



A REFUGE DESTROYED

RSF VIOLATIONS IN DARFUR'S ZAMZAM CAMP FOR INTERNALLY
DISPLACED PERSONS

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



Amnesty International is a movement of 10 million people which mobilizes the humanity in everyone and campaigns for change so we can all enjoy our human rights. Our vision is of a world where those in power keep their promises, respect international law and are held to account. We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and individual donations. We believe that acting in solidarity and compassion with people everywhere can change our societies for the better.

© Amnesty International 2025

Except where otherwise noted, content in this document is licensed under a Creative Commons (attribution, non-commercial, no derivatives, international 4.0) licence.

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode>

For more information please visit the permissions page on our website: www.amnesty.org

Where material is attributed to a copyright owner other than Amnesty International this material is not subject to the Creative Commons licence.

First published in 2025

by Amnesty International Ltd

Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street

London WC1X 0DW, UK

Index: AFR 54/0509/2025

Original language: English

amnesty.org



Cover photo: People who fled the Zamzam camp for the internally displaced after it fell under RSF control, rest in a makeshift encampment in an open field near the town of Tawila in war-torn Sudan's western Darfur region on April 13, 2025.

© AFP/Getty Images

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
2. METHODOLOGY	7
3. BACKGROUND	9
4. THE APRIL 2025 ATTACK ON ZAMZAM	15
4.1 POSSIBLE INDISCRIMINATE ATTACKS	16
4.2 THE RSF'S RESPONSE AND PRESENCE OF JOINT FORCES	20
5. DELIBERATE KILLING OF CIVILIANS	22
5.1 INDIVIDUALS TARGETED DURING THE ATTACK	22
5.1.1 KILLINGS AT SHEIKH FARAH MOSQUE AND SCHOOL	25
5.1.2 KILLINGS AT RELIEF INTERNATIONAL	27
5.2 INDIVIDUALS TARGETED DURING DISPLACEMENT JOURNEY	27
5.3 BURIALS	29
6. DESTRUCTION OF CIVILIAN OBJECTS, PILLAGE, HOSTAGE-TAKING AND TRAFFICKING	32
6.1 DESTRUCTION OF CIVILIAN OBJECTS	32
6.2 PILLAGE	36
6.3 HOSTAGE-TAKING AND TRAFFICKING	39
7. DISPLACEMENT AND HUMANITARIAN CRISIS	41
7.1 HARROWING DISPLACEMENT JOURNEYS	41
7.2 DIRE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION	43
8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	45

GLOSSARY

ABADA	Derogatory term meaning slave or servant
CRSV	Conflict-related Sexual Violence
FALANG GAYAAT	Derogatory term used by the RSF to refer to persons affiliated to the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Joint Forces
FFM	United Nations Independent International Fact-Finding Mission
GSLF	Gathering of Sudan Liberation Forces
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IPC	Integrated Phase Classification - the global system used by UN agencies and humanitarian actors to measure the severity of hunger
JFASM OR JOINT FORCES	Joint Forces of Armed Struggle Movements
JEM-JIBRIL	Justice and Equality Movement led by Jibril Ibrahim
MSF	Medicines Sans Frontieres
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OHCHR	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
RELIEF INTERNATIONAL	A humanitarian nonprofit that delivers healthcare and other services in fragile settings
RSF	Rapid Support Forces
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces
SLA-MM	Sudan Liberation Army led by Suliman Arcua Minnawi
VIIRS	Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From 11 to 13 April 2025, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) launched a large-scale assault on Zamzam, the largest camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sudan's North Darfur State. This attack was part of the RSF's military campaign, started in May 2024, to capture El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur State. While the RSF and its allied militias laid siege to El Fasher for 18 months, they also attacked nearby villages and other IDP camps.

This report documents emblematic cases of violations of international law that should be investigated as war crimes that were committed by the RSF and its allied forces during the attack and in its aftermath. It is primarily based on interviews and open-source analysis conducted by Amnesty International researchers between June and August 2025. Amnesty International interviewed 29 people, of whom one was a child. Interviewees included eyewitnesses, survivors, and victims' relatives, journalists and conflict analysts, as well as medical personnel with first-hand experience responding to those injured during the attack and attending to medical needs of IDPs fleeing from the attack. Amnesty International verified and analysed 44 videos and photos posted on social media or shared directly with researchers. The organization also analysed satellite imagery and reviewed social media posts, credible media sources, and publications from civil society organizations and the United Nations.

Amnesty International found that the RSF and forces allied to the RSF showed unrestrained disregard for international humanitarian law, including deliberate killing of civilians, hostage taking, pillaging and destruction of protected objects – buildings dedicated to religious, educational, charitable and medical purposes. These violations could also constitute war crimes under international law.

RSF fighters used explosive weapons in populated areas in Zamzam IDP camp and were seen randomly shooting their weapons in populated residential areas. Shooting in such a manner may constitute an attack without a specific military target, and therefore an indiscriminate attack. The civilian harm during the assault was high and resulted in the displacement of around 400,000 persons between 13 and 14 April alone.

Amnesty International found a pattern of reports of RSF fighters deliberately shooting and killing civilians. Combined, eyewitnesses reported seeing RSF fighters shoot and kill 47 civilians hiding in homes, fleeing the violence, at a humanitarian organisation's clinic and while seeking refuge in a mosque during the attack. IDPs also witnessed killings by the RSF or their affiliated militias during their displacement journeys. Eyewitnesses also recalled seeing RSF fighters shoot and kill one physically disabled person, one mentally disabled person, three older persons, and one injured person. Eyewitness accounts and video evidence demonstrate that the RSF targeted civilians due to their perceived affiliation to the Joint Forces of Armed Struggle Movements (JFASM, or Joint Forces) – an alliance of former Darfur rebel groups, fighting alongside the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) – and the SAF.

In violation of international humanitarian law, RSF fighters deliberately set fire to homes, businesses, the market and structures in the compound of the Sheikh Farah school and mosque, destroying or badly damaging critical civilian infrastructure. The RSF also pillaged homes, the market and shops.

Persons displaced by the assault endured harrowing displacement journeys characterized by lack of food, water, and medical services. Some experienced acts that may amount to rape, murder and pillage. Displaced people in IDP and refugee camps said they lacked food and medicine and suffered dismal shelter conditions, some forced to live under trees. Like in many other parts of the country, the humanitarian system in North Darfur is overwhelmed and inadequate to meet the extreme needs.

Amnesty International calls on the RSF and its allied forces to immediately end indiscriminate and deliberate attacks on civilians and civilian objects, stop rape and other sexual violence, end pillage and destruction of civilian property including medical facilities, markets, foodstuffs, livestock and other community and humanitarian facilities, and allow and facilitate rapid, unrestricted and unhindered access for humanitarian actors to ensure aid reaches all those in need, as well as protect humanitarian relief personnel and facilities, and end all attacks on humanitarian workers including in El Fasher and in all IDP camps in the country.

On 7 November 2025, Amnesty International sent a letter to General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, head of the RSF, outlining the report's preliminary findings and requesting information about the conduct of RSF forces and a response to the allegations. At the time of publication, no response was received.

2. METHODOLOGY

This report examines human rights abuses and serious violations of international humanitarian law by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Sudan's North Darfur State in relation to the attack on Zamzam internally displaced persons (IDP) camp that began on 11 April 2025. The report documents certain emblematic cases that should be investigated as war crimes that were committed during the attack, and in its aftermath. The abuses Amnesty International has documented and presented in this report are not exhaustive and represent only a small proportion of abuses that occurred during the three days of attack on the IDP camp.

The research for this report took place between June and August 2025. The report is primarily based on interviews and open-source analysis. Amnesty International interviewed 29 people, of whom one was a child. Interviewees included eyewitnesses, survivors,¹ and victims' relatives, journalists and conflict analysts as well as medical personnel with first-hand experience responding to those injured during the attack and attending to medical needs of IDPs fleeing from the attack.

The Evidence Lab, Amnesty International's digital investigations team, collected and analysed 44 videos posted on social media or shared directly with researchers between 11 April and 1 August 2025. Each video underwent a rigorous verification process. As a preliminary step, reverse image and video search tools were used to determine whether the material had appeared online prior to the April 2025 attack and to assess potential misattribution. The team then geolocated footage by cross-referencing visible landmarks, terrain, architecture, and other features with satellite imagery and publicly available ground-level photography. Chrono-location techniques were also applied, including analysis of the sun's position and shadow angles, to establish when the videos were filmed. Content analysis was conducted to identify actors, weapons, uniforms, and spoken language or dialects. Wherever possible, researchers sought to identify the affiliation of those committing acts documented in this report by descriptions obtained through eyewitness testimonies and analysis of verified open-source material. Amnesty International identified RSF fighters on videos through their uniforms and insignias. In some videos, RSF fighters can be heard identifying themselves as belonging to the RSF. Interviewees identified RSF fighters through their uniforms, the branded vehicles they used during the assault, through the dialect they spoke and in some cases through a combination of identifying factors. Interviewees identified armed men allied to the RSF, often referred to as "Janjaweed", by their traditional attire and the specific style of the head and face scarf, locally known as *khadamol*. Interviewees identified members of the Joint Forces of Armed Struggle Movements (JFASM, or Joint Forces) – an alliance of former Darfur rebel groups, fighting alongside the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) – because they lived amongst them. Amnesty International also analysed satellite imagery and reviewed social media posts, credible media sources, and publications from civil society organizations and the United Nations.

All interviews were conducted remotely through secure communications platforms in Arabic or local languages and translated into English, except for five which were conducted in English. No incentive was offered to interviewees to speak with Amnesty International. All interviewees were informed of the nature and purpose of the research, how the information would be used, as well as possible consequences of the interview, and were given a choice about whether they wanted to participate. Informed consent was obtained from each interviewee. Parental consent was obtained to interview the child. None of the survivors interviewed for this report had previously been interviewed about the April 2025 attack on Zamzam IDP camp by journalists or other human rights organizations. Names and other identifying

¹ Whilst international human rights law uses the term "victim", Amnesty International will use the term "survivors" in this report when referring to individuals who were subjected to crimes under international law and human rights abuses to acknowledge their agency and not define them by the harm that they have experienced. Amnesty International recognizes that some persons affected by the violence may prefer the term victim over survivor which may define their experience more explicitly. Amnesty International acknowledges that, ultimately, persons affected by violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law ought to define how they would prefer to be referred to and that this can change over time. However, for consistency in this report, Amnesty International will use the term "survivor" to refer to individuals who survived the RSF attack on Zamzam camp and its aftermath and "victim" to individuals who did not.

details have been omitted to protect identities of interviewees for security and confidentiality reasons. In all cases, pseudonyms are used.

On 7 November 2025, Amnesty International sent a letter to General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, head of the RSF, outlining the report's preliminary findings and requesting information about the conduct of RSF forces and a response to the allegations. At the time of publication, no response was received.

3. BACKGROUND

Millions of people have been affected by the non-international armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), commanded by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (commonly known as Hemedti) and their allied forces which erupted on 15 April 2023.² Due to the ongoing fighting, restricted access, and communication blackouts, amongst others, it is difficult to determine an exact death toll. Many deaths are likely to go unreported, and estimates of those killed have varied widely, ranging in the tens of thousands.³ In November 2025, another 11.8 million people were recorded to have fled their homes.⁴ Sudan is the world's largest displacement crisis.⁵ Two million new displacements were recorded between January to March 2025 alone.⁶ In December 2024, the humanitarian and hunger crisis was ranked the world's largest,⁷ yet, in November, the humanitarian response for 2025 was only funded for 33.51 percent.⁸ As of November 2025, a staggering 30.4 million

² Amnesty International has previously established the existence of the current non-international armed conflict between the SAF and the RSF and with it, the application of international humanitarian law. Both parties are also allied to militias and other armed groups, which operate under varying levels of control and influence of the RSF or SAF. See, Amnesty International, "Death came to our home": War crimes and civilian suffering in Sudan (Index: AFR 54/7037/2023), 3 August 2023, pg. 47, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/7037/2023/en/>

³ In October 2024, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) for the Sudan established by the UN Human Rights Council in October 2023 reported that 18,800 people died since April 2023 from attacks. Around the same time, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED) recorded 28,608 deaths from attacks. In November 2024, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine estimated that there were 26,000 deaths due to violence in Khartoum State alone between April 2023 and June 2024. See, FFM, *Findings of the investigations conducted by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan into violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and related crimes, committed in the Sudan in the context of the conflict that erupted in mid-April 2023*, 23 October 2024, A/HRC/57/CRP.6, para. 124; European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), "Security incidents and civilian deaths estimates," no date, <https://euaa.europa.eu/coi/sudan/2025/security-situation/11-overview-conflict/114-security-incident-and-civilian-deaths-estimates>; London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, "War-time mortality in Sudan: A capture-recapture analysis", 13 November 2024, <https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/research/centres-projects-groups/sudan-research-group#current-research>. See also, Global Conflict Tracker, "Civil war in Sudan", 15 April 2025, <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/power-struggle-sudan>; Science, "How many have died in Sudan's civil war? Satellite images and models offer clues", 26 February 2025, <https://www.science.org/content/article/how-many-have-died-sudan-s-civil-war-satellite-images-and-models-offer-clues>

⁴ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Operational Data Portal – Sudan, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/sudansituation>, accessed on 25 November 2025.

⁵ International Organization for Migration (IOM), "Two Years of Conflict in Sudan: Visualizing the World's Largest Displacement Crisis", 15 April 2025, <https://dtm.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1461/files/reports/DTM%20Sudan%20-%20Two%20Years%20of%20Conflict%20in%20Sudan%20Visualizing%20the%20World%27s%20Largest%20Displacement%20Crisis.pdf?iframe=true>; International Rescue Committee (IRC), "IRC Emergency Watchlist 2025: "A World out of Balance", Sudan, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Myanmar top of Humanitarian Crisis Ranking – Urgent Action Possible and Needed", 11 December 2024, <https://www.rescue.org/press-release/irc-emergency-watchlist-2025-world-out-balance-sudan-occupied-palestinian-territory>

⁶ UN, "Sudan war intensifying with devastating consequences for civilians, UN Fact-Finding Mission says," 17 June 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/05/un-experts-demand-international-action-human-rights-violations-escalate>; UN, "UN experts demand international action as human rights violations escalate in Sudan's displacement camps," 8 May 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/05/un-experts-demand-international-action-human-rights-violations-escalate>.

⁷ IRC, "IRC Emergency Watchlist 2025: "A World out of Balance", Sudan, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Myanmar top of Humanitarian Crisis Ranking – Urgent Action Possible and Needed", 11 December 2024, <https://www.rescue.org/press-release/irc-emergency-watchlist-2025-world-out-balance-sudan-occupied-palestinian-territory>; UN News, "Only hunger and bombs for besieged civilians in Sudan's El Fasher", 13 August 2025, https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165642?utm_source=UN+News+-+Newsletter&utm_campaign=5a826c2a04-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_08_13_03_53&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fdbf1af606-5a826c2a04-105778189

⁸ UN, "Sudan gripped by deadly crisis as hunger, disease and heat intensify", 30 July 2025, https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165534?utm_source=UN+News+-+Newsletter&utm_campaign=05058f4875-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_07_30_08_53&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fdbf1af606-05058f4875-105778189. In November, the funding coverage for 2025 was at 32.10% according to the UN Office of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). See, "OCHA – Sudan", <https://www.unocha.org/sudan>, accessed on 25 November 2025.

people required humanitarian assistance.⁹ In November 2025, the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) – the global system used by UN agencies and humanitarian actors to measure the severity of hunger – found famine-like conditions in North Darfur’s El Fasher and South Kordofan’s Kadugli reporting that people are trapped and surviving on grass, leaves and animal feed.¹⁰

This report builds on Amnesty International’s past work documenting serious abuses and crimes under international law in the context of the non-international armed conflict that broke out in Sudan on 15 April 2023 as well as work on the armed conflict in Darfur that has been ongoing since 2003.¹¹ Parties to the conflict have committed a wide range of crimes under international law, including the denial of humanitarian access and attacks on humanitarian objects and personnel; indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian objects as well as deliberate killing of civilians; arbitrary detention; torture; enforced disappearances; extrajudicial executions and other unlawful killings; and widespread sexual violence, particularly against women and girls.¹²

For decades, conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) has been part of attacks against civilians in armed conflicts in Sudan.¹³ In 2004, Amnesty International found that the war crime and crime against humanity of rape and other forms of sexual violence was strategically employed in Darfur to humiliate, punish, control, inflict fear and displace women and their communities.¹⁴ In April 2025, Amnesty International documented similar strategies behind the use of CRSV

⁹ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), “Sudan – Humanitarian Response Dashboard - March 2025”, 23 April 2025, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-response-dashboard-march-2025#:~:text=Between%20January%20and%20March%202025%2C%20humanitarian%20partners%20reached,assistance%2C%20out%20of%20a%20target%20of%2020.9%20million>

¹⁰ UN, “Famine tightens grip on Sudan, with civilians trapped and aid blocked”, 3 November 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/11/1166253>

¹¹ Amnesty International, “Sudan: El Fasher survivors tell of deliberate RSF killings and sexual violence – new testimony”, 25 November 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/11/sudan-el-fasher-survivors-tell-of-deliberate-rsf-killings-and-sexual-violence-new-testimony/>; Amnesty International, “*Death came to our home*” (previously cited); Amnesty International, “*They raped all of us*”: Sexual violence against women and girls in Sudan (Index: AFR 54/9201/2025), 10 April 2025, Sudan: “They Raped All of Us”: Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in Sudan - Amnesty International; Amnesty International, “Sudan: New conflict escalation exacerbates 20 years of suffering for civilians in Darfur”, 24 April 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/04/sudan-new-conflict-escalation-exacerbates-20-years-of-suffering-for-civilians-in-darfur/>; Amnesty International, “Sudan: Fresh evidence of government-sponsored crimes in Darfur shows drawdown of peacekeepers premature and reckless”, 11 June 2019, [https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/06/sudan-fresh-evidence-of-government-sponsored-crimes-in-darfur-shows-drawdown-of-peacekeepers-premature-and-reckless-2/#:~:text=Amnesty%20International%20has%20disturbing%20new%20evidence%2C%20including%20satellite, and%20other%20serious%20human%20rights%20violations%20in%20Darfur](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/06/sudan-fresh-evidence-of-government-sponsored-crimes-in-darfur-shows-drawdown-of-peacekeepers-premature-and-reckless-2/#:~:text=Amnesty%20International%20has%20disturbing%20new%20evidence%2C%20including%20satellite, and%20other%20serious%20human%20rights%20violations%20in%20Darfur;); Amnesty International, *Scorched Earth, Poisoned Air: Sudanese Government Forces Ravage Jebel Marra, Darfur* (Index no. AFR 54/4877/2016), 29 September 2016, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/4877/2016/en/>; Amnesty International, *Sudan: Civilians still under threat in Darfur* (Index: AFR 54/131/2004), October 2004, [https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/afr541312004en.pdf#:~:text=Amnesty%20International%20delegates%2C%20visiting%20Darfur%20in%20September%202004%2C,the%20human%20rights%20and%20humanitarian%20crisis%20in%20Darfur](https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/afr541312004en.pdf#:~:text=Amnesty%20International%20delegates%2C%20visiting%20Darfur%20in%20September%202004%2C,the%20human%20rights%20and%20humanitarian%20crisis%20in%20Darfur;); Amnesty International, *Sudan: At the mercy of killers – destruction of villages in Darfur* (Index: AFR 54/072/2004), 1 July 2004, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AFR54/072/2004/en/>; Amnesty International, *Sudan: Darfur: “Too many people killed for no reason”* (Index: AFR 54/008/2004), 3 February 2004, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/008/2004/en/>; Amnesty International, “Sudan: Humanitarian crisis in Darfur caused by Sudan Government’s failures”, 27 November 2003, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AFR54/101/2003/en/>

¹² Amnesty International, “*Death came to our home*” (previously cited); Amnesty International, “*They raped all of us*” (previously cited); Sudan FFM, *Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan*, 23 October 2024, A/HRC/57/CRP.6, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session57/A-HRC-57-CRP-6-en.pdf>; Sudan FFM, *Sudan: A War of atrocities*, 5 September 2025, A/HRC/60/22, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/ffm-sudan/a-hrc-60-22-auv.pdf>, para 49; Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA) Network, “Unseen and Unheard: The Plight of Missing Women and Girls Amidst Sudan’s Crisis,” 25 February 2025, <https://sihanet.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Missing-Women-and-Girls-Amidst-Sudans-Crisis.pdf>; Human Rights Watch (HRW), “Sudan: Armed Forces Airstrikes in South Darfur,” 4 June 2025, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/06/04/sudan-armed-forces-airstrikes-south-darfur>; Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), “Sudan: Drone strikes must be investigated,” 4 June 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/06/sudan-drone-strikes-must-be-investigated>

¹³ Amnesty International, “*Death came to our door*” (previously cited); Sudan FFM, *Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan* (previously cited); African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS), “War Time Sexual Violence, A Tactic in the Sudan Armed Conflict”, 16 December 2024, <https://www.acjps.org/publications/war-time-sexual-violence-a-tactic-in-the-sudan-armed-conflict>

¹⁴ Amnesty International, *Sudan: Darfur: Rape as a weapon of war: sexual violence and its consequences* (Index: AFR 54/076/2004), 18 July 2004, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/076/2004/en/>

across Sudan during the ongoing conflict, and concluded that members of the RSF suspected of committing acts of rape should be investigated for the crime against humanity of rape.¹⁵

The RSF and allied Arab militias have been accused of ethnically motivated attacks, including in Darfur, against Masalit and other non-Arab communities.¹⁶ The SAF and its allied forces have also been accused of ethnically motivated attacks including against the Kanabi community and South Sudanese nationals after the SAF's takeover of Gezira State's capital - Wad Madani.¹⁷ Amnesty International has documented cases of SAF airstrikes in civilian areas during the ongoing conflict.¹⁸ In September 2024, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) for the Sudan established by the Human Rights Council in October 2023 established that the RSF and its allied militias carried out a "widespread and/or systematic" attack directed against "predominantly non-Arab civilian population, in particular the ethnic Masalit, in El Geneina, West Darfur, and other areas along flight routes of civilians coming from El Geneina."¹⁹ Based on this, it found that it has reason to believe that "acts committed by the RSF and its allied militias [amounted to] crimes against humanity."²⁰ On 10 July 2025, the Deputy Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) informed the UN Security Council that his office has reasonable grounds to believe that crimes against humanity, as well as war crimes, have been committed and continue to be committed in Darfur.²¹ These crimes have been met with impunity and continue unabated.²²

Amnesty International has documented the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects, such as inaccurate and unguided mortars and multi-launch rocket systems, by both the RSF and SAF in densely populated areas including in Darfur. These weapons include, for example, recently manufactured Chinese mortars, indicating that outside suppliers continue to violate the UN Security Council arms embargo and to fuel the conflict.²³ Parties should never conduct attacks using explosive weapons with wide area effects, such as salvos of 122mm "Grad" rockets, on areas with concentrations of civilians.²⁴

Darfur is among the region's most heavily affected by the current armed conflict, exacerbating over two decades of civilian suffering and cycles of violence in the region.²⁵ In May 2024, the RSF – which evolved from the notorious Janjaweed militias implicated in crimes under international law in the 2003 armed conflict – and its allied militias launched a sustained campaign to capture, El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur State, with devastating impact on

¹⁵ Amnesty International, "They raped us all" (previously cited), 26-29.

¹⁶ Amnesty International, "Death came to our home" (previously cited); Sudan FFM, *Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan* (previously cited); Sudan FFM, *Sudan: A War of atrocities* (previously cited).

¹⁷ UN, "Sudan war becomes more deadly as ethnically motivated attacks rise", 17 January 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/01/1159111>; CSW, "CWS concerned at increase in ethnically motivated attacks following SAF takeover of Wad Madani", 20 January 2025, <https://www.cswusa.org/2025/01/20/press/6414/article.htm>; African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR), "Report of the virtual joint fact-finding mission on the human rights situation in the Sudan", 21 October 2025, <https://achpr.au.int/en/documents/2025-10-21/fact-finding-mission-human-rights-situation-sudan>

¹⁸ Amnesty International, "Death came to our home" (previously cited); Amnesty International, "Sudan: SAF airstrike on crowded market a flagrant war crime," 12 December 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/sudan-armed-forces-saf-killed-dozens-in-an-air-strike-on-a-crowded-market-in-the-rapid-support-forces-rsf-controlled-town-of-kabkabiya-in-north-darfur/>

¹⁹ Sudan FFM, *Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan* (previously cited), para 293.

²⁰ Sudan FFM, "Sudan: UN Fact-Finding Mission outlines extensive human rights violations, international crimes, urges protection of civilians," 6 September 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/09/sudan-un-fact-finding-mission-outlines-extensive-human-rights-violations>; Sudan FFM, *Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan* (previously cited), para 294.

²¹ International Criminal Court (ICC), "Statement of Deputy Prosecutor Nazhat Shameem Khan to the United Nations Security Council on the Situation in Darfur, pursuant to Resolution 1593 (2005)," <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/statement-deputy-prosecutor-nazhat-shameem-khan-united-nations-security-council-situation>.

²² Amnesty International, "Q&A: Why should the mandate for the fact-finding mission (FFM) for Sudan be extended at HRC 57?" (Index AFR 54/8460/2024), 27 August 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/8460/2024/en/>; Amnesty International, "UN Human Rights Council: positive votes on Sudan and Russia crucial to end cycles of impunity", 10 October 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/10/un-human-rights-council-positive-votes-on-sudan-and-russia-crucial-to-end-cycles-of-impunity/>; UNOCHA, "UN rights chief condemns recent killing of scores of civilians in Sudan", 17 July 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165420>; Amnesty International, *The state of the world's human rights* (Index: POL 10/8515/2025), 28 April 2025, [https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/58/29](https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol10/8515/2025/en/#:~:text=The%202025%20edition%20of%20Amnesty%20International%20%20annual%20report%20across%20a%20wide%20range%20of%20human%20rights%20themes,pp.346-348;OHCHR, Report: <i>Situation of human rights in the Sudan</i>, 20 January 2025, A/HRC/58/29, <a href=), para. 94.

²³ Amnesty International, *New weapons fuelling the Sudan conflict* (Index: AFR 54/8252/2024), 25 July 2024, pg. 4, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2024/07/new-weapons-fuelling-the-sudan-conflict/>

²⁴ Amnesty International, *Death came to our door* (previously cited), pg. 48.

²⁵ Amnesty International, "Sudan: New conflict escalation exacerbates 20 years of suffering for civilians in Darfur", 24 April 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/04/sudan-new-conflict-escalation-exacerbates-20-years-of-suffering-for-civilians-in-darfur/>

civilians.²⁶ According to a conflict analyst, controlling Darfur's northern areas is strategic in terms of securing smuggling and trading routes and is also important to solidifying RSF's ambition of state building.²⁷ As part of this campaign, the RSF and its allied militias laid a siege on El Fasher and attacked nearby villages and camps hosting IDPs, including Abu Shouk and the state's largest IDP camp, Zamzam.²⁸ The RSF ignored the UN Security Council's demand to lift the siege,²⁹ and left hundreds of thousands trapped in El Fasher and cut off from life-saving humanitarian assistance.³⁰ In August 2025, the UN reported that, between January and June the RSF had attacked Abu Shouk camp at least 16 times.³¹ In September 2025, the Yale School of Public Health's Humanitarian Research Lab identified "over 50 instances of bombardments in Abu Shouk IDP camp in satellite imagery collected between 30 August and 10 September 2025."³² In September 2025, the RSF allegedly carried out an airstrike on the Al-Safiya mosque in El Fasher and surrounding homes, killing dozens of people.³³ The SAF reportedly bombed a crowded market in the RSF-controlled town of Kabkabiya in North Darfur in December 2024 and a market in Tora village in North Darfur in March 2025.³⁴ On 26 October 2025, amid reports of attacks on civilians including summary executions, sexual violence,

²⁶ OHCHR, Report: *Under siege: the situation of human rights in El Fasher, North Darfur since May 2024*, 20 December 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/report-ohchr-sudan-country-office-siege-el-fasher-north-darfur-may-2024>; HRW, "Civilians Around Sudan's El Fasher Face New Attacks", 11 April 2025, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/04/12/civilians-around-sudans-el-fasher-face-new-attacks>

²⁷ Interview by voice call with conflict analyst, 5 June 2025. See also, Al Jazeera, "El-Fasher's Turning Point: Sudan Between the Risk of Fragmentation and Escalation", 24 November 2025, <https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/policy-briefs/el-fasher%E2%80%99s-turning-point-sudan-between-risk-fragmentation-and-escalation>. After months of negotiations, the Leadership Council of the Sudan Founding Alliance (TASIS) – a coalition of the RSF and allied groups – declared the establishment of a parallel government on 26 July 2025. Three days later, the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC), Arab League and Saudi Arabia condemned the action. On 13 August, the UN Security Council also rejected the declaration, saying it posed a threat to the territorial integrity of Sudan. AUPSC, "Press statement of the 1292nd meeting of the Peace and Security Council, held on 29 July 2025, following the announcement on Saturday 26 July 2025 of the establishment of a parallel government in the Republic of Sudan by the Sudanese coalition (Tasis) led by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF)," 29 July 2025, <https://papsrepository.africanunion.org/entities/publication/20184702-fa8b-4ff2-9c42-f3a34cbdc0b0>; Radio Tamazuj, "Sudan: RSF-led coalition announces parallel government", 26 July 2025, <https://www.radiotamazuj.org/en/news/article/sudan-rsf-led-coalition-announces-parallel-government>; Radio Tamazuj, "AU says does 'not recognize' Sudan parallel government", 30 July 2025, <https://www.radiotamazuj.org/en/news/article/au-says-does-not-recognise-sudan-parallel-government>; Sudan Tribune, "AU, Arab League, Saudis condemn RSF-led government in Sudan, 29 July 2025, <https://sudantribune.com/article303381/>; UN News, "Security Council rejects creation of rival government in Sudan", 13 August 2025, https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165645?utm_source=UN+News+-+Newsletter&utm_campaign=683bc41a0b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_08_13_06_53&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fdbf1af606-683bc41a0b-105778189.

²⁸ Interview by voice call with survivor and Zamzam IDP camp resident, 12 June 2025; UN News, "Only hunger and bombs for besieged civilians in Sudan's El Fasher", 13 August 2025, https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165642?utm_source=UN+News+-+Newsletter&utm_campaign=5a826c2a04-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_08_13_03_53&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fdbf1af606-5a826c2a04-105778189;

²⁹ UN Security Council (UNSC), Resolution 2736 (2024), adopted on 13 June 2024, UN Doc. S/RES/2736.

³⁰ UN News, "Only hunger and bombs for besieged civilians in Sudan's El Fasher", 13 August 2025, https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165642?utm_source=UN+News+-+Newsletter&utm_campaign=5a826c2a04-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_08_13_03_53&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fdbf1af606-5a826c2a04-105778189; UN, "UN alarmed by 'terrifying' situation in Sudan's El Fasher, calls for immediate ceasefire", 26 October 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/10/1166184>

³¹ UN News, "Only hunger and bombs for besieged civilians in Sudan's El Fasher", 13 August 2025, https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165642?utm_source=UN+News+-+Newsletter&utm_campaign=5a826c2a04-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_08_13_03_53&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fdbf1af606-5a826c2a04-105778189

³² The Yale School of Public Health's Humanitarian Research Lab, "No Safe Haven: Bombardment of Abu Shouk IDP camp and El-Fasher's Increasing Berm Encirclement", 11 September 2025, <https://files-profile.medicine.yale.edu/documents/e3d32307-89f9-4573-8c87-fc7d15239a9f>

³³ FFM, "Sudan: UN Fact-Finding Mission urges immediate action after deadly mosque strike in El Fasher", 24 September 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/09/sudan-un-fact-finding-mission-urges-immediate-action-after-deadly-mosque?sub-site=HRC>; BBC, "Drone strike on Sudan mosque kills 78, medic tells BBC," 19 September 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cp8wzzjze8xo>

³⁴ Amnesty International, "Sudan: SAF airstrike on crowded market a flagrant war crime", 12 December 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/sudan-armed-forces-saf-killed-dozens-in-an-air-strike-on-a-crowded-market-in-the-rapid-support-forces-rsf-controlled-town-of-kabkabiya-in-north-darfur/>; OHCHR, "Comment by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk on Sudanese Armed Forces airstrikes in Tora, North Darfur", 26 March 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/comment-un-high-commissioner-human-rights-volker-turk-sudanese-armed-forces>

widespread looting and destruction of vital infrastructure,³⁵ the RSF claimed that it had taken control of parts of El Fasher.³⁶ The next day, the SAF announced it had withdrawn its forces from the city.³⁷

On 11 April 2025, the RSF launched a large-scale attack on Zamzam IDP camp that lasted three days.³⁸ Zamzam IDP camp is approximately 10 kilometres southwest of El Fasher and is strategically located along supply routes, and likely of importance to the RSF in their efforts to control El Fasher.³⁹ The attack in April 2025 was not the first time that the RSF attacked Zamzam and was not an isolated incident, but rather part of the RSF's ongoing campaign. Fighting erupted in Zamzam in December 2024 and intensified at the end of January and in February 2025.⁴⁰ Shelling was also reported in early April 2025.⁴¹ The SAF and their allied forces, mostly the Sudan Liberation Army led by Suliman Arcua Minnawi (SLA-MM), and the Justice and Equality Movement led by Jibril Ibrahim (JEM-Jibril), have been fighting the RSF in and around the city.⁴²

Established in 2004, Zamzam IDP camp has been home to people displaced by the conflict since 2003.⁴³ With an increase in attacks on villages and IDP camps in Northern Darfur after December 2024, many civilians sought relative safety in the camp, significantly increasing the civilian population.⁴⁴ At the time of the April attack, Zamzam IDP camp was estimated to host around 500,000 – 1,000,000 people.⁴⁵ It is home to several Darfuri tribes, the majority of which

³⁵ OHCHR, "Sudan: Appalling reports of summary executions and other serious violations, as RSF makes major territorial gains in El Fasher and North Kordofan," 27 October 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/10/sudan-appalling-reports-summary-executions-and-other-serious-violations-rsf>; Amnesty International, "Sudan: RSF must end attacks and further suffering of civilians in El Fasher", 28 October 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/10/sudan-el-fasher/>; World Health Organization (WHO), "WHO condemns killings of patients and civilians amid escalating violence in El Fasher, Sudan", 29 October 2025, <https://www.who.int/news/item/29-10-2025-who-condemns-killings-of-patients-and-civilians-amid-escalating-violence-in-el-fasher--sudan>; Al Jazeera, "Massacre in El Fasher: What's happening in Sudan right now?", 29 October 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/10/29/massacre-in-el-fasher-whats-happening-in-sudan-right-now>; FFM, "Sudan: Concerned about the plight of civilians in El Fasher, UN Experts urge immediate protection measures and an end to impunity", 30 October 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/10/sudan-concerned-about-plight-civilians-el-fasher-un-experts-urge-immediate>; Amnesty International, "Sudan: El Fasher survivors tell of deliberate RSF killings and sexual violence – new testimony", 25 November 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/11/sudan-el-fasher-survivors-tell-of-deliberate-rsf-killings-and-sexual-violence-new-testimony/>

³⁶ Amnesty International, "Sudan: RSF must end attacks and further suffering of civilians in El Fasher", 28 October 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/10/sudan-el-fasher/>

³⁷ Amnesty International, "Sudan: RSF must end attacks and further suffering of civilians in El Fasher", 28 October 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/10/sudan-el-fasher/>

³⁸ UN, "Sudan war: 'Darkest chapters' ahead as Darfur massacre claims over 100 lives", 14 April 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/04/1162211>; Radio Dabanga, "North Darfur: Half a million people flee 'final catastrophe' as Zamzam camp 'obliterated'", 16 April 2025, <https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/north-darfur-half-a-million-people-flee-final-catastrophe-as-zamzam-camp-obliterated>;

³⁹ Interview by voice call with conflict analyst, 5 June 2025. Al Jazeera, "El-Fasher's Turning Point: Sudan Between the Risk of Fragmentation and Escalation", 24 November 2025, <https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/policy-briefs/el-fasher%E2%80%99s-turning-point-sudan-between-risk-fragmentation-and-escalation>

⁴⁰ Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), *Besieged, Attacked, Starved: Mass atrocities in El Fasher and Zamzam, Sudan*, 3 July 2025, https://www.msf.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/2025_07_Sudan_Report_El-Fasher_EN.pdf, pg. 17. Interviews by video call with survivors between 10 June – 11 July 2025; Amnesty International, "Sudan: RSF must stop attacks on famine-stricken Zamzam camp", 14 February 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/02/sudan-rsf-must-stop-attacks-on-famine-stricken-zamzam-camp/>; MSF, "Sudan: MSF forced to halt activities as violence engulfs Zamzam camp in North Darfur", 24 February 2025, <https://www.msf.org/sudan-msf-forced-halt-our-activities-violence-engulfs-zamzam-camp-north-darfur>; Relief International, "Zamzam camp comes under fire", 5 December 2024, <https://www.ri.org/zamzam-camp-comes-under-fire/>

⁴¹ Darfur Network for Human Rights, "Statement On the continued Rocket Attacks and Siege of Zamzam IDP Camp in North Darfur by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF)", 6 April 2025, <https://dnhr.org/2025/04/06/on-the-continued-rocket-attacks-and-siege-of-zamzam-idp-camp-north-darfur-by-the-rapid-support-forces-rsf/>

⁴² OHCHR, *Report of the OHCHR Sudan Country Office on the siege of El Fasher, North Darfur since May 2024*, 20 December 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/report-ohchr-sudan-country-office-siege-el-fasher-north-darfur-may-2024>; Human Rights Watch, "Civilians Around Sudan's El Fasher Face New Attacks", 11 April 2025, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/04/12/civilians-around-sudans-el-fasher-face-new-attacks>

⁴³ BBC, "'Child in my arms, luggage on my head, I fled Sudan camp for safety'", 18 April 2025, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn80v2d7elzo>; AP, "'The Janjaweed are coming': Sudanese recount atrocities in RSF attack on a Darfur camp", 3 May 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/sudan-darfur-military-rsf-war-zamzam-b6c60fe0883327aa0d64cd39d3a8e260>

⁴⁴ Interviews by video call with survivors who were camp residents between 10 June – 11 July 2025.

⁴⁵ MSF, *Besieged, Attacked, Starved* (previously cited), pg. 17; Global Protection Cluster, "Protection Alert: El Fasher and Zamzam IDP Camp, North Darfur, Sudan", 20 December 2024, https://globalprotectioncluster.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/gpc_protection_alert_north_darfur_20_dec_2024.pdf; Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), "Famine in Sudan: IPC Famine Review Committee Confirms Famine in parts of North Darfur", July 2024, <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/countries-in-focus-archive/issue-107/en/>

are from the Zaghawa and its subclans.⁴⁶ In August 2024, the United Nations confirmed famine conditions in the camp.⁴⁷ A conflict analyst from Darfur described Zamzam as “a place for people who have already lost everything.”⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Interviews by video call with survivor, 12 June 2025; MSF, “Desperate situation for people fleeing Zamzam camp in Sudan”, 18 April 2025, <https://www.msf.org/desperate-situation-people-fleeing-zamzam-camp-sudan>

⁴⁷ UNOCHA, “Sudan Humanitarian Update”, 1 September 2024, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-update-1-september-2024#:~:text=On%201%20August,%20the%20Integrated%20Food%20Security%20Phase,and%20are%20likely%20to%20persist%20during%20August-October%202024>

⁴⁸ Interview by video call with conflict analyst, 5 June 2025.

4. THE APRIL 2025 ATTACK ON ZAMZAM

On Friday, 11 April 2025, the RSF launched a large-scale assault on Zamzam IDP camp that lasted at least three days.⁴⁹ Residents woke up to, or had their morning activities disturbed by, persistent shelling and gunfire.⁵⁰ Survivors gave harrowing accounts of fleeing burning neighbourhoods and hiding from heavy fighting that lasted the whole day.⁵¹ Interviewees described hiding in their houses and makeshift shelters, including holes dug into the ground for safety, with their families, including young children and infants, for hours without food and water while they heard loud explosions and gunfire.⁵² Many only emerged during lulls of fighting to quickly cook or find water and food, to search for relatives or to flee.⁵³ Joint Forces and armed self-defense groups tried to repel the attack.

Interviewees who were present in Zamzam IDP camp when the attack started said it came from the southern and eastern side of the camp, driving residents towards the northern side in search of safety.⁵⁴ On Saturday 12 April, the RSF attacked again in the early hours of the morning, with heavy fighting lasting all day. This time, the fighting reached up to Saluma, a village on the northern edge of the expanded main camp.⁵⁵ The assault continued on Sunday 13 April when RSF took full control of the camp.⁵⁶

⁴⁹ RSF, “Media statement”, 13 April 2025, <https://t.me/RSFSudan/7596>; CNN, “Sudan’s RSF claims control of major Darfur camp, civilians flee”, 14 April 2025, <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/04/14/africa/sudans-rsf-zamzam-camp-intl/index.html>; Al Jazeera, “Sudan’s RSF claims control of famine-hit Zamzam camp in Darfur”, 13 April 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/4/13/sudans-rsf-claims-control-of-famine-hit-zamzam-camp-in-darfur>; The Guardian, “‘They slaughtered us like animals’: the inside story of how one of the biggest atrocities of the Sudan war unfolded in Zamzam”, 7 August 2025, https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2025/aug/07/genocide-sudan-zamzam-camp-timeline?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other; Centre for Information Resilience (CIR), “Fires, extreme violence and mass displacement following RSF attack on Zamzam camp, North Darfur”, 17 April 2025, <https://www.info-res.org/reports/fires-extreme-violence-and-mass-displacement-following-rsf-attack-on-zamzam-camp-north-darfur/>

⁵⁰ Interviews by video call with survivors between 10 June – 11 July 2025.

⁵¹ Interviews by video calls with at least 11 survivors between 12 June and 7 July 2025.

⁵² Interviews by video calls with at least seven survivors between 11 June and 4 July 2025.

⁵³ Interviews by video calls with at least seven survivors between 11 June and 4 July 2025.

⁵⁴ Interviews by video call with at least six survivors between 12 June – 8 July 2025.

⁵⁵ Interviews by video call with survivors between 10 June – 11 July 2025; The Guardian, “‘They slaughtered us like animals’: the inside story of how one of the biggest atrocities of the Sudan war unfolded in Zamzam,” 7 August 2025, https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2025/aug/07/genocide-sudan-zamzam-camp-timeline?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other

⁵⁶ Interviews by video call with three survivors between 13 and 17 June 2025; RSF, “Media statement”, 13 April 2025, <https://t.me/RSFSudan/7596>; https://x.com/SudanTribune_EN/status/1911546027917692968; Sudan Tribune, “RSF seizes Zamzam camp, displacing thousands; hundreds reported dead”, 13 April 2025, <https://sudantribune.com/article299682/>; Refugees International and others, “Joint statement: Genocide Returns to Darfur”, 16 April 2025, <https://www.refugeesinternational.org/advocacy-letters/joint-statement-genocide-returns-to-darfur/>; The Guardian, “‘They slaughtered us like animals’: the inside story of how one of the biggest atrocities of the Sudan war unfolded in Zamzam,” 7 August 2025, https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2025/aug/07/genocide-sudan-zamzam-camp-timeline?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other



 ↑ Zamzam IDP camp and key sites discussed in this report

4.1 POSSIBLE INDISCRIMINATE ATTACKS

During their assault on the camp, the RSF forces used explosive weapons with wide area effects, killing and injuring both members of the Joint Forces and civilians, and destroying both civilian and military objects.



 ↑ False-colour, near-infrared satellite imagery from 16 April 2025 shows craters from artillery in the centre of the camp (left) and along the security perimeter (right).

Amnesty International has collected a variety of evidence that demonstrates the widespread use of explosive weapons in populated areas during the RSF assault on Zamzam. Satellite imagery captured on 16 April 2025 and analysed by Amnesty International shows new craters predominantly on the outer edges of the camp, but also in the centre. In addition, seven survivors of the assault told Amnesty International that, on Friday 11 April and Saturday 12 April, shells landed in homes, on streets and, in one case, near a mosque during a wedding ceremony – all densely populated civilian areas, killing and injuring civilians and setting homes on fire.⁵⁷

“Younis”, an emergency response room volunteer,⁵⁸ told Amnesty International that, on the morning of 11 April when he was near a soup kitchen, he saw a shell land close to him, killing an adolescent boy on the spot and injuring an older woman of around 70 years as well as his shoulder and hand.⁵⁹ He fled to his house but said shelling to the east of his neighbourhood caused six wooden houses to catch fire. He then fled to a crowded area in the western side of the camp where he said people were seeking safety in makeshift shelters (holes in the ground). Describing the shelling in that area “Younis” said:

“The shelling started. [Shells landed] like 100 meters from us, 400 meters this side, and 50 meters this [other] side, and 40 meters this [other] side. I just ran away, and I decided to go home. It was really bad. You could not identify where the shelling is coming from. It was everywhere, in every place.”

“Younis” – an emergency response room volunteer.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Interviews by video call with seven survivors between 12 June 2025 and 4 July 2025.

⁵⁸ Emergency response rooms are local aid networks that span across Sudan. For more, see, The New Humanitarian, “In Darfur’s displacement epicentre, community kitchens shoulder the load”, 22 July 2025, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2025/07/22/darfur-sudan-displacement-epicentre-community-kitchens-shoulder-load-mutual-aid>

⁵⁹ Interview by video call with survivor, 12 June 2025.

⁶⁰ Interview by video call with survivor, 12 June 2025.

Fleeing that area, “Younis” said he encountered a friend who told him that a shell landed on his uncle’s house. When “Younis” went to check, he found that the shell had killed his brother (a doctor) and his friend (who provided fuel to health services) and injured two girls.⁶¹ He headed to shelters where he stayed until the fighting subsided and he could bury his relatives. “By around sunset, the fire was everywhere. ... The houses around us caught fire from the bombing,” he said.⁶²

“Osman”, a farmer who was in Saluma on the morning of Saturday, 12 April, said:

“[The RSF] shelled like over 18 shells in that highly populated area. The first artillery bomb fell on our neighbour’s house. It killed two people. ... They were two young men. They were just having their breakfast. Even before they finished [their food], the shell fell on their hut. The hut caught fire, and the shrapnel injured them badly and they were seriously bleeding. ... The rest [of the shells], fell in different locations where they did not hit people. ... We started fleeing. ... When the attack happened, the whole area was covered by smoke and dust from the shelling. The civilians managed to flee; they were running in all directions.”

“Osman” – a farmer.⁶³

“Dafallah”, a 25-year-old casual labourer recalled the shelling in Saluma on Saturday 12 April: “The shelling was everywhere in the camp. ... Those bombs burned the houses, and I saw someone burned inside the house.”⁶⁴

The fighting was quick to spread throughout Zamzam, and four survivors described crossfire, saying they saw members of the Joint Forces and armed self-defence groups return fire on Friday in Zamzam and Saturday in Saluma.⁶⁵ Amnesty International was not able to establish whether the Joint Forces fired artillery or other explosive weapons and, therefore, which side fired the shells that killed and injured the civilians “Younis”, “Osman” and “Dafallah” described, nor whether there were military targets nearby.

RSF fighters were also seen randomly shooting their weapons in populated residential areas. “[RSF] fighters were just shouting and shooting anywhere so that is how many people were killed,” said “Mamoun”, a man in his mid-twenties who worked as a volunteer with a non-governmental organisation (NGO) to distribute humanitarian aid.⁶⁶ “Sadya”, a 31-year-old woman who volunteered for NGOs described RSF fighters driving through her neighbourhood, not far from the main market, in Zamzam on 12 April: “one [RSF fighter] will stand up through a small roof and just shoot around and shoot anyone in the street.”⁶⁷ Shooting in such a manner may constitute an attack without a specific military target, and therefore an indiscriminate attack.

The civilian harm during the assault was high. A nurse told Amnesty International that he treated many patients with bullet wounds and injuries from fragments of shells from Friday morning, 11 April, until they had to close the small

⁶¹ Interview by video call with survivor, 12 June 2025.

⁶² Interview by video call with survivor, 12 June 2025.

⁶³ Interview by video call with survivor, 16 June 2025.

⁶⁴ Interview by video call with survivor, 17 June 2025.

⁶⁵ Interviews by video call with four survivors between 13 June and 4 July 2025.

⁶⁶ Interview by video call with survivor, 10 June 2025.

⁶⁷ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 and 16 June 2025.

private clinic in the afternoon due to the intensity of the violence.⁶⁸ Between 12 April and early May, Medicines Sans Frontieres (MSF) in Tawila – a town approximately 45 km west northwest of Zamzam IDP camp where most people fled to – treated 779 people, of whom 138 were children, with gunshot and blast injuries.⁶⁹ A doctor who treated IDPs, including children, on their way from Zamzam IDP camp to Tawila, including for injuries from bullets and fragments of shells said he amputated a 4-year-old child’s hand after he was injured by fragments of shells.⁷⁰

There is no verified death toll, but the UN Human Rights Office reported that, at least, 210 civilians were killed in Zamzam IDP camp between 11 and 13 April.⁷¹ Other estimates range as high as 1,500 deaths.⁷² Six survivors described seeing many dead bodies in civilian clothes, including of children and older persons, along the streets of Zamzam as well as dead livestock.⁷³ Three interviewees told Amnesty International that they saw burnt bodies, including of their neighbours.⁷⁴ Recalling seeing the dead bodies of his neighbours, “**Abbas**”, a 29-year old university student, said: “We found the holes [makeshift bunkers in the ground] and we found they killed the whole family: five kids, the man and the wife. They just shot them in that hole”.⁷⁵ He said the bullets had penetrated their head, back and legs.⁷⁶ “**Salwa**”, a 38-year-old woman said that she found four family members dead on a donkey cart in Saluma just before they were able to flee Zamzam. She said that her blind father-in-law and her daughter were shot in their foreheads. One brother-in-law was shot under his chin; another brother’s hand was severed. One of her two brothers was blind. Only her six-year-old son, who was shot in his back, survived.⁷⁷ Amnesty International was unable to determine whether these families died as the result of deliberate killings or random gunfire. The vast majority of IDPs who were interviewed said they had lost family members and neighbours, and in some cases multiple relatives, including children, due to the violence.⁷⁸ “**Younis**” said he lost around 20 relatives, all civilians, in total during the April assault.⁷⁹

Amnesty International has previously documented a variety of weapons systems that deliver wide-area explosives in the arsenal of the RSF, including precision-guided glide bombs dropped by drones, 155mm howitzers, and various rocket artillery systems.⁸⁰ While some of these weapons could potentially be used lawfully in areas populated by civilians, most cannot. Explosive ordnance that is inherently inaccurate, such as unguided rocket artillery and mortars that must be “walked” onto a target,⁸¹ are completely inappropriate for use in civilian areas, as they are highly likely to cause unlawful harm to civilians and civilian objects. All parties to the conflict must take all feasible precautions to protect the civilian population and civilian objects from attack.⁸² Attacks that fail to distinguish between military objectives and

⁶⁸ Interview by video call with survivor, 4 and 7 July 2025.

⁶⁹ MSF, “People fleeing Zamzam camp arrive to overwhelmed humanitarian response in Tawila”, 6 May 2025, <https://www.msf.org/people-fleeing-zamzam-camp-arrive-overwhelmed-humanitarian-response-tawila>

⁷⁰ Interview by video call with doctor, 9 July 2025.

⁷¹ OHCHR, “Sudan: Türk gravely concerned at rising civilian deaths and widespread sexual violence in North Darfur”, 25 April 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/sudan-turk-gravely-concerned-rising-civilian-deaths-and-widespread-sexual>

⁷² The Guardian, “‘They slaughtered us like animals’: the inside story of how one of the biggest atrocities of the Sudan war unfolded in Zamzam”, 7 August 2025, https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2025/aug/07/genocide-sudan-zamzam-camp-timeline?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other

⁷³ Interviews by video call with six survivors between 13 June and 11 July 2025.

⁷⁴ Interviews by video call with three survivors between 17 June and 4 July 2025.

⁷⁵ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 June 2025.

⁷⁶ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 June 2025.

⁷⁷ Interview by video call with survivor, 16 June 2025.

⁷⁸ Interviews by video call with nine survivors between 10 June and 4 July 2025.

⁷⁹ Interview by video call with survivor, 12 June 2025.

⁸⁰ Amnesty International, “Sudan: Advanced Chinese weaponry provided by UAE identified in breach of arms embargo - new investigation”, 8 May 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/05/sudan-advanced-chinese-weaponry-provided-by-uae-identified-in-breach-of-arms-embargo-new-investigation/>. Examples of the use of rocket artillery systems by the RSF can be found in: Sudan Human Rights Hub, “SUDAN: Patterns of Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians by SAF and RSF”, October 2024, <https://sudanhrh.org/en/articles/SUDAN-Patterns-of-indiscriminate-attacks-on-civilians>.

On the use of mortars in densely populated areas, see: La Silla Vacía, “Lobos del Desierto”: así operan los mercenarios Colombianos en Sudán”, 2 March 2025, <https://www.lasillavacia.com/silla-nacional/lobos-del-desierto-asi-operan-los-mercenarios-colombianos-en-sudan/>

⁸¹ A mortar is not aimed directly by the operator, it is “dialed in,” meaning that a round is fired, and then based upon where it lands, the operator adjusts the mortar tube and fires again, until the target is struck. This process is called “walking” onto the target. “Walking” mortars through areas populated by civilians is extremely reckless and has a very high likelihood of constituting an indiscriminate attack.

⁸² International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Customary IHL Study, Rule 22.

civilian objects are indiscriminate,⁸³ and are prohibited under customary international humanitarian law.⁸⁴ Launching an indiscriminate attack resulting in death or injury to civilians may amount to war crime.⁸⁵

4.2 THE RSF'S RESPONSE AND PRESENCE OF JOINT FORCES

According to media reports, the RSF denied targeting civilians and accused the Joint Forces of “orchestrating a media campaign using actors and staged scenes within the camp to falsely incriminate it.”⁸⁶ The RSF claimed that Zamzam IDP camp was used by “mercenary factions” as a military base;⁸⁷ a claim the RSF have used as justification for previous shelling into Zamzam IDP camp and for the main attack on the camp, according to one analyst interviewed by Amnesty International.⁸⁸

Amnesty International documented the presence of SLA-Minnawi faction, JEM-Jibril and the Gathering of Sudan Liberation Forces (GSLF) led by Abdallah Yahya, factions of the Joint Forces, in and around Zamzam camp.⁸⁹ There were also self-defence groups of civilians directly participating in the hostilities in Zamzam IDP camp composed of youth, mainly men, without uniforms, who took up arms to protect their families and their properties.⁹⁰

Ten interviewees, almost all who had lived in Zamzam camp, told Amnesty International that the Joint Forces, without specifying the faction, had presence in various locations in Zamzam IDP camp.⁹¹ Six interviewees told Amnesty International about the presence of Joint Forces fighters in Zamzam IDP camp prior to and during the attack.⁹² According to three interviewees, these troops came to protect the IDPs against RSF attacks when they started to intensify in 2024.⁹³ Video evidence confirms that GSLF marked buildings are located on the eastern side of Zamzam camp.⁹⁴ Satellite imagery from 16 April 2025 shows a probable security checkpoint and a newly constructed section of a bermed security perimeter under construction surrounding Zamzam camp and Saluma. The two other Joint Forces factions that operate in and around Zamzam are SLA-MM, JEM-Jibril.⁹⁵

In its letter to the RSF leadership, Amnesty International asked questions about what precautions they were taking to protect civilians from the dangers of their operations. At the time of publication, Amnesty International did not receive any response from the RSF.

While Amnesty International documented the military presence of factions of the Joint Forces and the presence of self-defence groups in Zamzam, the camp hosted hundreds of thousands of civilians living in densely populated areas and consisted of civilian objects, including medical facilities where humanitarian services were provided. While the forces

⁸³ An attack is indiscriminate when it is “of a nature to strike military objectives and civilians or civilian objects without distinction,” particularly when it is “not directed at a specific military objective,” or when it employs “a method or means of combat which cannot be directed at a specific military objective” or “a method or means of combat the effects of which cannot be limited as required by international humanitarian law.” The rules on the conduct of hostilities, codified in Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions have come to reflect customary international humanitarian law, including in non-international armed conflicts. Most of these rules have been included in the ICRC study of customary IHL. For the rule defining indiscriminate attacks, see, ICRC, Customary IHL Study, Rule 12.

⁸⁴ ICRC, Customary IHL Study, Rule 11.

⁸⁵ ICRC, Customary IHL Study, Rule 156.

⁸⁶ CNN, “Sudan’s RSF claims control of major Darfur camp, civilians flee”, 14 April 2025, <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/04/14/africa/sudans-rsf-zamzam-camp-intl/index.html>. See also, Al Jazeera, “Sudan’s RSF claims control of famine-hit Zamzam camp in Darfur”, 13 April 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/4/13/sudans-rsf-claims-control-of-famine-hit-zamzam-camp-in-darfur>

⁸⁷ RSF, Telegram post: “The War Media camera captures the current state of Zamzam Camp after mercenary forces turned it into a military barracks”, 17 April 2025, <https://t.me/RSFSudan/7619>; CNN, “Sudan’s RSF claims control of major Darfur camp, civilians flee”, 14 April 2025, <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/04/14/africa/sudans-rsf-zamzam-camp-intl/index.html>; Al Jazeera, “Sudan’s RSF claims control of famine-hit Zamzam camp in Darfur”, 13 April 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/4/13/sudans-rsf-claims-control-of-famine-hit-zamzam-camp-in-darfur>

⁸⁸ Interview by voice call with analyst, 5 June 2025.

⁸⁹ Interviews by video call with at least four interviewees between 10 June and 7 August 2025.

⁹⁰ Interviews by video call with four interviewees between 5 June and 10 July 2025.

⁹¹ Interviews by video call with 10 interviewees between 12 June and 7 August 2025.

⁹² Interviews by video call with six interviewees between 5 June and 11 July 2025.

⁹³ Interviews by video call with three survivors between 13 June and 10 July 2025.

⁹⁴ RSF, Telegram post: “Evidence demonstrates mercenary movements’ use of Zamzam camp as a military base and civilians as human shields”, 14 April 2025, <https://t.me/RSFSudan/7603>; RSF, Telegram post: “The War Media camera captures the current state of Zamzam Camp after mercenary forces turned it into a military barracks”, 17 April 2025, <https://t.me/RSFSudan/7619>

⁹⁵ Interview by video call with analyst, 8 July and 7 August 2025; Interview by voice call with interviewee, 15 August 2025.

and the military equipment belonging to these factions can be legitimate military targets, the presence of the Joint Forces neither makes Zamzam camp a legitimate military target as a whole, nor does it alleviate the RSF from its responsibility to abide by international humanitarian law including the principle of distinction.

5. DELIBERATE KILLING OF CIVILIANS

Amnesty International found a pattern of reports of RSF fighters deliberately shooting and killing civilians. Combined, eyewitnesses reported seeing RSF fighters shoot and kill a total of 47 civilians hiding in homes, fleeing the violence, at a humanitarian organisation's clinic and seeking refuge in a mosque and school during the attack. IDPs also witnessed killings by RSF or their affiliated militias during their displacement journeys. Deliberate killing of individuals who do not participate or are no longer directly participating in hostilities is a serious violation of international humanitarian law and constitutes the war crime of murder.⁹⁶ Eyewitness accounts and video evidence demonstrate that the RSF targeted civilians due to their perceived affiliation to the Joint Forces and the Sudanese Armed Forces.

5.1 INDIVIDUALS TARGETED DURING THE ATTACK

Five survivors said that they witnessed RSF fighters deliberately shoot at civilians during the assault on Zamzam IDP camp, including as civilians were running away from the fighting.⁹⁷ Four of them saw several civilians being shot and killed, including one physically disabled person, one mentally disabled person, three older persons and one injured person.⁹⁸

“Mamoun”, who volunteered with an NGO in Zamzam IDP camp, said he witnessed RSF fighters shoot and kill three civilians on 11 or 12 April:⁹⁹

“I saw many people killed by the RSF with my own eyes. An old man in white clothes was killed in the east of the camp. This old man, I saw the Landcruiser cars of the RSF following this man and they [the RSF] told him “Stop, stop” and when he stopped, they shot him directly in his chest and he died.”

“Mamoun” – a volunteer with non-governmental organization.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ ICRC Customary IHL Study, Rule 89 and 156; See also Rome Statute, Articles 8(2)(c)(i) and 8(2)(e)(i). Even though Sudan is not a state party, the provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) are also applicable as codifications of crimes under customary international law.

⁹⁷ Interviews by video call with five survivors between 10 June and 7 July 2025.

⁹⁸ Interviews by video call with four survivors between 10 June and 4 July 2025.

⁹⁹ Interview by video call with survivor, 10 June 2025.

¹⁰⁰ Interview by video call with survivor, 10 June 2025.

He said that he also saw RSF vehicles chase and stop two civilian men who were running away. **“Mamoun”**, who said he was close by, said he heard the RSF fighters accuse the two men of being SAF soldiers and after which they shot and killed them.¹⁰¹

“Alwya”, a 28-year-old student said she saw RSF fighters kill her cousin **“Ma’a’z”**, a teacher in his early thirties, who had been hit in the leg by a stray bullet. He was killed as they were leaving their house in Zamzam IDP camp on a donkey cart to flee and seek medical help for his injury. She said:

“The son of my uncle [“Ma’a’z”] was with us in the donkey cart. ... They [RSF fighters] took [my cousin (“Ma’a’z”)] down and they killed him in front of us. ... Then they told us if anybody tried to help him, they would kill us. Then they shot many times up [in the air].”

“Alwya” – a 28-year-old student.¹⁰²

On the killing of her son, **“Howida”**, a woman of around 90 years old, said:

“They [six RSF fighters] came with a vehicle [on 12 April]. They parked their vehicle outside and they entered the house. The door was open... They saw that he was in the room and told him to come out. The moment he went out, I also went out with him. I could not leave my son alone. ... When he came out, they put their hands in his pocket, and they picked his money and told him to go. When he started moving, they shot him from behind. ... They shot in his waist ... and it [the bullet] came out the other side. ... They shot him in front of me. Just in our compound. ... We had to take him to his brother’s house. On the way, he was bleeding so badly, and he passed away.”

“Howida” – a woman of around 90 years old.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Interview by video call with survivor, 10 June 2025.

¹⁰² Interview by video call with survivor, 12 June 2025.

¹⁰³ Interview by video call with survivor, 4 July 2025.

She said her 60-year-old son, “Abdelsalam” made and sold bricks to provide for her, his two wives and 13 children.¹⁰⁴ “Sadya”, a 31-year-old survivor who volunteered in Zamzam camp for two years prior to the attack, said that on 13 April, she was evacuating her mentally disabled brother on a donkey cart when they were stopped by RSF fighters who shot her brother twice from a short distance. Her brother bled to death that same day.¹⁰⁵ “Sadya” also told Amnesty International:

“On our way [around Saluma], we found another man. He could not move. He had a problem with his legs ever since he was born. His relatives ran and left him there. We tried to take him in our donkey cart but the soldier for the RSF said: “You are Zaghawa, right? And they shot him, and they killed him.”

“Sadya” – a 31-year-old volunteer.¹⁰⁶

Some witnesses said that civilians were targeted by the RSF and allied militias due to their perceived affiliation to the Joint Forces and the SAF.¹⁰⁷ When around 15 armed men, stormed his compound and shot and killed his 80-year-old brother and 30-year-old nephew, “Elnor”, a 59-year-old farmer, said that he heard the fighters say *falang gayaat*;¹⁰⁸ a derogatory term used by the RSF to refer to persons affiliated to the SAF and the Joint Forces. Based on these slurs, the language the men spoke and “Elnor’s” description of their uniforms and headdress seen on videos taken during the Zamzam assault, Amnesty International believes the 15 armed men were RSF fighters. Two other witnesses told Amnesty International they heard RSF, and its militias use this term.¹⁰⁹ A 38-year-old woman said she was stopped by RSF who called her *awien*, meaning woman of SAF and *abada*, meaning “slave”.¹¹⁰

In addition, three videos verified by Amnesty International posted online in April 2025, show RSF fighters referring to persons in Zamzam as *falang gayaat* and *abada*. In a segment of one of the videos, RSF fighters are walking among dead bodies in civilian clothing,¹¹¹ saying that they are in Zamzam on 11 April and referring to the dead bodies as *falang gayaat*. In another verified video, RSF fighters can be seen progressing towards Zamzam IDP camp equipped with PK-pattern machine guns and AK-103 pattern rifles firing towards Zamzam camp from the east. One of them is heard saying “hit the *abada*.”¹¹² A third video shows RSF fighters entering a damaged MSF hospital, referring to it as the place of the *falang gayaat*.¹¹³

The Zaghawa ethnic group is one of the main ethnic groups in North Darfur.¹¹⁴ The Zaghawa ethnic group makes up most of the Joint Forces fighting alongside the SAF in defence of El Fasher and Zamzam. It is also the group from

¹⁰⁴ Interview by video call with survivor, 4 July 2025.

¹⁰⁵ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 and 16 June 2025.

¹⁰⁶ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 and 16 June 2025.

¹⁰⁷ Interviews by video call with four survivors between 13 June and 7 July 2025.

¹⁰⁸ Interview by video call with survivor, 4 July 2025

¹⁰⁹ Interviews by video call with two survivors between 13 June and 7 July 2025.

¹¹⁰ Interview by video call with survivor, 16 June 2025. *Abada* is typically used by Afro-Arab tribes in Sudan to refer to indigenous African communities such as the Fur, Zaghawa, Nuba and others. See, also MSF, *Besieged, Attacked, Starved* (previously cited), pg. 23.

¹¹¹ Mohanad El Balal, X post, on file with Amnesty International.

¹¹² Sudan News, X post, 16 April 2025, https://x.com/Sudan_tweet/status/1912421276666253636/video/1

¹¹³ Mohanad El Balal, X post, 30 April 2025, <https://x.com/MohanadElbalal/status/1917597832522932571>

¹¹⁴ European Union Agency for Asylum, “Sudan – Country Focus”, April 2024, https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2024_04_COI_Report_Sudan_Country_Focus_EN.pdf; UNOCHA Sudan, “North Darfur State Profile (March 2023)”, March 2023, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/sudan/ocha-sudan-north-darfur-state-profile-march-2023>

which majority of the self-defence groups in El Fasher and Zamzam recruit.¹¹⁵ MSF reports that “[n]umerous accounts state that the RSF systematically asked civilians about their tribe, and that people found to be Zaghawa were killed.”¹¹⁶ According to two analysts who spoke with Amnesty International, perceptions of targeting of specific ethnic groups could be because the Zaghawa tribe make up most of the Joint Forces fighters.¹¹⁷ The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported that several witnesses of the RSF attack on Zamzam and attacks on El Fasher said that “RSF fighters invoked victims’ ethnic affiliation when targeting members of African communities whom they suspected of being supportive of SAF and the Joint Forces, often addressing victims as “falangai”, a derogatory term referring to enslaved persons.”¹¹⁸

5.1.1 KILLINGS AT SHEIKH FARAH MOSQUE AND SCHOOL

Civilians who had sought refuge at the Sheikh Farah mosque and school, located on the southern side of the main road, close to the Relief International office, were victims of deliberate killings.¹¹⁹ Two survivors present at Sheikh Farah mosque and school during these deliberate killings said that, combined, they witnessed the RSF execute 25 civilians, amongst them religious personnel, one blind person and one person with a mental disability.¹²⁰

Three camp residents told Amnesty International that the Sheikh Farah mosque and school was used to host IDPs.¹²¹ “Younis”, a 28-year-old man who volunteered for an emergency response room at the time of the attack, said that he and his colleagues used to set up public soup kitchens at the Sheikh Farah mosque and school to help people access food. He said there were an estimated 1,800 families, with an average of four to five members per family, living inside the centre.¹²²

Three survivors of the targeted killings, all who fled to the Sheikh Farah mosque and school in search of safety during the attack, told Amnesty International harrowing accounts. “Hafsa” told Amnesty International that on 11 April she and other residents hid in one of the several rooms where children normally study the Qur’an from where she could see the killings. She recalled:

“At around 11am, the RSF reached the *Khalwa* [Qur’anic school] and started to search the rooms. The RSF removed 20 men from the rooms and asked them to lie down under a tree in the *Khalwa* compound. They then shot them. Sixteen of the men were shot in the head and died immediately. Three men were shot in other parts of their bodies and survived with injuries. One man was lucky and was not shot so he survived unharmed.”

“Hafsa” – survivor.¹²³

¹¹⁵ MSF, *Besieged, Attacked, Starved* (previously cited); ACLED, “Two years of war in Sudan: How the SAF is gaining the upper hand”, 15 April 2025, <https://acleddata.com/report/two-years-war-sudan-how-saf-gaining-upper-hand>

¹¹⁶ MSF, *Besieged, Attacked, Starved* (previously cited), pg. 23.

¹¹⁷ Interview by video call with analyst, 5 June 2025; Interview by video call with analyst, 8 July and 7 August 2025.

¹¹⁸ OHCHR, “Human rights situation in the Sudan 1 January to 30 June 2025”, 19 September 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/sudan/ohchr-report-human-rights-situation-in-sudan-1-january-30-juin-2025.pdf>, para. 67.

¹¹⁹ Interviews by video call with three survivors between 7 and 11 July 2025. See also, MSF, *Besieged, Attacked, Starved* (previously cited), pg. 18.

¹²⁰ Interviews by video call with two survivors on 8 and 11 July 2025.

¹²¹ Interviews by video call with three survivors between 10 June and 8 July 2025.

¹²² Interview by video call with survivor, 12 June 2025.

¹²³ Interview by call with survivor, 8 July 2025.

“Hafsa” said she left her hiding place and saw that one of the 16 men who were shot in the head was her 42-year-old cousin, “Omar”. “Omar” left behind two wives and four children: all younger than 18 years old. She continued:

“I took the piece of cloth and ran towards the tree and covered his body. There was a hole in his head because they shot him in the head. I saw other men who were also shot in the head. The RSF then returned and shot at me and other people who came out to see and cover the dead bodies. The bullet hit me on the feet in my right leg. It was a slight injury, and I have fully recovered now.”

“Hafsa” – survivor.¹²⁴

“Hassan”, a 16-year-old and his two uncles fled his home when clashes intensified on the first day of the attack around midday. He said he encountered RSF fighters on the street: “[When we first met the RSF fighters,] they asked whether we were military or civilian. We said we were civilians. They told us to go to the mosque,” he said.¹²⁵ When “Hassan” and his uncles entered the Sheikh Farah mosque’s compound he said that they saw seven other adults, all unarmed and in civilian clothing, and one other teenage boy. “Hassan” said he saw many RSF fighters in the mosque’s compound; five of whom were around them. He recalled:

“[When we entered the compound,] they separated us [from the adults] ... between us and the big men, there was a wall. That boy and I sat down near the wall and they (RSF fighters) opened fire [on the others]. We heard heavy shooting. ... Later, when I stood up, ... I saw their dead bodies.”

“Hassan” – a 16-year-old boy.¹²⁶

“Musa”, a 50-year-old farmer who had lived in Zamzam IDP camp for around 20 years said that, as he stepped into the *Khalwa*, a bullet hit and broke his leg. He said: “Some people came and dragged me and put me in a hut inside the compound of the *Khalwa* and left me there. In that room, [there was] an old man, old women and other women.”¹²⁷ He said the women were weeping over their children who had been killed in the school. “They were young children. They were studying in the school. They (the women) were crying for the children,”¹²⁸ he said.

“Sadya”, who volunteered in Zamzam camp for two years prior to the attack, said that she saw a lot of dead bodies in the Sheikh Farah mosque and school compound and identified the dead bodies of three IDPs that she had known,

¹²⁴ Interview by call with survivor, 8 July 2025.

¹²⁵ Interview by video call with survivor, 11 July 2025.

¹²⁶ Interview by video call with survivor, 11 July 2025.

¹²⁷ Interview by video call with survivor, 7 July 2025.

¹²⁸ Interview by video call with survivor, 7 July 2025.

including a 27-year-old disabled man. She said that he had a bullet hole in his forehead and that his hands were on his chest and that he was still holding on to the wooden slate that he used to write verses of the Qur'an on.¹²⁹

5.1.2 KILLINGS AT RELIEF INTERNATIONAL

On 11 April, RSF fighters also attacked a health facility operated by international non-governmental organisation Relief International. In a public statement, Relief International said that “heavily armed militants” attacked their clinic, killing nine staff members including “doctors, referral drivers and a team leader” in the process.¹³⁰ A media article cites Relief International’s Sudan Director saying that RSF fighters “went into a safety bunker and shot the nine victims in the head and chest.”¹³¹ Two interviewees told Amnesty International that they saw the dead bodies of the Relief International staff.¹³² Two other staff members died during the following days as the result of injuries sustained during the attack.¹³³

5.2 INDIVIDUALS TARGETED DURING DISPLACEMENT JOURNEY

IDPs witnessed killings by RSF or their affiliated militias during their displacement journeys. In the late afternoon of 11 April, “Nafisa” fled Zamzam on a donkey cart with her husband and their eight children. When they were outside the camp, her husband went back for his mother. “Nafisa” said that armed men riding camels tried to steal his donkey. When he refused, she said, the men shot him in front of her and her children. “Up to today, my children are crying,” she told Amnesty International.¹³⁴

“Abbas”, a 29-year-old student recalled how he, seven other young men and several women encountered RSF who, after they had stolen their donkey cart, forced them to lie on the ground:

“[...] some of them said let us open fire on them as they are lying. Let us not shoot first, let us check them. They took our phone and our money. They forced us to walk on our knees and elbows from 8:00 AM to 8:30 AM and beat us. While they forced us to walk on our knees, they tied our hands. [They were saying]: “You people, you are affiliated to the SAF.” They were beating us so badly. Some people were so tired, that they almost lost consciousness....”

“Abbas” - a 29-year-old student.¹³⁵

¹²⁹ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 and 16 June 2025.

¹³⁰ Relief International, “Zamzam camp, Sudan: A profound tragedy for Relief International as eleven colleagues mercilessly killed”, 13 April 2025, <https://www.ri.org/zamzam-camp-sudan-a-profound-tragedy-for-relief-international/>

¹³¹ BBC, “‘Death is everywhere’: Sudan camp residents shelter from attacks”, 13 April 2025, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cg41r3w0e19o>

¹³² Interviews by video call with two survivors between 13 and 16 June 2025.

¹³³ Relief International, “Zamzam camp, Sudan: A profound tragedy for Relief International as eleven colleagues mercilessly killed”, 13 April 2025, <https://www.ri.org/zamzam-camp-sudan-a-profound-tragedy-for-relief-international/>

¹³⁴ Interview by video call with survivor, 11 June 2025.

¹³⁵ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 June 2025.

He said that RSF soldiers tried to separate three children from their mothers. When one of the mothers refused, the RSF shot and killed her, “Abbas” said. He narrated that, after they had buried the woman, they continued their journey, heading to Tawila. He said that they came across RSF or RSF allied militia. He said the commander of the group ordered two fighters to take him away to a big tree and kill him. He recalled:

“[One of them] said: “We are not going to kill you. ... [We are going to] shoot under the tree and report to our commander that we killed you. No-one will come and check if you died or not.” ... [They] shot several bullets under my legs and left me laying down. [The fighters] went back and said, “yes we killed him.” [...] When my group started walking, I pretended that I was dead [...] I waited for till dark hours. That is when I got up and started looking for my people.”

“Abbas” - a 29-year-old student.¹³⁶

PROHIBITION OF ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS

Common Article 3 to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions on non-international armed conflicts, which Sudan ratified in 2006, protect civilians from direct attack and violence, “unless and for such time as they take a direct part in hostilities.” In cases of doubt, individuals should be presumed to be civilians and immune from direct attack. Making the civilian population, or individual civilians not taking a direct part in hostilities, the object of attack (direct attacks on civilians) is a war crime. Civilians with specific protections include IDPs and individuals engaged in medical, religious or humanitarian duties during conflict.

The deliberate killings of civilians detailed in this chapter carried out by the RSF may constitute war crimes, including of murder, and should be investigated as such.

The killings documented in this chapter may also constitute an abuse of the right to life. The right to life is protected by article 6.1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) that Sudan ratified in December 1966 and article 4 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights that Sudan ratified in February 1986. Article 4.2 of the ICCPR also prohibits derogations to the right to life in circumstances such as internal political instability or any other public emergency. Where civilians were injured, it amounts to bodily harm.

¹³⁶ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 June 2025.

5.3 BURIALS

Three residents of Zamzam IDP camp told Amnesty International that they were not able to bury their loved ones and were often forced by the heavy shelling to leave the bodies behind in order to save their own lives.¹³⁷ “We left him, and we have not buried him, even now,”¹³⁸ “Alwya” said about her cousin who was deliberately killed by RSF fighters in her presence.

“Osman”, a farmer, told Amnesty International that a shell fell on his neighbour’s house in Saluma on 12 April, killing two people. He said:

“We picked those dead bodies, but since the shelling intensified, we could not even be able to bury those two dead bodies. We decided to flee. The rest [of the shells], they fall in different locations where they did not hit people. But we flee away after we saw the death of those two people. There is no way for us to wait. We start fleeing.”

“Osman” – a farmer.¹³⁹

Some, who were able to bury their loved ones could not perform all the Islamic burial rites or were forced to bury them in locations not of their choice.¹⁴⁰

“Elnor” recalled what he did after witnessing around 15 armed men, likely RSF fighters, shoot and kill his 80-year-old brother and 30-year-old nephew, and set his house on fire:

“[...] The fire did not reach the bodies [...] I came out slowly [from my hiding place]. I grabbed their legs and pulled the dead bodies like they were animals to the neem tree and put the dead bodies there and left them there. I wanted to take them away from the fire so that they would not be burned.”

“Elnor” – a survivor.¹⁴¹

In the evening, when the fighting had died down, he found a donkey cart to collect the bodies and bury them. He said: “[...] We didn’t do all [the burial rites]. We were supposed to cover them up with white clothes, but we didn’t have those. But we prayed for them the way we used to.”¹⁴²

¹³⁷ Interviews by video call with three survivors between 12 and 16 June 2025.

¹³⁸ Interview by video call with survivor, 12 June 2025.

¹³⁹ Interview by video call with survivor, 16 June 2025.

¹⁴⁰ Interviews by video call with at least four survivors between 12 June and 4 July 2025.

¹⁴¹ Interview by video call with survivor, 4 July 2025.

¹⁴² Interview by video call with survivor, 4 July 2025.

“Abbas”, a 29-year-old student who had carried his injured friend, “Mansour”, a civilian, to the desert where “Mansour” succumbed to his injuries, said:

“I ran with that guy [out of Zamzam IDP camp on 11 April]. We ran out of water. ... We walked into the wilderness and there was no source of water, there were no big trees, just that type of tree in the desert. I had first aid experience. I tried to help him as much as possible. We were both thirsty. He was bleeding. I did everything [I could] to save his life, but I failed, and he passed away. ... He was from our home village, we fled to Zamzam in 2004. In Zamzam, we lived in the same block. “Mansour” was 26-year-old. ... He had a water tank ... and supplied people with water. That was his business, to sell the water. He was an orphan. He was the head of his family. [When he died,] there was nothing I could do. He was heavy. And we had walked three kilometres [away from Zamzam]. I was thirsty and I couldn’t carry his dead body. I removed my vest and tied his legs and hands to put him in the position of the dead. There was no water to wash him because we were in the desert. I [dug a hole with my hands] and put him in it in the position how he was supposed to be laid. I covered him up with soil. I went back [to Zamzam] because I was so tired and I told the people my friend has passed away. There was no way I could carry him to bring [his body] back [to the camp].”

“Abbas” – a 29-year-old student.¹⁴³

Amnesty International spoke with three camp residents who helped collect and bury dozens of dead bodies in mass graves.¹⁴⁴ One of them, “Abbas”, told Amnesty International that on 11 April, he and others collected and buried dead bodies till late into the night. He estimates that he buried 46 bodies in one mass grave. He said that among the dead were some Joint Forces fighters, but most were civilians of different ages and genders.¹⁴⁵ “There was no way that we

¹⁴³ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 June 2025.

¹⁴⁴ Interviews by video call with three survivors between 10 and 16 June 2025.

¹⁴⁵ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 June 2025.

could be digging the graves one by one,” he said referring to the high number of dead people, and because of the fighting and volatility of the situation.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 June 2025.

6. DESTRUCTION OF CIVILIAN OBJECTS, PILLAGE, HOSTAGE-TAKING AND TRAFFICKING

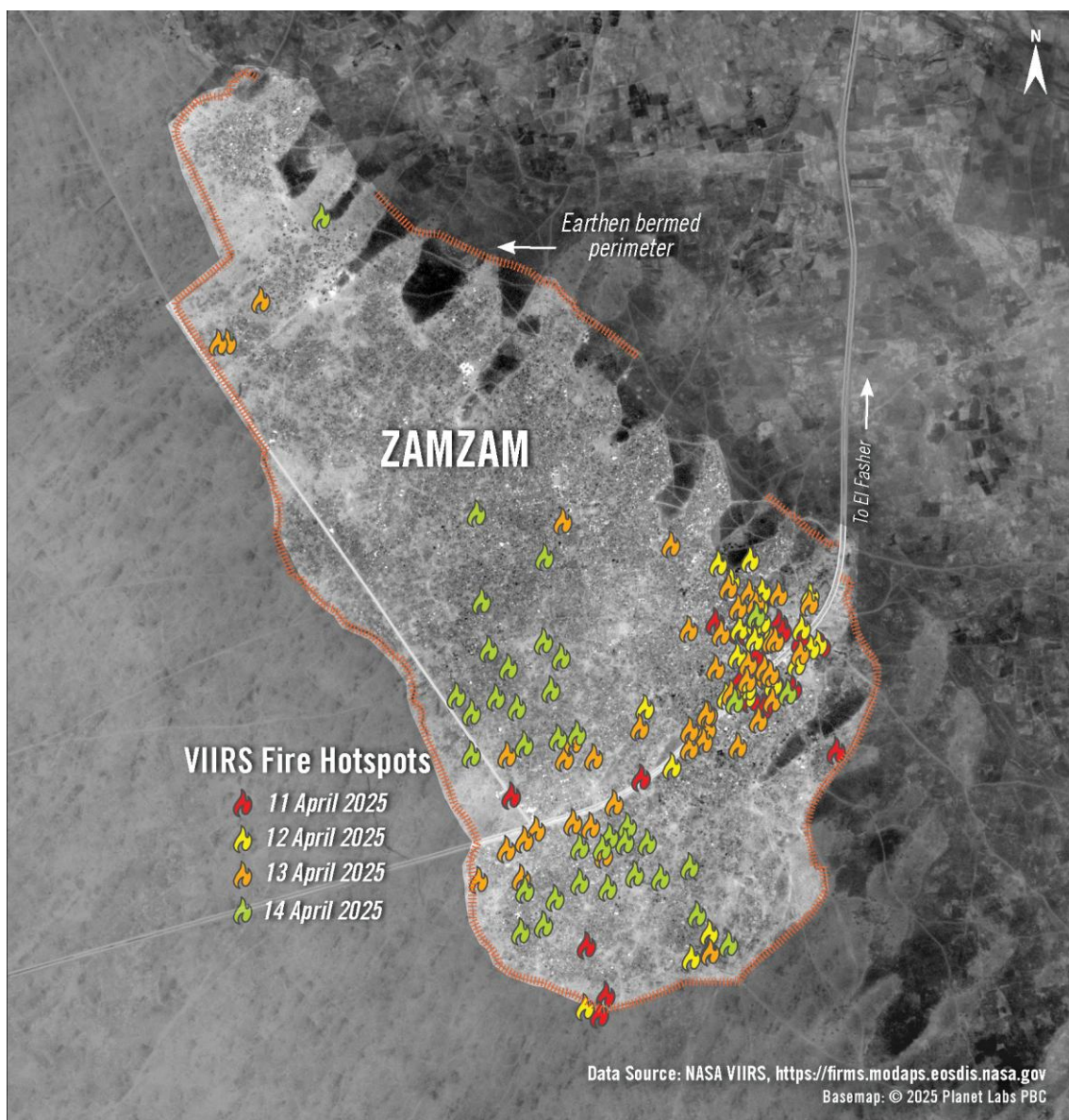
In violation of international humanitarian law, RSF fighters deliberately set fire to homes, businesses, the market and structures in the compound of the Sheikh Farah school and mosque, destroying or badly damaging critical civilian infrastructure. Intentional destruction of buildings dedicated to religious or charitable purpose, including health services is a war crime.¹⁴⁷ The RSF also pillaged homes, the market and shops. According to Relief International, their supplies of therapeutic food for the treatment of severe acute malnourishment were taken during the RSF's attack on their clinic;¹⁴⁸ acts that may amount to the war crime of pillage. The MSF health facility was heavily damaged with signs of pillage, depriving civilians of crucial care and violating international law.

6.1 DESTRUCTION OF CIVILIAN OBJECTS

NASA's Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) sensors detected major fires throughout the camp most prevalently over four days from 11 -14 April 2025. Satellite imagery captured between 10 – 16 April shows widespread damage and destruction, active fires and smoke. Large areas with many structures were completely razed including markets and structures along the main road to El Fasher.

¹⁴⁷ Rome Statute, Article 8 (2) (e) (iv).

¹⁴⁸ Refugees International and others, "Joint statement: Genocide Returns to Darfur", 16 April 2025, <https://www.refugeesinternational.org/advocacy-letters/joint-statement-genocide-returns-to-darfur/>



 ↑ Locations in Zamzam where large fires were detected by NASA's VIIRS (Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite) fire detection instrument from 11-14 April 2025.

Areas in the south and east, along the main road to El Fasher had the most hotspots on 11-12 April. The hotspots were detected further to the west by the 14th. Smoke and active fires, not detected by VIIRS, continue to be visible in satellite imagery over the rest of the week.

Most of those interviewed said their homes and neighbourhoods were burned; either deliberately by RSF fighters or as the result of shelling, leaving residents without homes and critical food and non-food items.¹⁴⁹ Businesses were also burnt, destroying people's livelihoods.¹⁵⁰

At least four witnesses saw RSF fighters set fire to homes.¹⁵¹ For instance, "Elnor", a 59-year-old farmer, told Amnesty International that after he saw around 15 armed men (who, based on the slurs, the language the men spoke and "Elnor's" description of their uniforms and headdress seen on videos taken during the Zamzam assault, Amnesty

¹⁴⁹ Interviews by video call with survivors between 11 June and 11 July 2025.

¹⁵⁰ Interviews by video call with survivors between 11 June and 17 July 2025.

¹⁵¹ Interviews by video call with four survivors between 16 June and 7 July 2025.

International believes to be RSF fighters) shoot and kill his 80-year-old brother and his 30-year-old nephew (whom he referred to as his son), both businessmen, on 12 April, they torched his house. He said:

“When they [RSF fighters] entered, I was [hiding] under the maize stock seeing them. They shot my brother and my son, and they killed them. ... One [soldier] took out a matchbox and lit our hut on fire. They burned our house whilst they were lying down like that, the dead bodies of my brother and my son ... When they shot them and they were sure that they died, they set the hut on fire and proceeded to our neighbour’s home.”

“Elnor” – a 59-year-old farmer.¹⁵²

Satellite imagery (see below) shows the main market, critical civilian infrastructure, razed. Testimonies suggest the market was destroyed as the result of RSF shelling and deliberate arson. **“Salwa”**, a 38-year-old woman who was at the market selling dura (a staple food in Sudan made of cooked maize and millet) when the RSF started the assault said she saw drones and then shells falling in the market, prompting her and others to flee. **“Sadya”**, a 31-year-old volunteer for NGOs was at her home close to the market when the RSF assault started. She said:

“On Friday, around 9am, we saw the shelling. After that, the fighting started, and we heard the gunshots [and saw the smoke] from the east of the camp. After that, they [RSF fighters] went inside the market and burned all the shops and killed the people. I fled from there to the other side.”

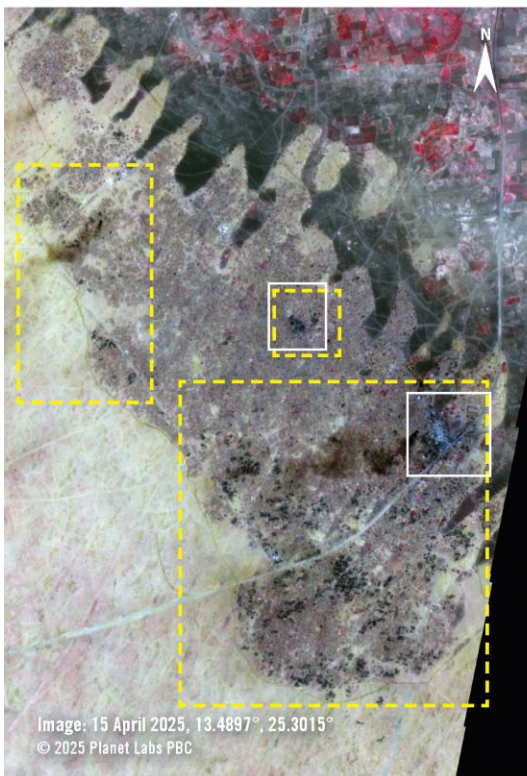
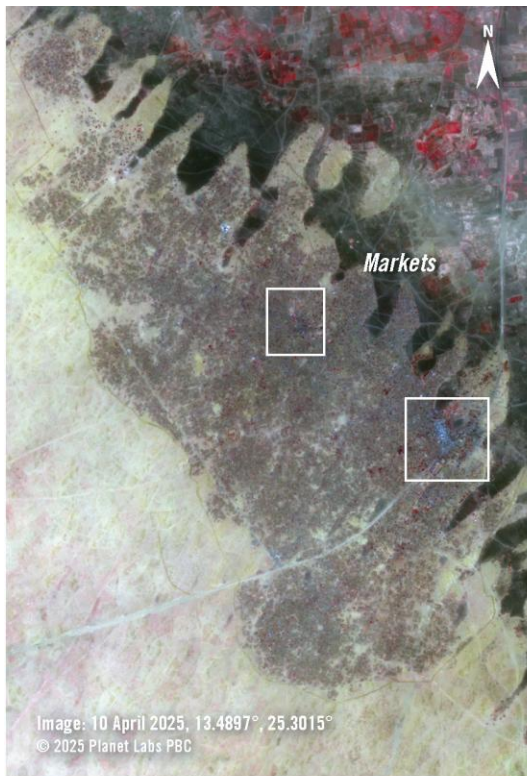
“Sadya” – a 31-year-old volunteer for NGOs.¹⁵³

“Younis”, a 28-year-old man who volunteered for an emergency response room at the time of the attack said he saw smoke coming from the market on Friday morning as he was running through Zamzam camp in search of safety. He said the RSF took control of the market on Friday afternoon.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Interview by video call with survivor, 4 July 2025.

¹⁵³ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 and 16 June 2025.

¹⁵⁴ Interview by video call with survivor, 12 June 2025.





  False-colour, near infrared imagery shows Zamzam IDP camp, approximately 10 kilometers south of El Fasher, Sudan. Healthy vegetation appears in red hues while recently burned areas appear black. On 10 April 2025, imagery shows the camp with two market areas highlighted. On 13 April 2025, multiple active fires and smoke are visible including in the market areas. Many structures to the south and west appear black from recently being burned and are highlighted with yellow dashed polygons. On 15 April 2025, heavily burned areas can be seen in the south, central and western areas of the camp. On 16 April 2025, higher resolution imagery shows the market areas in detail with the yellow dashed areas highlighting the most heavily burned areas.

In addition to civilian homes and the market, RSF fighters also burned and destroyed other civilian objects. “Musa” who was hiding in the Sheikh Farah mosque and school told Amnesty International: “They [RSF fighters] went away and some of them set fire to the places within the compound of the school. That burning was very close to the room where I was, but the fire did not catch up to the hut where I was.”¹⁵⁵

Satellite imagery confirms heavy burning of structures within and along the main road just adjacent to the Sheikh Farah mosque and school compound.



  Satellite Imagery from 16 April 2025 shows the Sheikh Farah mosque area with many temporary shelters visible within the compound. Multiple areas - highlighted with yellow boxes- within and in front of the compound appear razed.

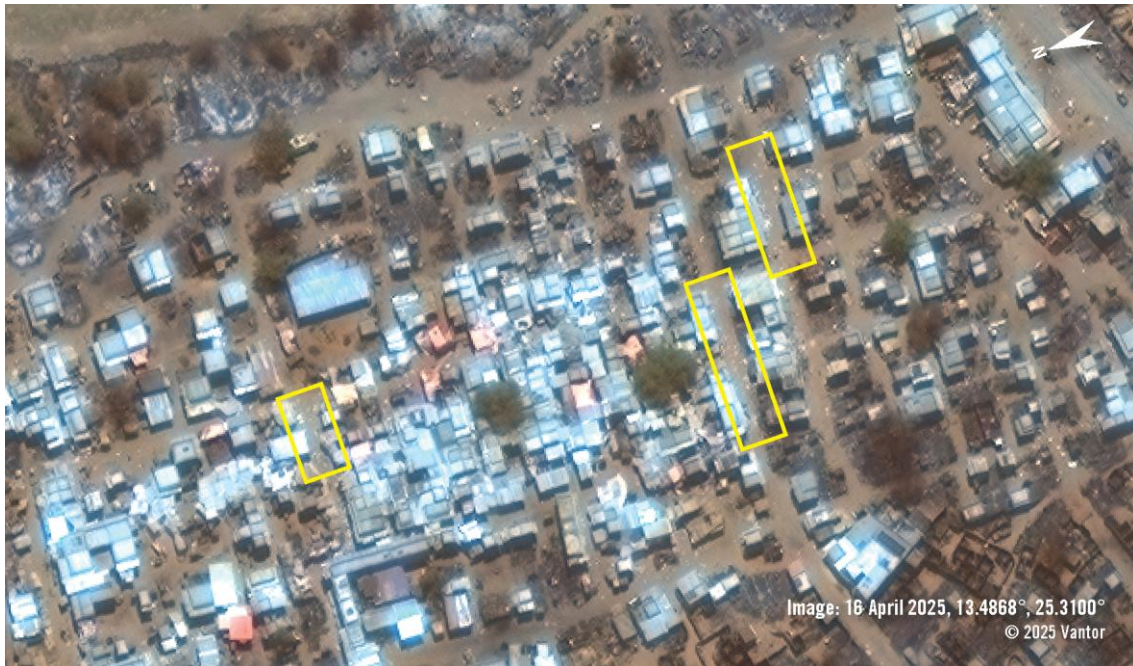
6.2 PILLAGE

Amnesty International also documented a pattern of pillage by the RSF and its allied militias during the assault and as people were fleeing. Most of those interviewed said their homes were pillaged and at least three survivors said they witnessed RSF fighters pillage homes in Zamzam IDP camp.¹⁵⁶ One of them also saw RSF fighters pillage at the market and from shops.¹⁵⁷ Higher resolution satellite imagery (see below) captured on 16 April 2025, shows debris outside the main market area, suggesting this area may have been pillaged.

¹⁵⁵ Interview by video call with survivor, 7 July 2025.

¹⁵⁶ Interviews by video call with three survivors between 11 and 17 June 2025.

¹⁵⁷ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 and 16 June 2025.



 ↑ *Satellite imagery from 16 April 2025 shows debris visible at the main market - highlighted with yellow rectangles. The location and spread of the debris suggest the buildings may have been looted.*

Health facilities were also ransacked and items taken.

In addition to the killing of their 11 staff, Relief International's supplies of therapeutic food for the treatment of severe acute malnourishment were taken during the RSF's attack on their clinic in Zamzam.¹⁵⁸ Relief International was the last organisation providing critical public health services at Zamzam IDP camp.¹⁵⁹ MSF stopped operations in Zamzam camp in February 2025 after an escalation of attacks in and around the camp.¹⁶⁰

A video posted on 30 April and verified by Amnesty International shows some of the tents that made up the MSF medical facility heavily damaged, and items scattered on the floor.¹⁶¹ RSF fighters can be seen walking around and heard saying that this was the *falang gayaat*'s place, their trenches and medicine. Smoke from fires at the MSF hospital compound is visible in satellite imagery on 18 April and buildings appear damaged on 19 April.

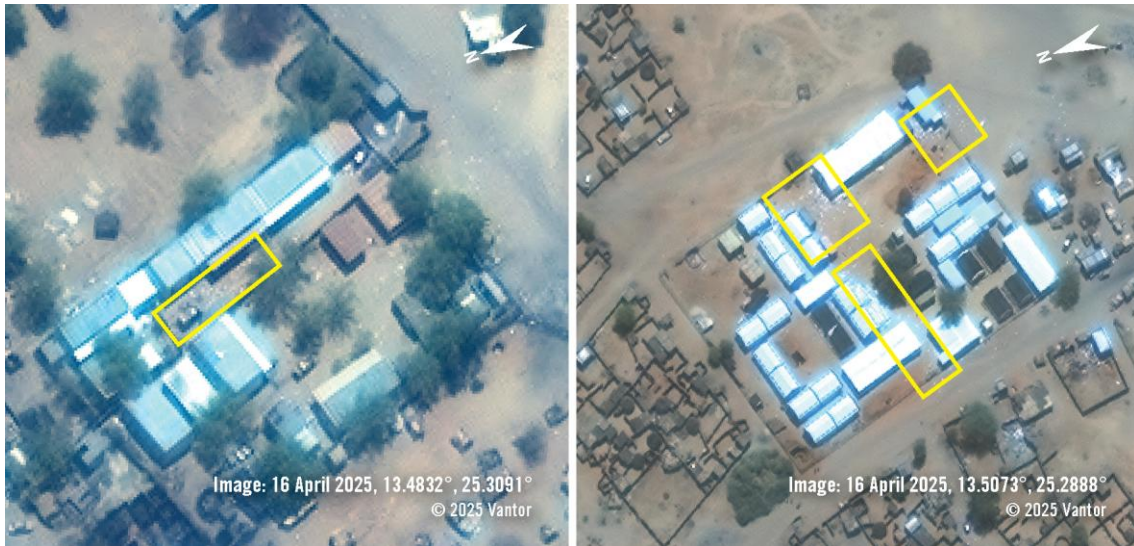
The higher resolution satellite imagery captured on 16 April 2025 also shows debris outside of the MSF hospital and Relief International Clinic, suggesting these areas may have been pillaged.


¹⁵⁸ Refugees International and others, "Joint statement: Genocide Returns to Darfur", 16 April 2025, <https://www.refugeesinternational.org/advocacy-letters/joint-statement-genocide-returns-to-darfur/>

¹⁵⁹ Relief International, "Zamzam camp, Sudan: A profound tragedy for Relief International as eleven colleagues mercilessly killed", 13 April 2025, <https://www.ri.org/zamzam-camp-sudan-a-profound-tragedy-for-relief-international/>

¹⁶⁰ MSF, "Sudan: MSF forced to halt activities as violence engulfs Zamzam camp in North Darfur", 24 February 2025, <https://www.msf.org/sudan-msf-forced-halt-our-activities-violence-engulfs-zamzam-camp-north-darfur>

¹⁶¹ Mohanad El Balal, X post, 30 April 2025, <https://x.com/MohanadElbalal/status/1917597832522932571>



 ↑ Satellite imagery from 16 April 2025 shows debris visible at the Relief International clinic (left) and the MSF hospital (right) - highlighted with yellow rectangles. The location and spread of the debris suggest the buildings may have been looted.

Almost all IDPs interviewed by Amnesty International spoke of pillage during their journeys, some more than once,¹⁶² by RSF affiliated militias, often described as armed men riding horses and camels and other actors on motorbikes carrying sticks.¹⁶³ Items that were pillaged included blankets, saucepans, cell phones, money and livestock, including donkeys and the carts they pulled which were critical for transporting injured and older persons.¹⁶⁴ A 50-year-old-woman said:

“From the point where they loot the donkey, and our [sick] dad was down [on the ground] and I was with my son and the son of my brother with his family and another person. When they put my dad down [on the ground], we all cried because he could not walk and we did not have any means of transport.”

A 50-year-old survivor.¹⁶⁵

Another person fleeing gave their donkey to the family and they carried on with their journey.

¹⁶² Interview by video call with survivor, 11 June 2025.

¹⁶³ Interviews by video call with survivors between 10 June and 11 July 2025.

¹⁶⁴ Interviews by video call with survivors between 10 June and 11 July 2025.

¹⁶⁵ Interview by video call with survivor, 11 June 2025.

DESTRUCTION OF CIVILIAN OBJECTS, INCLUDING THOSE WITH SPECIFIC PROTECTIONS, AND PILLAGE

International humanitarian law prohibits attacks on civilian objects, as well as “[t]he destruction or seizure of the property of an adversary ... unless required by imperative military necessity”.¹⁶⁶ The “adversary” includes civilians “not aligned to or supportive of the [destroying] party or its objectives.”¹⁶⁷ According to the ICC, “[d]estruction entails acts such as setting ablaze, demolishing, or otherwise damaging property.” Moreover, “badly damaged property may be akin to partial destruction and thus fall under the definition of destruction.”¹⁶⁸ The setting ablaze of homes, businesses, the market and structures in the compound of the Sheikh Farah school and mosque amounts to destruction of protected objects, such as building dedicated for religious, education or charity, and should be investigated as war crimes. The pillaging of the Relief International clinic as documented in 6.2 may also constitute war crimes.

International humanitarian law affords specific protections to medical facilities. The protection can only be waived if medical facilities are used to commit acts harmful to the enemy and following warning and reasonable time limit, as feasible.¹⁶⁹ Intentional attacks on humanitarian objects, or on health facilities or medical units, amount to war crimes.¹⁷⁰

Additional Protocol II of the Geneva Conventions prohibits pillage during non-international armed conflicts.¹⁷¹ The protocol does not further define “pillage”, but the International Committee of the Red Cross’ customary international humanitarian law study uses the following definition: “the forcible taking of private property by an invading or conquering army from the enemy’s subjects.”¹⁷² Under the Rome Statute, “pillaging a town or place, even when taken by assault,” is a war crime in non-international armed conflicts.¹⁷³ The ICC’s Elements of Crimes document further defines the war crime of pillaging to have taken place when a perpetrator appropriates certain property without the consent of the owner, intending to deprive the owner of the property and use it for private or personal use.¹⁷⁴ It further established that the conduct must have taken place in the context of and associated with an international armed conflict and that the perpetrator was aware of the existence of an armed conflict.¹⁷⁵ Appropriations justified by military necessity cannot constitute the crime of pillaging.¹⁷⁶ The acts of looting by RSF and allied forces described in 6.2 may amount to the war crime of pillage.

6.3 HOSTAGE-TAKING AND TRAFFICKING

Amnesty International documented the cases of two people, one of them a child, who were taken hostage by the RSF. Hostage taking, which includes the abduction for ransom, is prohibited under international humanitarian law,¹⁷⁷ and it constitutes a crime under international law.¹⁷⁸

After RSF fighters killed his two uncles and seven other men in Sheikh Farah mosque and school, “Hassan” said he was walking through the streets of Zamzam when he encountered RSF fighters in a vehicle who took him to an area outside Zamzam called Dar es Salaam, chained him at night and forced him to herd their sheep during the day. “The place is far away; I couldn’t flee with the chains on my legs. Even if I decided to flee, I would have died of thirst. I would just go the whole day looking after animals,” he said.¹⁷⁹ After what he believes was a month, he said the RSF fighters

¹⁶⁶ ICRC, Customary IHL Study, rule 50.

¹⁶⁷ ICC, *Prosecutor v. Ongwen*, Trial Chamber IX, Judgment, 4 February 2021, para. 2776. See also ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Trial Chamber II, Judgment, 7 March 2014, para. 892; O. Triffterer and K. Ambos, *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. A Commentary*, 2016, p. 568, para. 970.

¹⁶⁸ ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Trial Chamber II, Judgment, 7 March 2014, para. 891.

¹⁶⁹ Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions (Protocol II) to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, Article 11

¹⁷⁰ Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(iv), (v) and (xii).

¹⁷¹ Additional Protocol II, Article 4(2)(g).

¹⁷² ICRC, Customary IHL Study, Rule 52.

¹⁷³ Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(v).

¹⁷⁴ ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8 (2) (b) (xvi).

¹⁷⁵ ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8 (2) (b) (xvi).

¹⁷⁶ ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 8 (2) (b) (xvi).

¹⁷⁷ Additional Protocol II, Article 4(2)(c).

¹⁷⁸ Rome Statute, Article (8)(2)(c)(iii).

¹⁷⁹ Interview by video call with survivor, 11 July 2025.

gave him to another man who “Hassan” believes was also an RSF member. He said that this man, too, used him to herd his sheep and that he treated him badly. He recounted: “In the morning [he would give me] just a little milk. The whole day, I stayed only with that little milk. He was treating me badly. I spent 18 days working for him. One day I decided to escape from him.”¹⁸⁰ “Hassan” said that he fled to a place unknown to him called Tabid where he slept in the market. He said that the man found him, beat him and took him back to his house, where he asked him for the phone number of one of his relative, called them and demanded a ransom of five million Sudanese pounds (equivalent of around 1500 US Dollar at the time). Once the money was paid, “Hassan” said that the man took him back to Tabid and left him there. “Hassan” said that he used someone else’s phone to call a relative. He said he then fell ill with what he thought was malaria for three days before his family found him and took him to another location where his family was.¹⁸¹ “In [that place], I found out that some other family members had been killed,” he said.¹⁸²

“Sadya”, a 31-year-old survivor who volunteered in Zamzam camp for two years prior to the attack, said that, in the days following the RSF attack on Zamzam, she fled south of Zamzam where RSF fighters detained her for three days, threatened her life, beat her, saying she needed to pay. She said that they requested around 10 million Sudanese Pounds (equivalent of around 3000 US Dollar at the time). She said that she was released after her parents paid around three million Sudanese Pounds (equivalent of around 900 US Dollar at the time).¹⁸³

MSF also documented cases of use of abductees to herd livestock by the RSF in North Darfur during the ongoing armed conflict.¹⁸⁴ The FFM has also documented the RSF’s practice of demanding payment for the release of detainees.¹⁸⁵

“Hassan” and “Sadya” are also survivors of trafficking because they were transported, transferred, harboured or received into the RSF for the purpose of exploitation. The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (also known as the Palermo Protocol),¹⁸⁶ that sets out the internationally accepted definition of trafficking, requires the following three elements to each be met for adults: 1) an action, such as the “recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person” 2) carried out by a particular means including “the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability” 3) “for the purpose of exploitation”, including slavery or practices similar to slavery.¹⁸⁷ Only the action and purpose elements (not the means) are required to establish trafficking for children,¹⁸⁸ as they cannot consent to their intended exploitation.¹⁸⁹ For the purposes of international human rights law, “Hassan” is considered a child because he is under the age of 18.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁰ Interview by video call with survivor, 11 July 2025.

¹⁸¹ Location withheld for security reasons.

¹⁸² Interview by video call with survivor, 11 July 2025.

¹⁸³ Interview by video call with survivor, 13 and 16 June 2025.

¹⁸⁴ MSF, *Besieged, Attacked, Starved* (previously cited), pg. 21.

¹⁸⁵ Sudan FFM, “Sudan: A War of atrocities” (previously cited), para 49.

¹⁸⁶ Sudan ratified the Palermo Protocol on 2 December 2014. See, UN Treaty Collection, https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XVIII-12-a&chapter=18&clang=en

¹⁸⁷ Palermo Protocol, Article 3(a).

¹⁸⁸ Palermo Protocol, Article 3(c).

¹⁸⁹ Palermo Protocol, Article 3(b).

¹⁹⁰ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Article 38. The Sudanese government ratified the CRC on 3 August 1990. UN Treaty Body Database, Sudan, https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=165&Lang=en

7. DISPLACEMENT AND HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

7.1 HARROWING DISPLACEMENT JOURNEYS

Persons displaced by the assault endured harrowing displacement journeys characterized by lack of food, water, medical services and marked by violations of international humanitarian law including acts that may amount to rape, murder (see chapter 5.2) and pillage (see chapter 6.2).

Field reports of the United Nations Population Fund suggest that sexual and gender-based violence was common on the journey from Zamzam IDP camp to Tawila after the April 2025 RSF attack on the camp.¹⁹¹ OHCHR documented the rape or gang rape of 39 persons as well as reported of abductions during the RSF's attack on Zamzam IDP camp and as people were fleeing.¹⁹² Amnesty International collected three testimonies, including that of a doctor who treated a patient for signs consistent with rape and sexual abuse,¹⁹³ indicative of CRSV along displacement journeys. **"Abbas"**, who was fleeing in a group with women and girls said: "[The RSF] took them far away from us. We heard the girls screaming. When they came back, they told us two of them were raped. One was 16 and one was 18.¹⁹⁴ **"Elnor"**, a 59-year-old farmer, told Amnesty International that, at checkpoints manned by RSF fighters or their allied militias, men forcibly took young girls away from their mothers' sight for a few hours, leaving the mothers in states of distress and tears. "But [...] culturally, we [as men] cannot ask "have you been raped?" But that is what we know. When you isolate them, where people cannot see and later you bring them... [we know that they have been raped]," he said.¹⁹⁵

Between 13 and 14 April, the UN reported that around 400,000 persons were estimated to be displaced from Zamzam.¹⁹⁶ People fled in multiple directions and sought safety in IDP camps and in neighbouring countries. Most fled to Tawila.¹⁹⁷ Several IDPs that Amnesty International spoke with experienced attacks again in the places where they sought refuge, including El Fasher and Abu Shouk, and were displaced again.¹⁹⁸ For many survivors, this was not their first time to be displaced. **"Khaltoum"** a 50-year-old woman, said: "for 24 years, we have been moving from IDP camp to IDP camp.... We think we may not be lucky in life."¹⁹⁹

Survivors arrived with just the clothes on their backs, having had to leave almost all of their belongings behind, including properties that were used for their livelihoods, impacting their ability to survive.²⁰⁰ They told harrowing accounts about their displacement journeys, walking many hours, up to three days without, or with insufficient food and water.²⁰¹ Others fled on donkey carts. A few who were able to communicate with relatives elsewhere were able to arrange payment to flee on vehicles. Many fled with their children, injured relatives, some with older relatives and

¹⁹¹ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), "GBV Gap Analysis for Tawila, North Darfur June 2025", 19 June 2025, <https://sudan.unfpa.org/en/publications/gbv-gap-analysis-tawila-north-darfur-june-2025>

¹⁹² OHCHR, "Human rights situation in the Sudan 1 January to 30 June 2025", 19 September 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/sudan/ohchr-report-human-rights-situation-in-sudan-1-january-30-june-2025.pdf>, para 41.

¹⁹³ Interview by video call with doctor, 9 July 2025.

¹⁹⁴ Interview by video call with witness, 13 June 2025.

¹⁹⁵ Interview by video call with survivor, 4 July 2025.

¹⁹⁶ IOM, Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Sudan Focused Flash Alert: Al Fasher (Zamzam IDP camp), North Darfur (Update 008), 28 April 2025, <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/dtm-sudan-focused-flash-alert-al-fasher-zamzam-idp-camp-north-darfur-update-008>

¹⁹⁷ IOM, DTM Sudan Focused Flash Alert: Al Fasher (Zamzam IDP camp), North Darfur (Update 008), 28 April 2025,

<https://dtm.iom.int/reports/dtm-sudan-focused-flash-alert-al-fasher-zamzam-idp-camp-north-darfur-update-008>

¹⁹⁸ Interviews by video call with four survivors between 13 and 17 June 2025.

¹⁹⁹ Interview by video call with survivor, 11 June 2025.

²⁰⁰ Interviews by video call with five survivors between 11 June and 7 July 2025.

²⁰¹ Interviews by video call with survivors between 10 June and 11 July 2025.

others with injuries, including from past attacks that were left untreated.²⁰² Others said that some older people with limited mobility were left behind.²⁰³

IDPs described seeing dead bodies along the routes to the places where they tried to seek safety.²⁰⁴ Some told Amnesty International about losing loved ones along the way who succumbed to the injuries sustained during the attack on Zamzam IDP camp.²⁰⁵ Others said that they witnessed people, including children, die from what they thought was dehydration.²⁰⁶ **“Mahasin”**, a mother of three, recalled seeing a mother with a dead child:

“[The mother] said she asked people to give her water to give to her child ... but no-one could help her.... It was a very horrible moment. I could see the child died of thirst ... This mama, she could not get anyone to help her child.... I saw many people die of thirst.”

“Mahasin” – a survivor.²⁰⁷

A video posted by MSF on 18 April 2025, and verified by Amnesty International, shows IDPs arriving in Tawila. It explains that around 24,000 persons had, by that time, arrived in Tawila after fleeing the attack on Zamzam IDP camp and that they arrived “severely dehydrated, malnourished and shocked.”²⁰⁸ When asked what the greatest need of the IDP was, a 30-year-old man who volunteered to collect the most injured IDPs told Amnesty International:

“[The greatest need of people was] water ... because people were dehydrated ... and went without drinking water for one or two days. ... We could not give the water immediately because their digestive systems were also empty. We mixed the water with flour. ... We inherited this from our ancestors.”

A 30-year-old volunteer.²⁰⁹

Access to medical care along the routes was extremely limited to non-existent. **“Suliman”**, a 32-year-old nurse said he saw people bleed to death on the routes to El Fasher.²¹⁰ Describing the state of the IDPs that he saw flee from Zamzam IDP camp to Tawila, the 30-year-old volunteer told Amnesty International:

²⁰² Interviews by video call with three survivors between 11 and 13 June 2025.

²⁰³ Interviews by video call with two survivors, 11 June 2025; Interview by video call with camp leader, 11 June 2025.

²⁰⁴ Interviews by video call with at least two survivors between 13 June 2025 and 4 July 2025.

²⁰⁵ Interviews by video call with survivors between 10 June and 11 July 2025.

²⁰⁶ Interviews by video call with survivors between 10 June and 11 July 2025.

²⁰⁷ Interview by voice call with survivor, 13 June 2025.

²⁰⁸ MSF, X post, 18 April 2025, <https://x.com/MSF/status/1913193786580385991>

²⁰⁹ Interview by video call with volunteer, 10 July 2025.

²¹⁰ Interview by video call with volunteer, 4 July 2025.

“Some were bleeding severely. We used [regular] vehicles as ambulance[s] and rushed those patients to Tawila ... I collected three patients. Their stomach was open after it was penetrated by a bullet. ... Before we reached Tawila, one passed on along the way.”

“Suliman” – a 32-year-old nurse.²¹¹

A doctor who treated IDPs on their way from Zamzam IDP camp to Tawila estimated that, over the course of a month, he helped around 500 families who fled Zamzam. He said the most common conditions that he treated were diarrhea, dehydration, and injuries from bullets and fragments of shells, typically causing fractures. He estimated that he helped 30 women deliver their babies. He also treated injured children.²¹² The oldest person he treated was around 80 years old.²¹³

International humanitarian law prohibits attacks on objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, such as foodstuffs and livestock.²¹⁴ As mentioned in chapters 5 and 6, deliberate killing of civilians and pillage are also war crimes. International humanitarian law also prohibits rape and other forms of sexual violence, and they amount to war crimes.²¹⁵ Rape and other forms of sexual violence are also an abuse of a number of human rights that are applicable in times of conflict, including the rights to equality and non-discrimination, to physical integrity, and to the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.²¹⁶ Rape constitutes torture.²¹⁷ States are required to act to end sexual violence in conflict, protect those at risk, bring perpetrators to justice, and provide comprehensive services and reparation for survivors.²¹⁸

7.2 DIRE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

Displaced people in IDP and refugee camps said they lacked food and medicine and suffered dismal shelter conditions, some forced to live under trees.²¹⁹ Like in many other parts of the country, the humanitarian system in North Darfur is overwhelmed. Parties to the conflict, including the RSF, continue to impede humanitarian access and

²¹¹ Interview by video call with volunteer, 10 July 2025.

²¹² Interview by video call with doctor, 9 July 2025.

²¹³ Interview by video call with doctor, 9 July 2025.

²¹⁴ Additional Protocol II, Article 14.

²¹⁵ Additional Protocol II, Article 4(2)(e); Rome Statute, Article 8(2)(e)(vi); ICRC Customary IHL Study, Rules 93 and 156.

²¹⁶ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Articles 2(1), 7, and 26; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Article 1; Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), General Recommendations 19 and 35 prohibit gender-based violence including rape as a human rights violation and set out the steps states are required to take in order to comprehensively respond. General Recommendation 30 specifically focuses on the obligations of duty bearers in conflict, conflict prevention and post-conflict contexts, and reaffirms State obligations to take action to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in conflict including rape. International human rights law applies in times of non-international armed conflict.

²¹⁷ See, for example, Special Rapporteur on Torture, Report: UN Doc. E/CN.4/1986/15 (19 February 1986), para. 119; UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment, Report: UN Doc. A/HRC/7/3, 15 January 2008, para. 3; CAT Committee, *V.L. v. Switzerland*, UN Doc. CAT/C/37/D/262/2005, 22 January 2007, para. 8.10; General Comment No. 4 on the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, paras 57-61.

²¹⁸ See, for example, CEDAW, General Recommendation 30.

²¹⁹ Interviews by video call with survivors between 10 June and 11 July 2025.

attack humanitarian objects and personnel, including convoys.²²⁰ The international aid cuts have only made the situation worse.²²¹

The food insecurity in North Darfur is dire.²²² Over 40,000 children – more than double the number in 2024 – were admitted for treatment for malnourishment in the state between January and May 2025.²²³ The RSF siege on El Fasher resulted in high malnourishment figures in the city.²²⁴ Prices of basic food items have skyrocketed, and people have resorted to eating animal feed made of peanut shells.²²⁵ In November 2025, the IPC found famine-like conditions in North Darfur’s El Fasher and Kadugli in South Kordofan.²²⁶ IDPs cannot venture far from IDP camps in search of firewood for fear of attacks by armed actors, making them more dependent.²²⁷

The health system across North Darfur has collapsed, leaving scores of people without basic and critical health care.²²⁸ Health centres in smaller locations are not equipped to deal with serious injuries sustained during the Zamzam and other attacks, including attacks in El Fasher.²²⁹ Those that can treat more serious injuries are overwhelmed. For instance, in Tawila, the MSF hospital was so overwhelmed by patients from the Zamzam attack that, at one point, there were four patients in one bed.²³⁰ In July 2025, the UN warned about a deteriorating health situation in North Darfur, with cases of cholera, malaria and the measles on the rise in Tawila, El Fasher and Kabkabiya; another location in North Darfur.²³¹ By early August 2025, the UN reported close to 1200 cases of cholera in Tawila, 300 of which were children.²³²

²²⁰ WHO, “WHO condemns killings of patients and civilians amid escalating violence in El Fasher, Sudan”, 29 October 2025, <https://www.who.int/news/item/29-10-2025-who-condemns-killings-of-patients-and-civilians-amid-escalating-violence-in-el-fasher--sudan>; BBC, “Sudan’s army denies bombing convoy taking aid to famine-hit area”, 21 August 2025, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cp3elnv5d91o>; UN, “Five humanitarians killed in ‘horrendous’ attack on aid convoy in Sudan”, 3 June 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/06/1163991>; OCHA, “Humanitarian access snapshot – June 2025”, 6 July 2025, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-access-snapshot-june-2025>

²²¹ Council on Foreign Relations, “A Third Year of War: Dried-Up Aid Pulls Sudan Further Into Chaos”, 14 April 2025, <https://www.cfr.org/article/third-year-war-dried-aid-pulls-sudan-further-chaos>; BBC, “‘People will starve’ because of US aid cut to Sudan”, 25 February 2025, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy7x87ev5jyo>; UN, “Aid cuts leave refugee agency unable to shelter six in 10 fleeing war in Sudan”, 18 July 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165430>

²²² AFP, “Malnutrition In Sudan’s El-Fasher Kills 63 In A Week: Health Official”, 10 August 2025, https://www.barrons.com/news/malnutrition-in-sudan-s-el-fasher-kills-63-in-a-week-health-official-f22e1370?refsec=topics_afp-news; Sudan Tribune, “U.N. says Sudan famine has spread ‘catastrophically’ one year on”, 13 August 2025, <https://sudantribune.com/article303940/>; AA, “Over 30 nations urge end to Sudan siege as famine, war crimes fears grow”, 14 August 2025, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/over-30-nations-urge-end-to-sudan-siege-as-famine-war-crimes-fears-grow/3659695>; Amnesty International, “Sudan: Life-saving aid must reach the people caught between the rains and conflict”, 14 July 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/07/sudan-life-saving-aid-must-reach-the-people-caught-between-the-rains-and-conflict/>

²²³ UNICEF, “Number of severely malnourished children doubles in North Darfur as nutrition crisis deepens across Sudan”, 10 July 2025, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/number-severely-malnourished-children-doubles-north-darfur-nutrition-crisis-deepens>

²²⁴ AFP, “Malnutrition In Sudan’s El-Fasher Kills 63 In A Week: Health Official”, 10 August 2025, https://www.barrons.com/news/malnutrition-in-sudan-s-el-fasher-kills-63-in-a-week-health-official-f22e1370?refsec=topics_afp-news; Sudan Tribune, “U.N. says Sudan famine has spread ‘catastrophically’ one year on”, 13 August 2025, <https://sudantribune.com/article303940/>

²²⁵ Reuters, “Hunger mounts, cemeteries grow in Sudan’s besieged al-Fashir”, 5 August 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/hunger-mounts-cemeteries-grow-sudans-besieged-al-fashir-2025-08-04/>; Al Jazeera, “‘We’re suffering’: People in Sudan’s el-Fasher eat animal fodder to survive,” 4 August 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/8/4/cholera-deaths-rise-to-191-in-sudans-darfur-area-amid-famine-ongoing-war>

²²⁶ UN, “Famine declared in two Sudanese cities cut off by war, fragile gains elsewhere”, 4 November 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/11/1166268>

²²⁷ Interview by video call with camp leader, 11 June 2025, Interviews by video call with survivors between 10 June and 11 July 2025; UN, “Tens of thousands fleeing on foot amid atrocities in Sudan’s El Fasher”, 31 October 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/10/1166237>

²²⁸ UN, “Sudan: UN scales up response plan as humanitarian needs rise in Tawila”, 22 July 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165467>; Darfur 24, “UN warns of deteriorating health situation in North Darfur”, 23 July 2025, <https://www.darfur24.com/en/2025/07/23/un-warns-of-deteriorating-health-situation-in-north-darfur/>

²²⁹ Interview by video call with camp leader, 11 June 2025.

²³⁰ MSF, “People fleeing Zamzam camp arrive to overwhelmed humanitarian response in Tawila”, 6 May 2025, <https://www.msf.org/people-fleeing-zamzam-camp-arrive-overwhelmed-humanitarian-response-tawila>

²³¹ UN, “Sudan: UN scales up response plan as humanitarian needs rise in Tawila”, 22 July 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165467>; Darfur 24, “UN warns of deteriorating health situation in North Darfur”, 23 July 2025, <https://www.darfur24.com/en/2025/07/23/un-warns-of-deteriorating-health-situation-in-north-darfur/>

²³² UN, “Cholera spreads in North Darfur, 640,000 children under threat, UNICEF warns”, 3 August 2025, https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165562?utm_source=UN+News+--+Newsletter&utm_campaign=4710917c7e-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_08_03_04_53&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fdb1af606-4710917c7e-105778189

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Amnesty International's research demonstrates unrestrained disregard by the RSF and forces allied to the RSF for international humanitarian law rules in the context of the attack on Zamzam IDP camp that lasted from 11 to 13 April, including deliberate killing of civilians, pillaging and destruction of protected objects – buildings dedicated to religious, educational, charitable and medical purposes. These violations of international humanitarian law may also constitute war crimes under international law.

RSF forces used explosive weapons in populated areas during the RSF assault on Zamzam IDP camp. They were seen randomly shooting their weapons in populated residential areas. Shooting in such a manner may constitute an attack without a specific military target, and therefore an indiscriminate attack. The civilian harm during the assault was high and resulted in the displacement of around 400,000 persons between 13 and 14 April alone, who are now trying to survive in dire humanitarian conditions.

Amnesty International found a pattern of reports of RSF fighters deliberately shooting and killing civilians during the assault and as persons were fleeing which could amount to the war crime of murder and should be investigated as such. Eyewitness accounts and video evidence demonstrate that the RSF targeted civilians due to their perceived affiliation to the Joint Forces and the Sudanese Armed Forces. During its assault on Zamzam IDP camp in April 2025, the RSF destroyed protected objects. RSF fighters also carried out pillage during the assault. The two cases of abduction for ransom by the RSF documented in 6.3 may amount to hostage taking, an act which is proscribed by international humanitarian law and international criminal law, and trafficking. The acts suggestive of sexual violence, as described in chapter 7.1, could amount to war crimes.

The violations of international humanitarian law in this report had a profound impact on civilian lives, robbing them of items critical to their survival and livelihood, subjecting them to severe traumatic events with devastating mental health consequences and leaving them without recourse to justice and grieving for the loss of their loved ones.

The state is obliged to take effective action to combat impunity by ensuring that those suspected of criminal responsibility are investigated and, where there is sufficient evidence to suspect them for crimes under international law, prosecuted, and provide victims with effective remedies, including that the harm that they, and their families, endured is repaired.²³³ In violation of their rights to redress, none of the survivors of human rights violations or families of killed IDPs have yet received appropriate reparation. Neither has anyone been held accountable for these violations.

Several interviewees described feeling abandoned by international actors. **“Elnor”**, a 59-year-old farmer, who witnessed around 15 armed men, likely RSF fighters storm his compound and shoot and kill his 80-year-old brother and 30-year-old nephew, said: “No-one is concerned with our situation.”²³⁴ **“Musa”**, a 50-year-old farmer who was injured by a stray bullet and survived deliberate killings in Sheikh Farah mosque and school said:

²³³ United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), Resolution 60/147: Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law, adopted on 21 March 2006, UN Doc. A/RES/60/147; UNGA, Resolution 40/34: Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, adopted on 29 November 1985, UN Doc. A/RES/40/34; UN Independent Expert to update the Set of principles to combat impunity, Report, 8 February 2005, UN Doc. E/CN.4/2005/102/Add.1; ACHPR, Article 7.

²³⁴ Interview by video call with survivor, 4 July 2025.

“... our voice is not always heard. We are now [living] over 20 years as IDPs. For these [war] criminals, they are just there. The [members of the] international community, they don’t take any strong decisions. At least [they should] condemn them or [the perpetrators should] even be taken to trial. ... What can we say to the international community? They are seeing everything, and we feel as though there is no international community.”

“Musa” – a 50-year-old farmer.²³⁵

Amnesty International asked interviewees what they needed most and what they wished to see change. They offered recommendations to the parties to the conflict, the UN and International NGOs, as well as Sudan’s bilateral partners including:

- Ensure humanitarian access and service provision, including shelter, blankets, mats, food, saucepans, dishes, medication, jerry cans as well as financial and psycho-socio support;²³⁶
- Urgently end the fighting, in part so that civilians can return to their homes;²³⁷
- Protect civilians;²³⁸
- Criminal accountability and compensation.²³⁹

In addition to the recommendations identified above by the survivors, Amnesty International has the following recommendations for all parties to the conflict in Sudan including in North Darfur, government authorities, and regional and international actors.

TO THE RAPID SUPPORT FORCES

- Immediately end indiscriminate and deliberate attacks on civilians and civilian objects including in North Darfur and across the country;
- End pillage and destruction of civilian property including medical facilities, markets, foodstuffs, livestock and other community and humanitarian facilities;
- Allow and facilitate rapid, unrestricted and unhindered access for humanitarian actors to ensure aid reaches all those in need, as well as protect humanitarian relief personnel and facilities, and end all attacks on humanitarian workers including in El Fasher and in all IDP camps in the country;
- Ensure safe passage for people wanting to leave areas affected by violence and allow safe exit for those fleeing violence to seek safety and protection inside Sudan and in other countries;
- Stop rape and other sexual violence against women and girls and ensure there are credible investigations, adequate punishment of perpetrators, treatment, and full reparation for survivors;

²³⁵ Interview by video call with survivor on 7 July 2025.

²³⁶ Interviews by video call with 11 survivors and a camp leader between 11 June and 11 July 2025.

²³⁷ Interviews by video call with 12 survivors between 11 June and 11 July 2025.

²³⁸ Interviews by video call with two survivors between 11 June and 7 July 2025.

²³⁹ Interviews by video call with three survivors between 11 and 13 June 2025.

- End arbitrary deprivation of liberty and trafficking and immediately release all those who have been abducted;
- Establish conditions for the safe, voluntary and sustainable return of internally displaced persons;
- Ensure the full respect of rules of international humanitarian law and, where violations of such rules are committed, ensure that those suspected of war crimes or other serious violations are removed from their active roles, and referred to the competent authorities to be investigated and prosecuted in fair trials without recourse to the death penalty;
- Cooperate and support all ongoing accountability efforts including the work of both the UN Human Rights Council and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' Fact-Finding Missions to Sudan and facilitate their access to the territories under your control.

TO THE SUDANESE ARMED FORCES

- Immediately end all indiscriminate and deliberate attacks on civilians and civilian objects including in North Darfur and across the country;
- Allow and facilitate rapid, unrestricted and unhindered access for humanitarian actors to ensure aid reaches all those in need, ensure safe passage for people wanting to leave areas affected by violence and allow safe exit for those fleeing violence to seek safety and protection inside Sudan and in other countries;
- Cooperate and support all ongoing accountability efforts including the work of both the UN Human Rights Council and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' Fact-Finding Missions to Sudan and facilitate their access to the territories under your control.

TO THE JOINT FORCES

- Take all feasible precautions to avoid, and in any event to minimize, incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians and damage to civilian objects;
- Cooperate and support all ongoing accountability efforts including the work of both the UN Human Rights Council and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' Fact-Finding Missions to Sudan and facilitate their access to the territories under your control.

TO THE FORCES ALLIED TO THE RSF

- Immediately end indiscriminate and deliberate attacks on civilians and civilian objects;
- End pillage and destruction of civilian property including foodstuffs and livestock;
- Ensure safe passage for people wanting to leave areas affected by violence and allow safe exit for those fleeing violence to seek safety and protection inside Sudan and in other countries;
- Ensure the full respect of rules of international humanitarian law and, where violations of such rules are committed, ensure that those suspected of war crimes or other serious violations are removed from their roles, and referred to the competent authorities to be investigated and prosecuted in fair trials without recourse to the death penalty.

TO THE SUDANESE AUTHORITIES, ESPECIALLY THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

- Ensure credible independent investigations and, where sufficient evidence is found, prosecutions of suspected perpetrators of crimes documented in this report as well as of perpetrators of other international human rights and humanitarian law violations committed in the context of the conflict, in civilian courts adhering to international fair trial standards and without recourse to the death penalty. Ensure that such investigations include an examination of command responsibility for such violations.

TO THE AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

- Reiterate the call on all the parties to the conflict, particularly the RSF and its allied militias, to end all attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure and ensure, unrestricted, unhindered and immediate humanitarian access;
- Call, with urgency, for the scaling up of humanitarian funding and response;
- Call for all countries to respect the UN Security Council's arms embargo on Darfur by refraining from transferring weapons and ammunition to the parties to the conflict;
- In accordance with its proposal in Communique 1218 of 12 June 2024, work with all relevant stakeholders to convene an extraordinary summit of the African Union to consider the situation in Sudan, including the humanitarian situation in Darfur generally and in North Darfur specifically.

TO THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

- Continue to call on all the parties to the conflict, particularly the RSF and its allied militias, to end all attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure and ensure unrestricted, unhindered and immediate humanitarian access;
- Call, with urgency, for the scaling up of humanitarian funding and response;
- Renew the mandate of the Joint Fact-Finding Mission to Sudan upon the expiry of its current mandate to allow it to continue documenting violations committed in the Sudan conflict, including by conducting visits to Sudan and its neighbouring countries;

TO THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

- Continue to call on all the parties to the conflict, particularly the RSF and its allied militias, to end all attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure and ensure unrestricted, unhindered and immediate humanitarian access;
- Call, with urgency, for the scaling up of humanitarian funding and response;
- Call for all states to respect the UN Security Council's arms embargo on Darfur by refraining from transferring weapons and ammunition to the parties to the conflict;
- Expand the arms embargo regime that currently applies to Darfur to the rest of Sudan – given the significant escalation of the violence and its impact on civilians, and the flagrant violation of the existing embargo by various actors who are fuelling the Sudan conflict. The expansion of the arms embargo must be accompanied

by a comprehensive and effective mechanism to prevent international sales and other illicit transfers of arms to Sudan. Ensure that adequate human and other resources are allocated to the UN Panel of Experts and the UN Secretariat to conduct investigations to help ensure compliance with the UN arms embargo on Sudan;

- Considering the current conflict, provide additional resources to the ICC investigations, and expand the Darfur conflict referral to the ICC to also include investigation and prosecution of crimes under international law, in the rest of Sudan including those committed in the context of the current conflict.

TO THE STATE PARTIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

- Provide the International Criminal Court with additional resources to investigate ongoing violations including in the context of the Darfur situation;
- Give full political backing for the ICC's work and oppose the sanctions imposed on the Court by the USA, which affect all of the Court's investigations, including in Darfur. Call on the UN Security Council to expand its jurisdiction to explicitly cover crimes under international law committed in Sudan.

TO SUDAN'S INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

- Increase, with urgency, emergency funding for humanitarian response in Sudan, as well as in refugee camps in neighbouring countries;
- Immediately call on all the parties to the conflict to end all attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure and ensure unrestricted unhindered and immediate humanitarian access;
- Ensure protection and support for people fleeing Sudan, opening safe and regular pathways and refrain from returning Sudanese nationals to Sudan or to any third country where they may be at risk of being returned to Sudan;
- Call for all countries, including the United Arab Emirates, to respect the UN Security Council's arms embargo on Darfur by refraining from transferring weapons and ammunition to the SAF, RSF and other actors; in addition, work with the UN Security Council and others to expand and enforce the arms embargo regime that currently applies to Darfur to the rest of Sudan – given the significant escalation of the violence and its impact on civilians, and the flagrant violation of the existing embargo by various actors who are fuelling the Sudan conflict;
- Ensure that the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan established by the Human Rights Council has the necessary resources and support to document, collect, report and preserve evidence of crimes under international law;
- Exercise jurisdiction over crimes under international law committed in Sudan under the principle of universal and extraterritorial jurisdiction and open 'structural investigations' into crimes under international law committed in Sudan.

TO ALL COUNTRIES SENDING ARMS, AMMUNITIONS, AND OTHER SUPPLIES TO PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT

- Immediately cease supplies of all arms and ammunition to all parties to the Sudan conflict, including the direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer of arms and military materiel, related technologies, parts and components, technical assistance, training, financial or other assistance;

- All states should stop transferring arms to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) until such time that the UAE can guarantee that none will be reexported to Sudan or to other embargoed destinations, and that all its past breaches of the UN Security Council's arms embargoes are thoroughly investigated and perpetrators brought to account.

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
IS A GLOBAL MOVEMENT
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.
WHEN INJUSTICE HAPPENS
TO ONE PERSON, IT
MATTERS TO US ALL.**

CONTACT US



info@amnesty.org



+44 (0)20 7413 5500

JOIN THE CONVERSATION



www.facebook.com/AmnestyGlobal



[@Amnesty](https://twitter.com/Amnesty)

A REFUGE DESTROYED

RSF VIOLATIONS IN DARFUR'S ZAMZAM CAMP FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

From 11 to 13 April 2025, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) launched a large-scale assault on Zamzam, the largest camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sudan's North Darfur State. This attack was part of the RSF's military campaign, started in May 2024, to capture El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur State.

During the attack and in its aftermath, the RSF and its allied forces showed unrestrained disregard for international humanitarian law, including deliberate killing of civilians, hostage taking, pillaging and destruction of protected objects. These violations could constitute war crimes under international law.

RSF fighters used explosive weapons in populated areas in Zamzam IDP camp and were seen randomly shooting their weapons in populated residential areas. RSF fighters deliberately set fire to homes, businesses, the market, a school and a mosque, destroying or badly damaging critical civilian infrastructure. The RSF also pillaged homes and shops. Medical facilities were ransacked and heavily damaged during the attack.

The civilian harm during the attack was high and resulted in the displacement of around 400,000 persons between 13 and 14 April alone. Displaced persons endured journeys characterized by lack of food, water, and medical services. Some experienced acts that may amount to rape, murder and pillage. Displaced people in IDP and refugee camps live in dismal conditions. The humanitarian system in North Darfur is overwhelmed and inadequate to meet the extreme needs.