



Man-made Famine in Sudan: A Scar on Our Collective Conscience

7 January 2025

The undersigned organizations welcome the convening of the 9831st meeting of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) under its agenda item on the “Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict” namely on food insecurity in Sudan, which was held in New York on Monday, 6 January 2025. We wish to thank the United Kingdom’s delegation to the United Nations Office in New York as well as the delegations of Guyana and Slovenia (the Council’s informal co-focal points on conflict and hunger), Denmark and Sierra Leone for their role in convening this important meeting.

The UNSC’s meeting on food insecurity in Sudan comes at a crucial time in the country’s history, amidst failure of the state and calculated disruption of food production and distribution systems due to the devastating internal armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces. The discussion among UNSC’s member states and the briefing reports delivered by the Director, Operations and Advocacy Division at the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and the Deputy Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), spelled out the gravity of the situation. Meanwhile, the report of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Famine Review Committee (FRC) of 24 December 2024, depicts a somber reality that a deadly famine exists in five areas in Sudan. The IPC/FRC report is categorical that it “... finds Famine in at least five areas of Sudan for which reliable data exists, and projects Famine in five additional areas between December 2024 and May 2025. Risk of Famine in the projection period is confirmed in seventeen additional areas.” Around 25 million or half of Sudan’s population risks facing high levels of acute food insecurity, described by IPC as crisis level conditions or worse, in other words, a food insecurity situation amounting to starvation.

On 16 February 2024, the Civil Society Consultative Meeting on Sudan held in Addis Ababa sent alarm signals about the imminent risk of famine in North Darfur State. On 1 August 2024 and after more than five-month of precious time, the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) and IPC’s Sudan Technical Working Group confirmed that famine, indeed, exists in Zamzam IDPs Camp in North Darfur, alas no concrete action to end this humanitarian tragedy has been taken since then. It is abhorrent to all canons of civilized life that man-made starvation, death, destitution and extremely critical levels of acute malnutrition exist in a country bestowed by vast resources, fertile land and abundant food and water sources. It is morally unacceptable that donated relief material is reportedly stored in Sudanese seaports or find its way to marketplaces in areas not affected by famine, while millions of vulnerable victims of hunger barely find a meal a day.

Once again, we call upon members of the UNSC and the international community at large to remain seized of this matter. Equally, we urge the African Union’s Peace and Security Council to fully support the ongoing UNSC’s efforts to end famine in Sudan and to take additional measures to halt the overall internal war tragedy unfolding in the country. Pressure to bear must be exercised on the warring parties to:

1. Respect international humanitarian law and immediately start negotiations for a monitored cessation of hostilities accord for humanitarian purposes.
2. Commit themselves to guarantee timely, safe and sustained humanitarian access to famine-stricken areas, and remove all administrative and security impediments that hinder smooth functioning of relief operations.

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Signed:

1. African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies, Banjul
2. African Organization for Rights and Development, Kampala
3. *Centre du Commerce International pour le Développement*, Conakry
4. Human Rights Institute of South Africa, Johannesburg
5. *Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme*, Dakar/Geneva
6. Sudan Knowledge Centre, Geneva
7. Ubuntu Centre for Peace and Strategic Studies, Kampala

For more information, please contact Abdelmageed Haroun at: haroun@aford.org

Tel/WhatsApp +256 7 621 97 247