

United Nations High Commissioners for Refugee



**Measures to Improve Regional Cooperation to Establish and
Enforce Secure Distribution Mechanisms for Refugees with
focus on Sudan**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The UNHCR – the United Nations’ lead agency for the protection of refugees – faces one of the most complex challenges in its more than 70-year history. With its mandate to protect the rights of displaced people and finding long-term solutions for those fleeing their homes, the UNHCR is leading this committee in its efforts to address the region's humanitarian emergency. The current situation in Sudan is characterized by ongoing armed conflict and a massive exodus into neighboring countries, requiring an urgent reorientation of our regional strategies.

At the heart of our work lies a critical analysis of existing humanitarian aid distribution mechanisms. While the UNHCR sets global standards for the protection and care of refugees, these efforts are reaching their limits in the Sudanese context. Bureaucratic barriers at border crossings, a lack of security for aid convoys due to conflict parties and strain on neighboring states' infrastructure require coordinated regional action. In this committee, our aim is to develop concrete recommendations based on international law that enable a secure and efficient supply chain across national borders, going beyond the mere concept of protection.

The success of these strategies largely depends on the 193 Member States of the United Nations who support the UNHCR. These states have a dual responsibility: neighboring countries act as direct partners in implementing the Refugee Convention, opening their borders to humanitarian aid, while the international community creates the necessary scope through financial support and diplomatic pressure on those involved in the conflict. By combining the UNHCR’s protective role with coordinated member state support, our aim is to provide aid to millions of displaced people and laying the foundation for the long-term stabilization of affected regions. Therefore, It is crucial that this committee increases diplomatic pressure and develops practical solutions to ensure that humanitarian access is recognized as an absolute necessity.

II. INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

In April 2023, the armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) escalated. This has triggered a massive wave of displacement. Millions of people have fled to neighboring countries and other regions within Sudan. Ensuring that humanitarian aid reaches these people has been, and continues to be, an immense logistical and political challenge. The ongoing escalation of the war has led to major security issues, including civilian casualties, human rights violations, and the breakdown of social structures. Host countries are often affected by economic and security issues themselves and are severely overstretched. Governments do not know how to deal with such immense challenges, let alone address them. The safety of civilians is severely jeopardised by ongoing fighting, destroyed infrastructure and inadequate supplies in many places. It is extremely difficult for humanitarian aid workers to operate without putting their lives at risk.

There is also a growing lack of coordination between states (e.g. Chad, Egypt and South Sudan) and organizations (e.g. UNICEF and the IOM), which is significantly slowing down the delivery of aid to those affected. Yet regional cooperation is necessary to establish and strengthen better distribution mechanisms.

III. FACTS AND CURRENT SITUATION

1. FACTS

- Geographical location: State in Northeast Africa between the Sahara Desert and the Red Sea
- South Sudan is in the south of the country
- Most people are fleeing areas where fighting is particularly intense:

 Khartoum (the capital region) – heavily contested since the start of the civil war

 Darfur (especially West Darfur) – severe violence and forced displacement

 Al Jazirah (Gezeira State) – many people have been forced to leave their homes

North Darfur and South Darfur

Kordofan region

- Population: approx. 48 million (2024)
- Capital of Sudan: Khartoum
- Population of the capital: 6 million
- Gross domestic product: \$34 billion USD (2024 estimate) severely weakened by civil war and inflation
- Form of government: Transitional Republic / politically unstable state
- Current President: no legitimate presidency (Abdel Fattah al-Burhan as chairperson of the SAF leads the country)
- Official languages: Arabic and English



2. CURRENT SITUATION

The humanitarian crisis in Sudan and neighboring regions is one of the largest and most complex in the world. Improving the situation requires measures to promote regional cooperation and establish safe distribution mechanisms for refugees.

Currently, aid efforts are severely hindered by ongoing conflict, bureaucratic obstacles at border crossings, and a lack of security for humanitarian workers and transport. Many refugee camps are overcrowded, resulting in inadequate

sanitary conditions and an increased risk of disease outbreaks. Food supplies are irregular and the price of basic goods has skyrocketed.

To address these problems, several steps are necessary at the regional level. Firstly, safe corridors for humanitarian aid must be established and guaranteed by diplomatic agreements between the parties to the conflict. Secondly, border procedures must be harmonized to remove bureaucratic hurdles and speed up the distribution of aid supplies. Thirdly, warehouse management should be decentralized to prevent existing warehouses from becoming overloaded and to enable better distribution.

Finally, transparent monitoring systems are essential to ensure that aid reaches those most in need. The effectiveness of these measures depends heavily on political stability and a willingness to engage in regional cooperation. Without binding agreements on the safety of aid workers and the streamlining of bureaucratic processes, the provision of aid to refugees will remain at risk. The international community must work to enforce humanitarian access as an obligation under international law.

IV. MAJOR PARTIES INVOLVED

1. PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT IN SUDAN

The main parties to the conflict are the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) under General al-Burhan and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) under 'Hemedti'. Their role in humanitarian logistics is ambiguous: they act as de facto authorities in contested areas, but their military strategy also hinders the delivery of aid.

The main problem from the perspective of humanitarian aid is the instrumentalization of 'humanitarian access'. The parties to the conflict frequently block transport routes or impose excessive bureaucratic requirements to weaken the opposing side and prevent supplies from reaching the population in enemy-controlled areas. Without a direct

commitment from these parties to respect humanitarian corridors, a sustainable improvement in distribution is not possible, as they directly influence the physical security of aid convoys.

2. GOVERNMENTS OF NEIGHBORING STATES

The governments of neighboring countries, particularly Chad, Egypt, South Sudan, Ethiopia and the Central African Republic, play a crucial role in any cross-border distribution mechanism; they are far more than mere observers. These states must strike a balance between national security, limited resources, and the obligation to take in refugees. In practice, this means:

Logistical gatekeepers: Their border policies determine how quickly aid supplies can reach Sudan. Bureaucratic hurdles at the borders often lead to bottlenecks that render aid inefficient.

Regional stability: Governments must be convinced that coordinated regional cooperation will not jeopardize their own stability, but will actually strengthen it by ensuring orderly refugee flows and secure aid networks.

International aid is currently facing a dilemma. The parties to the internal conflict control access on the ground, while the governments of neighboring states determine the logistical conditions at the borders. Therefore, an effective strategy must address both fronts.

V. CURRENT CHALLENGES

The conflict in Sudan has forced millions of people to leave their homes and seek safety in neighboring countries such as Chad, Egypt, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. Because so many refugees are arriving in a short period of time, many countries and aid organizations are struggling to provide enough support.

One of the biggest challenges is the lack of cooperation between countries in the region. Different governments have different rules for refugees, which can make it

harder to organize and distribute aid efficiently. As a result, some refugees do not receive food, water, medical care, or shelter quickly enough.

Another challenge is security. In some border areas and refugee camps, violence and criminal activity make it difficult for humanitarian organizations to safely deliver aid. Aid workers are sometimes unable to reach people who need help the most.

In addition, many host countries already face economic problems and have limited resources. International funding is often not enough to meet the growing needs of refugees, which puts extra pressure on governments and humanitarian organizations.

Finally, there is often a lack of communication and information sharing between countries and aid organizations. This can lead to delays and make aid distribution less effective.

VI. POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

A possible solution is to improve cooperation between Sudan's neighboring countries. Governments could work together more closely and share information about refugee movements and humanitarian needs. This would help organizations respond faster and more effectively.

Another solution would be to create regional coordination centers where governments, NGOs, and UN agencies can communicate and plan aid distribution together. Better coordination could prevent resources from being wasted and ensure that refugees receive support more quickly.

The use of digital registration systems could also improve the distribution of aid. By registering refugees electronically, organizations can better track who has received assistance and reduce the risk of fraud.

To make aid deliveries safer, countries could cooperate to protect humanitarian corridors and transport routes. This would allow aid workers to reach refugee camps more easily and safely.

Furthermore, the international community should provide more financial support to both humanitarian organizations and host countries. More funding would help improve living conditions in refugee camps and ensure that essential services remain available.

Lastly, local communities and organizations should be involved in humanitarian efforts. They often understand the needs of refugees best and can help make aid distribution more effective and sustainable.

VII. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Internally displaced persons (IDPs): People who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict, natural disasters or other circumstances, but who remain within their own country's borders. They do not enjoy the same level of international protection as recognized refugees.

Refugee: A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of their nationality, and is unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country, owing to such fear.

Humanitarian corridor: An agreed, safe route for transporting relief supplies and medical personnel, or evacuating civilians. The establishment of a humanitarian corridor requires the consent of all parties to the conflict.

Non-refoulement: A fundamental principle of international law stating that no state may return a person to a territory where they would be at risk of persecution, torture, or other inhuman or degrading treatment.

VIII. USEFUL SOURCES

- <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2025-09/sudan-refugee-protection-and-solutions-strategy-jun-2025-dec-2027.pdf>
(UNHCR-solution strategy 2025)
- <https://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do>
(UNHCR Information)
- <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/power-struggle-sudan>
(Global Conflict Tracker)
- <https://www.rescue.org/article/crisis-sudan-what-happening-and-how-help>
(How to help Sudan)
- https://www.unhcr.org/emergencies/sudan-emergency?utm_source=chatgpt.com
(Sudan emergency)
- https://www.iom.int/sudan-crisis-response?utm_source=chatgpt.com
(Crisis response)
- https://www.wfp.org/emergencies/sudan-emergency?utm_source=chatgpt.com
- <https://www.unocha.org/sudan>
(OCHA)
- https://www.arabnews.jp/en/middle-east/article_94981/
- <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/power-struggle-sudan>
(current situation 08.06.26)
- <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/06/1167688>
(drone attack on key aid routes 10.06.26)
- <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-crisis-situation-analysis-period-250526-310526>
(Sudan crisis situation Analysis 25.05.25-31.05.26)