further response. Panama responded formally and requested a six-week extension, which was granted. Ethiopia and Somalia did not respond.

130. The mission encourages the Governments of Ethiopia, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan to engage with it, particularly in the light of evidence of illicit activities stemming from their territory, as documented in the present report.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

131. **The mission finds that the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces committed serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law in the course of drone operations, with some conduct amounting to war crimes. Expanded range, persistence and increasingly sophisticated capabilities enabled both parties to strike far beyond immediate ground front lines; yet greater technical precision did not translate into greater civilian protection. The mission documented repeated attacks affecting civilians, civilian objects and protected infrastructure, including hospitals, markets, schools and displacement sites. Drone warfare changed where civilians could be reached, eroding the protection afforded by distance.**

132. **External support is sustaining these military capabilities. The mission identified a transnational network supplying the Rapid Support Forces with weapons, logistical support, training and foreign personnel, while foreign-supplied drones expanded the long-range strike capability of the Sudanese Armed Forces. Continued transfers and support amid well-documented violations raise serious concerns under international law. The concern is particularly acute where external support sustained Rapid Support Forces operations in Darfur, including in El Fasher, where the mission previously documented war crimes, crimes against humanity and conduct displaying the hallmarks of genocide.**

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133. **Despite repeated warnings, drone strikes and broader hostilities continue, including renewed drone strikes in El Obeid and escalating violence in Blue Nile. The weapons, financing, personnel and technology that sustain this war must be restricted. The mission therefore calls for urgent action to:**

(a) **Protect civilians in drone operations. Parties to the conflict must end the fighting and take all feasible precautions, particularly where hospitals, schools, displacement sites and other concentrations of civilians may be affected. International mechanisms for the protection of civilians in the Sudan must be seriously explored;**

(b) **Support and encourage efforts to preserve records relevant to accountability for drone attacks on civilians, including by preserving targeting and authorization records, coordinates, imagery, platform and munition data, operator logs and post-strike assessments, investigate strikes causing substantial civilian harm and provide relevant records to independent investigative and judicial mechanisms;**

(c) **Stop military support that risks fuelling violations. States must enforce the Darfur arms embargo, trace and halt transfers of drones, weapons, components, technical assistance and other military support where there is a substantial risk of their use in serious violations of international humanitarian law, implement applicable obligations regarding arms transfers and personnel support, strengthen end-use monitoring and traceability, investigate individuals and entities involved in providing illicit military support to the parties and impose targeted sanctions on those implicated in violations. The Security Council should extend the arms embargo throughout the Sudan;**

(d) **Support and provide resources to entities, including the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, that record weapons transfers, military support and drone attacks;**

(e) **Support victims. States and civil society should ensure immediate assistance to victims of attacks, including emergency care, rehabilitation, prosthetics and psychosocial support, without prejudice to their right to reparation;**

(f) **Pursue accountability across the full chain of responsibility, including those who commit, order, finance, supply or otherwise facilitate international crimes, through domestic and international proceedings, support universal jurisdiction, cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court and support the extension of its jurisdiction beyond Darfur to the whole of the Sudan and the establishment of a specialized independent judicial mechanism in the form of a specialized court for the Sudan working in tandem with the Court.**

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