

# Manifesto : From Gold to Graves — The Neo-Colonial War on Sudan

## *Preamble: A Call for Justice and Solidarity*

As Sudanese survivors and allies we, civil society actors, human rights defenders, and global citizens, assert that Sudan's suffering is not inevitable — it is orchestrated. What is happening in Sudan is neither an accident, nor a tragedy, but a system built on greed:

A war designed to strip the land, silence its people, and sell its future. Behind every burned village and every blocked aid route stand those who trade our gold for our blood.

We will not be silent.

We stand in organized resistance, in people-led solidarity, and in the belief that Sudan's liberation will be written by its own hands.

## **1. Darfur Today: A Siege Against Humanity**

El-Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, remains under siege. Humanitarian aid deliveries are repeatedly blocked, and civilians are trapped in escalating violence.

Between the 7th and 9th of October 2025, at least 53 civilians were killed, and over 60 injured in drone and artillery strikes on displaced persons' camps, a hospital, and neighbourhoods in El-Fasher.<sup>1</sup>

On 27th October RSF had executed more than 20000 unarmed civilians since taking El Fasher; medical personnel and aid workers providing food and basic supplies are directly targeted.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights condemned the targeting of civilian infrastructure, calling these attacks “blatant violations of international law.”

The scope of displacement is staggering: By mid-2025, more than 14 million people had been forced from their homes, and the UN warns that Sudan now hosts one of the world's largest and fastest-growing displacement crises. What's more, food insecurity has reached the level of famine and shortages of medical supplies contribute to the largest humanitarian crisis recorded in modern history, as 30 million people are in need of emergency humanitarian assistance and more than 20 million are living on the brink of starvation.

Entire towns, farmlands, water systems, power stations and health centres have been destroyed or occupied, making survival nearly impossible for many communities.

## **2. El-Fasher is bleeding, and the world is watching**

Hospitals lie in ruins, aid convoys are turned back, and families are trapped between militia fire and hunger. At the beginning of October, 2025, more than fifty civilians were killed in displacement camps and hospitals. By the end of the month, over twenty thousand unarmed people had been executed by the RSF.

This isn't chaos or crossfire, it's a deliberate campaign to erase Darfur's non-Arab communities: the Masalit, the Zaghawa, the Fur. Calling it "ethnic tension" is not neutrality; it's ahistorical denial. This is genocide carried out in plain sight. It is not a sudden war, at all, since the genocidal counter insurgency campaign has been going on for decades. The recent conviction of Ali Kuschayb, a Janjaweed leader who committed atrocity crimes and genocide under Omar Al-Bashir's rule in the early 2000s indicates for how long impunity has been reigning in Western Sudan.

Since Sudanese independence, political power was centralised in Khartoum state and regions in the periphery had little say in the management of resource wealth and barely profited from exports, though they possessed the richest soils. This goes for South Sudan, western regions such as Darfur and Kordofan as well as for eastern parts such as Gedaref, Sennar and Kassala which were neglected by development measures in the wake of independence; Gezira experienced a similar fate at the time. The British resettled many farmers and pastoralists from the exploited areas outside the center in these central and eastern agricultural regions to cultivate land in the early 20th Century, so the marginalization remained coherent with Sudan's centralized state structure. The farming communities in these settlements called "Al-Kanabi" have been suffering ethnic cleansing at the hands of the Sudanese Army and allied militias to this day. These crimes make clear that the RSF and the Army share a history of extermination campaigns and that power structures and alliances may change, but that there's a continuity of targeted killings for the sake of land theft and exploitation.

## **3. Caught between Scylla and Charybdis: Life under Khartoum's military rule**

In this context of domination, the Army created the Janjaweed militia in 2003 to exterminate Darfuri people and seize land abundant with ores, oil, gas reserves, cattle and agricultural produce such as greens and rubber. The Janjaweed militia was made up of ethnically Arab farmers and cattle herders from the wider Sahel region who received Gaddafi's and state support to remain in control of supply lines critical to economic and foreign stakeholders, which is perhaps why their war crimes received such little attention. However, the supremacist militia doesn't shy away from joining alliances with armed groups such as Abdelaziz al-Hilu's SPLM-N forces from the Nuba mountains in South Kordofan, if it serves their purpose: They are currently besieging and starving dozens of ethnical groups racialized by the RSF as Nuba people in this mountainous region.

Up until 2021, when the military overthrew the transitional government set up after the 2019 revolution, the RSF and the Army were acting as one and the same entity. Abdel Fattah al Burhan had a fallout with elements of the civilian-led administration, but ever since the coup, Mohammed 'Hemedti' Hamdan Dagalo, the RSF leader, and him couldn't reach any agreement, creating a false dichotomy that only the RSF militia is implicated in grave human rights abuses and violations of international law. Hemedti and Burhan struggle for power and Islamist elements in the recognized government are antagonized over ceasefire or peace agreements, while the RSF condemns cooperating with Islamists, hence stalling peace talks and entrenching the power struggle between the two rivalling generals.

Today, the Army not only failed to protect and even wilfully neglected the victims and their resistance on several occasions, but also shelled civilian areas and destroyed critical infrastructure via air raids etc. when battling the RSF. Therefore, all conscientious citizens of Sudan and the world must act to stop the genocide and enable a just and transparent peace process revolving around the lived experiences of those currently surviving extermination.

Justice can't wait! Accessible and transparent legal pathways must guide accountability mechanisms within a community based programme of transitional justice. It is also imperative to guarantee a fair allocation of resources by means of the peace process, so as to sustainably reduce resentment and potential for hostilities.

#### **4. Why Sudan? Follow the Gold, the Land, and the Ports**

A 2025 analysis by C4ADS reveals that both the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the RSF are funding their operations through gold and mineral revenues, with networks that largely evade existing sanctions.

Reports show nearly all legal gold exports from Sudan flow to the UAE, through both official and smuggling routes.

The Central Bank of Sudan stated that in 2024, 97% of gold exports from SAF-controlled areas were shipped to the UAE, generating USD 1.52 billion.

Chatham House analysis emphasizes that the gold trade is a key driver in sustaining conflict and in entrenching regional dependencies.

Economically, Sudan's agricultural land is also under pressure: Gulf state investors (notably the UAE) have long eyed Sudan as a "breadbasket," acquiring farmland and agricultural stakes.

Control of Red Sea ports remains central to strategic ambitions — whoever controls Port Sudan holds leverage over regional trade routes and naval access.

## **5. The Global Chessboard: Stakeholders in Sudan's War**

**UAE:** Evidence suggests the UAE acts both as a buyer of Sudanese gold and a financier of the RSF. Amnesty International documented that advanced Chinese weaponry used by RSF likely originated from UAE arms transfers.

**Saudi Arabia & Egypt:** Both countries support the SAF as part of regional balance-of-power dynamics. Egypt, in particular, coordinates with Sudan's financial and export sectors.

**Russia and private military actors:** Seek access to gold concessions and influence in Port Sudan.

**China & Iran:** Re-enter Sudan through arms deals and infrastructure projects, seeking strategic footholds.

**U.S. & Western powers:** While publicly condemning atrocities, certain U.S. statements now formally classify RSF's actions as genocide. Though not directly involved, the U.S. and EU members like Germany and France entertain major arms contracts with both the KSA and the Emirates.

Neighbouring states: The Nile dispute injects Egypt and Ethiopia into Sudan's internal alignments. Exclusion from power and ethnic affiliations made many young Chadians pour into Darfur to fight for the RSF or the groups resisting it. Kenya arms the RSF with Emirati weaponry. Chad also functions as a gun running hub for France, the UAE and Libya, while the UAE generally receives arms from the French, the US etc.

Libyan actors (e.g. Haftar): Serve as intermediaries in arms and mercenary flows tied to RSF operations.

## **6. Extractivism Is Violence**

The eradication of communities is not accidental: It is the means to seize control of resources. Displacement clears resource-rich lands for investors. For this purpose, women are intentionally targeted with severe torture and sexual violence to reduce the birth rate and terrify and humiliate families.

Conflict gold, land dispossession, and forced migration form an extractive war economy that treats people as obstacles to profit.

War enables profiteering through human trafficking, forced labour, illicit arms trade, and unaccountable extraction.

## **7. International Complicity**

The UN has often framed mass atrocities in Sudan as “ethnic tensions”, avoiding the stronger language of genocide.

Russia routinely blocks Security Council action to hold perpetrators to account.

Western governments have made strong statements, but many continue trade or investment ties that benefit actors in the conflict.

Arms dealers, mining companies, and financial corporations continue to profit from opaque deals in Sudan, even as civilians suffer.

## **8. Sudanese Resistance: Agency From Within**

Sudanese civil society — women's groups, youth activists, community committees, journalists, and diaspora networks — continue to document abuses, provide mutual aid, and demand justice under siege.

This resistance reminds us: Sudan is not only a site of suffering, but also a site of struggle and survival. Any path forward must center these actors, not sideline them. Especially women being the backbone of communities need our solidarity, as they bear the brunt of the genocide due to intentional targeting.

Badria Omer Mukhtar AlSanusi, our charming sister and partner from Darfur lent us these poetical words of hers to highlight the pride and beauty of the diverse Sudanese people living and caring for Darfur and their homeland:

*“Through humanity, we rise; through acceptance, we elevate, and we traverse the heavens of creativity and brilliance. We are beautiful in everything—beautiful in our tribes, our dialects and languages, our cultures, and our heritage. All of us together complete this artistic masterpiece!”*

*Humanity always unites us, now and forever, as it is a symbol of tolerance, peace, love, and harmony. My country is rich in diverse cultures; let us love one another despite our differences in Sudanese identity, to pave a smooth path for future generations. Let us embrace each other despite our diversity, for in difference there is life—and we are the life of this country. If we change our mindset and our thinking, if we forgive and reconcile through our differences, we can build nations—and build Sudan.*

*I am deeply delighted to be from the Land of the Sultans! And had I not been from there, I would have regretted it greatly. If I were given the choice, I would choose it as my land, my refuge, and my home—where I could find peace and rest until the end of my days.”*

## **9. Demands & Framework for Action**

### ***Immediate Steps***

- Uphold humanitarian access: Allow unimpeded delivery to all besieged regions, particularly in Darfur.

- Targeted sanctions: Impose sanctions on RSF leadership, financial intermediaries, and arms suppliers.
- Independent investigation: Call for a neutrally appointed international commission to investigate crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide and thus lay the groundwork for transformative justice and peacebuilding efforts.

### ***Structural Reforms***

- Debt cancellation: Suspend or annul Sudan's war-time debts and freeze new exploitative financial agreements.
- Resource sovereignty: Demand that Sudan controls its gold, land, and ports, not foreign corporations or militia proxies. E.g. the current conflict still affects South Sudan and its resource sovereignty, as the RSF jeopardizes business by occupying Sudan's eastern regions and hence pipeline infrastructure connecting South-Sudanese oil fields and Port Sudan.
- Transparency in aid and development: Ensure that external investments benefit Sudanese communities, not external elites.

### ***Long-term Vision***

- Justice & accountability: Support transitional justice, reparations, and inclusion in peace processes led by Sudanese communities affected by the genocidal war. Ideally, these processes ought to centre equity and the common weal of a unified country through decentralized, local ownership and gender justice.
- Reconstruction & resilience: Invest in healthcare, education, climate adaptation, and mental health in conflict-affected regions.
- Global solidarity alliance: Link Sudan's struggle to broader fights against extractivism — in Congo, Palestine, the Amazon, and beyond.

□ A post war Sudan must not go back to elite bargains. It must rather be built on federal, gender justice and community led governance. The people need to be represented in the decision-making power to guarantee a sovereign transition honouring the interests and rights of all Sudanese in a democratic manner.

### ***Pledge & Call to Action***

- **Back Sudanese-led efforts** calling for sanctions on the gold networks funding this war, especially those tied to the UAE.
- **Push your government** to name what's happening: Genocide. Recognition is the first step toward accountability.
- **Direct your support** to Sudanese organizers and mutual aid groups working on the ground or in the diaspora, the people keeping communities alive.
- **Lift up Sudanese voices.** Share their stories, their art, and their reports. Use your platforms to break the silence:

**#SudanIsBleeding #DarfurGenocide #SudanSolidarityNow  
#LetAidIn #BreakTheSiege #EndNeoColonialism #SaveElfashir  
#IstandwithDarfur**

Join the movement: Speak, educate, mobilize and amplify Sudanese voices, demand accountability by naming the perpetrators and support humanitarian and justice efforts.

We collectively refuse to let genocide become normal.  
We proclaim: Sudan is not for sale.  
Sudanese lives are irreplaceable.  
Justice will not wait.


Written By: Women Beyond Silence

### **Endnotes / References**



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