POLICY BRIEF

Civilian protection and accountability in Sudan

SRL Swiss | EN | 25.10.2026

Scope and principal conclusion

The report explains the war beginning in April 2023 through regional exclusion, competing armed institutions and military revenues beyond civilian oversight. Its central recommendation is to combine immediate protection and humanitarian access with scrutiny of war financing and meaningful Sudanese civilian authority. These measures should proceed together rather than await a comprehensive political settlement.

Findings from the case records

The Sudanese Armed Forces and Rapid Support Forces retained rival command and economic structures. The 2019 transition and subsequent negotiations failed to establish effective civilian control; the 2021 coup further weakened oversight. The conflict therefore extends beyond a personal dispute between commanders.

The report distinguishes ethnically targeted violence in Darfur, airstrikes, retaliatory executions, detention and restrictions on relief. Attribution and severity follow the evidence for each actor and locality; impartial assessment does not require treating all parties' conduct as identical.

Assistance needs, acute food insecurity and cross-border movements measure different populations and periods. The report cites 33.7 million people needing assistance in 2026, but warns against adding incompatible indicators or interpreting missing famine data as an improvement.

Priorities for action

1. Parties must stop unlawful attacks and abuses and enable relief. Record authorisations, delays and actual delivery separately. Preserve original evidence securely without making access to services conditional on testimony.

2. Donors should fund integrated food, water, health and child-protection services and local networks. Exporting and transit states should scrutinise arms transfers; financial authorities and gold businesses should examine ownership and payment chains while protecting humanitarian payments.

3. Mediators should give Sudanese civilian organisations influence over agendas and decisions. Security reform must include budgets and business networks. Assess housing, services and explosive hazards before voluntary returns and monitor renewed displacement.

Evidence and limits

The report is a public-source review with a 15 October 2026 cut-off, not field research or a criminal judgment. Proposed review intervals are SRL Swiss recommendations, not commitments accepted by institutions.

SRL Swiss, The Sudan Crisis, revision 2.0, 15 October 2026, pp. 2, 5 and 33–36.

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