

To Save Lives in Sudan, Urgent Action Needed Now

Nonviolent Peaceforce warns of mass atrocities and catastrophic consequences as civilians struggle through 500 days of violence.

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SUDAN, 28 August 2024 — As civilians struggle through their 500th day of violence in Sudan, Nonviolent Peaceforce is again raising the alarm on imminent risks of violence and mass atrocities, particularly in and around El Fasher and Zamzam Camp in North Darfur.

“We are deeply concerned about the deteriorating situation in North Darfur. The place is already one of the hardest on earth to survive in and all analysis warns it will just get worse,” shared Nic Pyatt, Head of Mission for Nonviolent Peaceforce in Sudan. “As ceasefire negotiations have again stumbled, the highest price is being paid by civilians.”

Widespread violence, targeting of civilian infrastructure and a lack of the most basic services is an everyday reality for anyone trying to survive in the area. Civilians in El Fasher and its surrounding areas — home to approximately 2.8 million people, including 1 million who fled from other parts of Sudan — are left with no options. Routes to safer areas are controlled by armed actors and the cost of moving is beyond the majority of most — that's if cars and fuel to make the journey can be found. Civilians despair the ever-threatening situation around them: “If we leave, we will die on the road where no one knows. We'd rather die in El Fasher where the world is watching and people know about it.”

Daily activities — fetching water, trying to find food and access water — have become life threatening in North Darfur, as civilians face bombing and violence as they move. Basic items required for survival (for example, cash or basic medicines) are non-existent, or completely beyond the reach of most people. The price of 20 litres of fuel is now equivalent to approximately \$500 USD — approximately 17x the price prior to the outbreak of the war in April 2023. Communication networks have been largely suspended meaning people are unable to know where their loved ones are or even if they are alive.

Zamzam, one of the largest camps for displaced persons in Sudan, has seen its population swell to over 500,000 as people search for somewhere safe to shelter as well as for basic services and food. Zamzam is unable to offer any of these to those arriving. The Famine Review Committee [has confirmed man-made famine conditions in parts of North Darfur, including Zamzam](#). Like El Fasher, few are able to afford bare essentials needed to survive — as reported by the FRC, prices in June had skyrocketed: 63% for cooking oil, 190% for sugar, 67% for millet and 75% for rice.

“The need to end the fighting is urgent. That requires all parties to the conflict to be engaged in securing an end to hostilities — those directly involved in fighting on the ground, and, the many states that are indirectly implicated through ongoing arms trade,” said Pyatt. “We have seen at critical junctures in this conflict how concerted leadership from states, including the United States and the United Kingdom, has helped to prevent atrocities — we are again imploring leaders to use all available diplomatic, political, and economic levers to protect civilians and prevent further mass atrocities in Sudan.”

NP is an international protection agency. Our mission is to protect civilians in violent conflicts through unarmed strategies, build peace side-by-side with local communities, and advocate for the wider adoption of these approaches to safeguard human lives and dignity.

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