



## **Human Rights Update: January 2019**

### **Looting and killing continue in the Two Areas**

The National Human Rights Monitors Organisation (NHRMO) has been monitoring human rights violations committed against the civilian population in Southern Kordofan (SK) and Blue Nile (BN), Sudan, since the current conflict began in 2011.

The information in this update has been verified by NHRMO field monitors in the areas controlled by the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement/Army–North (SPLM/A-N). Other information has been provided by trusted sources. The update highlights several incidents perpetrated by Sudanese government forces and its allied militias/paramilitary forces against the local population in these areas. The update provides strong evidence that civilians are being directly and deliberately targeted by the Sudanese government and its allied militias/paramilitary forces as most of the attacks were against clearly identifiable and unarmed civilians.

### **INTRODUCTION**

This report covers the month of January 2019 and focusses on the areas of Southern Kordofan (Nuba Mountains) and Blue Nile states of Sudan controlled by the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army/Movement – North (SPLA/M-N), also known as the Two Areas.

The decreased pattern of violent conflict from the last quarter of 2018 continued in the Two Areas in January 2019. This was a result of unilateral ceasefires in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile by the belligerent parties (Sudan government and the SPLA/M-N) for more than two years. In the case of Blue Nile, the intensity of inter-communal tensions and violence that began in 2017 continued into 2018 also reduced.

The last ceasefires were declared in July 2018 by the government<sup>1</sup> and in November by the SPLA/M-N<sup>2</sup>, both extending to 31 December 2018. These ceasefires were not extended immediately into January, although on 28 January 2019 Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir, declared an “open ended” ceasefire<sup>3</sup> in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states. For its part, the SPLM/A-N did not seem to have made any reciprocal declaration at the time of writing.

However, despite the ceasefires, human rights monitors in Southern Kordofan reported that the Sudan government army and its allied militias carried out a couple of attacks on the population resulting in the death of one person and stealing of cattle.

In terms of food security, the food situation slightly improved due to the onset of the harvest season.

There were also reports of some returns of refugees to Southern Kordofan from camps in South Sudan as well as to Blue Nile from Ethiopian refugee camps.

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND/OR CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS

### Southern Kordofan State / Nuba Mountains

January 2019

#### Delami County

- **On 16 January 2019, at 5.30pm**, in an area between Aberim and Tunguli Payams, in Delami County, between 11 and 15 Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) soldiers, suspected to be from a military base in Aberi town, shot and killed a 45-year old man. He was trapped in an ambush by SAF while returning home from his fields. A witness said:

We have been in his farm, helping him to harvest his crops and when we were done with our work, we loaded our bicycles with some of the harvested crop. On our way back home, as we rode our bicycles, near the stream, there was suddenly a hail of gunshots directed at us. My friend fell down under the gunfire as I quickly ran into the bush across in order to escape the bullets... They continued to fire in my direction, trying to mow me down, but luckily, no bullet touched me.

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<sup>1</sup> “Sudan extends ceasefire with rebels until year-end: statement,” Reuters, 12 July 2018, available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-sudan-ceasefire/sudan-extends-ceasefire-with-rebels-until-year-end-statement-idUSKBN1K228G> (accessed 11 March 2019).

<sup>2</sup> “SPLM-N extends ceasefire after talks to revive Sudan peace process,” Radio Dabanga, available at <https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/splm-n-extend-ceasefire-after-talks-to-revive-sudan-peace-process-1> (accessed 11 March 2019).

<sup>3</sup> “Sudan’s Bashir extends ceasefire in two war zones,” Radio Tamzuj, 28 January 2019, available at <https://radiotamazuj.org/en/v1/news/article/sudan-s-bashir-extends-ceasefire-in-two-war-zones> (accessed 11 March 2019).

About twenty minutes after the firing died down, from where he was hiding, the witness saw two SAF Toyota Land Cruisers arrive. The harvest was loaded into the cars which drove off in the direction of Aberi. People in these areas usually transport crops using carts or bicycles and make many trips to transfer the whole harvest.

- **On 18 January 2019, at 4.00am**, in Tojur village, Sabat Payam, Delami County, SAF soldiers from Khoraldelip, looted 20 cows from a household and returned to SAF territory.

### **Blue Nile**

- Our monitors did not pick up any incident of human rights violations or ceasefire violations by government forces or its allied militias in Blue Nile State in January 2019.

## **OTHER REPORTS**

### **Blue Nile State**

- In Blue Nile State, the situation was reported as being calm. As reported in our last Human Rights Update, return of Sudanese refugees from Ethiopia to SPLM/A-N controlled areas of BN continued. In January 2019, at least 25 households returned and settled in Yabus and Abu Angro, in Alkurmuk County. As inter-communal tensions have eased, movement across the territory has become easier.

### **Southern Kordofan / Nuba Mountains**

- On 16 January 2019, a coalition of indigenous Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) in Kauda town, Southern Kordofan, an area under the control of SPLM/A-N, organised a one-day protest in solidarity with anti-government protests that have occurred across Sudan since 19 December 2019. Civilians from all walks of life, men and women, young and old, joined the protest.

### **Maban, Upper Nile, South Sudan**

- Our monitors reported that the security situation in refugee camps in Maban County, Upper Nile State, South Sudan, which predominantly host Sudanese refugees from Blue Nile, has improved, but freedom of movement is still being undermined by crime and insecurity. In addition, *de facto* authorities are reported to be “controlling” movement of refugees.

The four main refugee camps in South Sudan hosting refugees from Blue Nile State are Kaya, Yousif Batil, Gendirasa and Doro, in Maban County, Upper Nile State. These four camps hosted 145,078 refugees as of 31 January 2019.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> UNHCR, “South Sudan: Refugee Statistics,” 31 January 2019, available at <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/68177> (accessed 10 March 2019).



