



Nubsud Human Rights Monitors Organisation

Human Rights Update: July – October 2019

Despite the start of a peace process between the Sudan ruling council and the SPLM/A-N¹, communities in the SPLM/A-N controlled areas are still undergoing violent attacks and human rights violations by Sudan government forces and their allied forces² in the Two Areas.

Nubsud Human Rights Monitors Organisation (NHRMO) has been monitoring human rights violations committed against the civilian population in Nuba Mountains / Southern Kordofan (NM/SK) and Blue Nile (BN) states of Sudan - The Two Areas - since the current conflict began in 2011. The information on human rights violations provided in this update has been verified by NHRMO field monitors in the areas controlled by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement / Army – North (SPLM/A-N). Additional information has been accessed from trusted sources. 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 referred to in this report have been carried out against clearly identifiable and unarmed civilians.

This update covers the period July – October 2019 in the areas controlled by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army – North (SPLM/A-N) – Al Hilu faction. Since Sudan's long-time ruler, Omar Al Bashir, was toppled on 11 April 2019, the new government has listed achieving peace as a critical objective. Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalah Hamdok said that, if achieved, peace would "reduce Sudan's defence budget by 70 to 80 per cent, money that could be spent on healthcare, education, infrastructure and reviving the economy."³ In October, the SPLM/A-N faction headed by Al Hilu started peace negotiations with the interim government. According to the SPLM/A-N spokesperson, the movement sought "to reach a comprehensive and just peace agreement that addresses the root causes of the Sudanese crisis."⁴

However, despite the moves towards peace and unilateral ceasefires by the warring parties, attacks against civilians by the Sudanese army and allied forces have continued, sometimes with fatal consequences for the civilian population. In the current update, most of the attacks were carried out by the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the rest by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

¹ Sudan People's Liberation Movement / Army – North.

² Forces or militias allied to the Sudan Armed Forces in the Two areas are the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and the Popular Defence Forces (PDF).

³ Relief Web, "Sudan, SPLM-N al-Hilu sign peace roadmap, as talks with SRF approaching separate deal," 18 October 2019, available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-splm-n-al-hilu-sign-peace-roadmap-talks-srf-approaching-separate-deal>

⁴ Dabanga Sudan, "SPLM-N El Hilu u-turn on negotiations with Sudan government," 7 September 2019, available at <https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/splm-north-u-turn-on-negotiations-with-sudan-govt>

On 19 October 2019, the Sudanese government and SPLM-N (Al Hilu) agreed on an official roadmap for negotiations before direct talks in Juba.⁵ The agenda will include political issues, humanitarian assistance and security arrangements. A thorny issue is the demand by SPLM-N that Sudan should not be an Islamic, but a secular, state. However, the transitional government and the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), which includes both SPLM-N and Darfur resistance movements, held a separate meeting to discuss plans for the peace process.

In another development, David Beasley, the Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), visited Kauda, Nuba Mountains (NM)/Southern Kordofan (SK), on 23 October 2019. This was the first visit to the area by a UN official in eight years. Mr. Beasley encouraged the transitional government and other stakeholders to facilitate humanitarian access across Sudan including to civilians in conflict-affected areas.⁶

The food security situation is still fragile in both SK and Blue Nile (BN). The early harvest ended in October while the main harvest is in November. However, according to an NHRMO monitor in Delami, “[T]here is a clear indication of poor harvest this year [particularly] in Delami County, due to the heavy rains that the county has been experiencing especially [during] the month of October 2019.” The extraordinarily heavy rain spoilt many crops which ended up rotting on the stalks. Sorghum, groundnuts and sesame harvests were badly affected. Sorghum the main staple food in the region.

An outbreak of diarrhoea and vomiting was reported among infants in Delami County who are also generally malnourished. This epidemic lasted for almost a month and resulted in eight child deaths in different payams of the county. The symptoms of the disease are characterised by the swelling of the body, including legs and faces, as well as traces of blood in the stool.

SOUTHERN KORDOFAN STATE

All of the five incidents recorded in SK took place in Delami County. Recently, Delami has been specifically targeted by SAF and its allied militias and the residents live in constant fear. As a result, agricultural activities, particularly those in far-flung fields, have been affected as people are wary of venturing far from their homes in fear of being injured, abducted or even killed by SAF soldiers or militiamen.

July 2019

Delami County

- On 15 July 2019, at 3.00pm, in Kubla village, Umhetan Payam, 22 soldiers of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), from Umhetan town where they have a military barracks, looted 40 goats of a civilian living within the SPLM/A-N controlled area.
- On 29 July 2019, at 2.00pm, SAF soldiers went back to the same location and looted the remaining nine goats from the same household.

August 2019

There were no security incidents in NM/SK reported during the month of August 2019.

September 2019

⁵ Relief Web, “Sudan, SPLM-N al-Hilu sign peace roadmap, as talks with SRF approaching separate deal,” 18 October 2019, available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-splm-n-al-hilu-sign-peace-roadmap-talks-srf-approaching-separate-deal>

⁶ Sudan Tribune, “UN praises Sudan for facilitating WFP humanitarian visit to South Kordofan, 27 October 2019, available at <https://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article68384>

- On 14 September 2019, at 3.48pm, in Hadra village, Umhetan Payam, 33 SAF soldiers looted 17 cows from two households in the SPLM/A-N controlled areas. SAF soldiers attacked the herders, shooting at them, and killing one. Villagers later tracked the soldiers who appear to have taken the cows to the Dundor area, where SAF has a big military barracks.

October 2019

- On 14 October 2019, at 3.45pm, in Khor Waral village, Umhetan Payam, RSF militiamen attacked and wounded 17 civilians who were travelling from the Western Jebels in the area controlled by the SPLM/A-N⁷ to Delami County. RSF looted nine motorbikes and 600,000 SDG (equivalent to 7,500 US dollars) from the civilians. During the attack, a civilian was wounded and several went missing. The injured victim, interviewed while being treated at Tujur Health Centre, said,

...we were three people riding one motorbike, with seven other motor bikes each carrying two people when RSF men started shooting at us. Our motorbike fell and we were unable to run but the other people ran in different directions; some into the bush towards Kubla village, Umhetan Payam, Delami County while the majority ran towards Western Jebels. They took our money and all the motor bikes... Three of us are still missing.

This happened on the very day of the opening of peace talks between the current Sudan government and the SPLM/A-N in Juba, South Sudan, and led to the suspension of the talks for several days.

- On 15 October 2019, at 5.15pm, RSF militiamen attacked travellers on the road between Delami County and Western Jebels. They abducted 16 civilians with all the belongings they had and later released three, keeping the other thirteen.

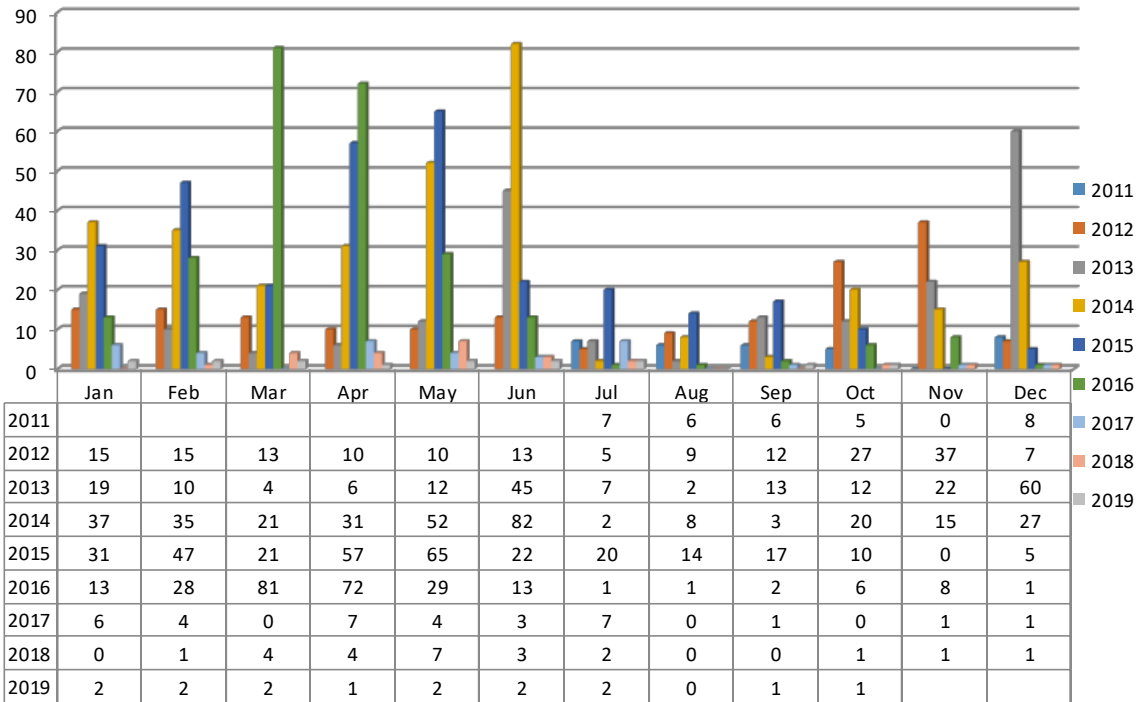
BLUE NILE STATE

Our monitors did not pick up any security or human rights violations in BN during the period July – October but it was reported that “[a]typical rainfall across the region in October caused widespread flooding which impacted on communities in Blue Nile and Maban,”⁸ in Upper Nile, South Sudan, where refugee camps hosting people from Blue Nile are located.

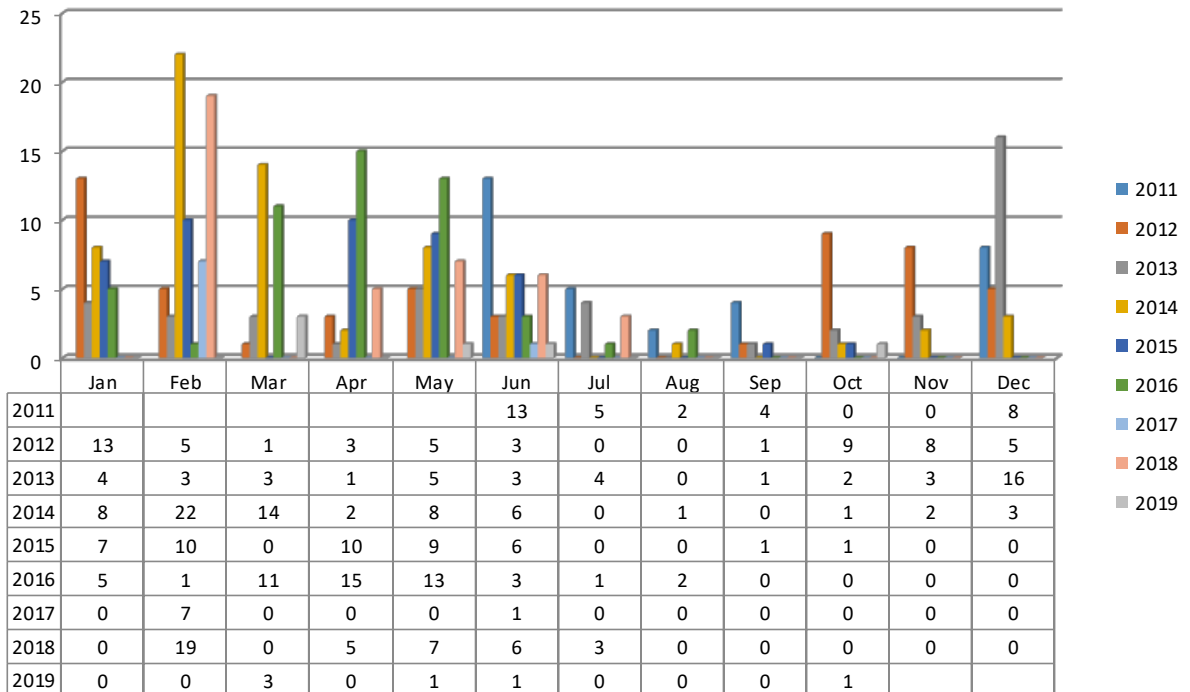
⁷ Part of the Western Jebels are controlled by Sudan government forces.

⁸ SKBN Coordination Unit, “SKBN Humanitarian Update October,” November 2019.

Number of incidents in SK and BN 2011 -2019



Number of civilians injured in SK and BN 2011-2019



Number of civilians killed in SK and BN 2011-2019

