

ATROCITIES WATCH AFRICA

Atrocities Watch Africa (AWA) is a non-partisan, civil society organisation that provides continental leadership in matters pertaining to the prevention of mass atrocities within Africa, our strategies and approaches are grounded in the realisation that atrocities can be prevented through various interventions, including, but not limited to, early warning mechanisms, diplomatic efforts, use of social media and new technologies, litigation, and advocacy campaigns.

This newsletter builds on our team's continuous monitoring of the region that allows us to identify deteriorating situations where atrocities may be committed as well as track ongoing situations of ongoing atrocities to detect increasing tendencies or opportunities for improvement.

This month's newsletter covers:

- Burkina Faso
- Central African Republic
- Niger
- Sierra Leone
- Sudan

Burkina Faso:

There has been an increase in atrocities committed by Islamist armed groups since late 2022, according to a recent Human Rights Watch report.¹ Over 60,000 Burkinabe crossed borders in search of refuge in the past six months, an additional sign that the situation is worsening.² Currently about 40% of Burkina Faso's territory is no longer under government control, and is rather controlled by Al-Qaeda linked Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) or, to a lesser extent, the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS). These groups have besieged several towns in the Sahel and Est regions leaving civilians without access to food or humanitarian aid, causing starvation and illness among residents and displaced people. Islamist extremists reportedly stormed the towns in search of residents collaborating with the government as Volunteers for the Defense of the Homeland (VDH) and demanding residents leave their villages while threatening to kill them.³ Human Rights Watch called on the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) to bring attention to the situation and to help ensure

¹ Human Rights Watch, "Burkina Faso: Upsurge in Atrocities by Islamist Armed Groups," 15 June 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/06/15/burkina-faso-upsurge-atrocities-islamist-armed-groups>

² UNHCR, "Rising violence drives refugees from Burkina Faso to neighbouring countries," 20 July 2023, <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/rising-violence-drives-refugees-burkina-faso-neighbouring-countries>

³ Human Rights Watch, "Burkina Faso: Upsurge in Atrocities by Islamist Armed Groups," 15 June 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/06/15/burkina-faso-upsurge-atrocities-islamist-armed-groups>

that the transitional military authorities impartially investigate and prosecute members of Islamist armed groups implicated in these atrocities.⁴

Government armed forces and militias also committed serious abuses during operations against Islamist armed groups. They have been accused of killings and enforced disappearances of scores of civilians since February 2023.⁵ As the ACHPR said in its statement on the situation in Burkina Faso from the Karma massacre that took place in late April 2023, in which over 60 people were killed, "...a State may also be held responsible for killings by non-state actors if it approves, supports or acquiesces in such acts or if it fails to exercise due diligence to prevent such killings or to ensure there is a proper investigation."⁶

The situation of Burkinabe refugees is especially worrisome in Ghana, where hundreds-mostly women and children- have been deported and forced to return to Burkina Faso in a clear violation of the principle of non-refoulement.⁷ These deportations have allegedly targeted Fulani, who although they have fled attacks by Islamist groups, are accused of sympathising with them.⁸

Central African Republic:

A new referendum to amend the constitution was held on 30 July 2023, among the proposed revisions are removal of the two-term limit on the presidency. Another key amendment would, according to Human Rights Watch, allow only a true citizen, defined as someone born of two Central African parents to run for president. This stirs up fears of exclusion and persecution among Muslims related to civil war experiences.⁹ The constitutional referendum took place without major clashes, but voter turnout was low, even in neighbourhoods reputed to be strongholds of the ruling party.¹⁰

The opposition had called for people to vote against the referendum and called out irregularities such as the lack of an electoral register, not being able to vote in absence of a voters card,¹¹ and that the draft constitution was only made available 20 days prior to the voting

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Human Rights Watch, "Burkina Faso: Upsurge in Atrocities by Islamist Armed Groups," 15 June 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/06/15/burkina-faso-upsurge-atrocities-islamist-armed-groups>

⁶ ACHPR, Press release on the situation of human rights in Burkina Faso, 30 April 2023, <https://achpr.au.int/en/news/press-releases/2023-04-30/press-release-situation-human-rights-burkina-faso> and Human Rights Watch, "Burkina Faso: Upsurge in Atrocities by Islamist Armed Groups," 15 June 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/06/15/burkina-faso-upsurge-atrocities-islamist-armed-groups>

⁷ UNHCR, "UNHCR urges Ghana to cease forced return of Burkinabe nationals in need of protection," 12 July 2023, <https://www.unhcr.org/africa/news/press-releases/unhcr-urges-ghana-cease-forced-return-burkinabe-nationals-need-protection>

⁸ Max Suuk, "Ghana accused of targeting Fulani refugees from Burkina Faso," DW, 22 July 2023, <https://www.dw.com/en/ghana-accused-of-targeting-fulani-refugees-from-burkina-faso/video-66316040>

⁹ Le Monde, "Central African Republic: Tight security, low turnout during vote on new constitution," 1 August 2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/07/31/central-african-republic-tight-security-low-turnout-during-vote-on-new-constitution_6074111_4.html

¹⁰ Human Rights Watch, "Referendum Threatens Democracy in Central African Republic," 31 July 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/07/31/referendum-threatens-democracy-central-african-republic>

¹¹ Africa News, "Central African Republic: last week of campaigning ahead of referendum," 24 July 2023, <https://www.africanews.com/2023/07/24/central-african-republic-last-week-of-campaigning-ahead-of-referendum/>

providing insufficient time for discussion.¹² Due to the lack of time, civic and media space were not allowed to disagree and present their own proposals, and UN experts believe the referendum could complicate the country's human rights situation.¹³ The election created polarisation among civilians, with both those supporting and opposing Touadéra rallying in the streets of Bangui.¹⁴ Official results are yet to be published, however, residents and experts believe it will be adopted.¹⁵

The UN Security Council (UNSC) was briefed on the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) on 20 June by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the CAR and head of MINUSCA Valentine Rugwabiza. The speakers shed light on the country's efforts to advance the implementation of the 2019 agreement between the government and armed groups. Key advancements included the dissolution of two signatory armed groups and factions of three others, however, challenges remain.¹⁶ Despite overall improvements, the security situation on the northern border with Chad and at the South Sudan and Sudan border are rapidly deteriorating, along with the influx of refugees from Sudan.¹⁷

A recent report by Le Monde shed light on the Wagner Group's operations in the country between 2017 and 2021, the report details how these foreign mercenaries, officially deployed as instructors to CAR security forces steadily expanded their military presence in total violation of the arms embargo and have committed atrocities including looting as well as torturing local population under the suspicion of belonging to the Séléka group.¹⁸

Due to serious allegations of sexual abuse a unit of 60 MINUSCA military personnel were repatriated.¹⁹

Niger:

On 26 July, a faction of the military overthrew and detained President Bazoum citing the deteriorating security situation in the ongoing fight against Islamist extremist groups and

¹² Human Rights Watch, "Referendum Threatens Democracy in Central African Republic," 31 July 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/07/31/referendum-threatens-democracy-central-african-republic>

¹³ OHCHR, UN expert warns constitutional referendum in Central African Republic poses human rights risks, 16 June 2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/06/un-expert-warns-constitutional-referendum-central-african-republic-poses>

¹⁴ Africa News, "CAR: A few hundreds rally against draft Constitution," 25 July 2023, <https://www.africanews.com/2023/07/15/car-a-few-hundreds-rally-against-draft-constitution/> and Africa News, "CAR: Touadéra supporters march in Bangui to back constitutional vote," 1 June 2023. <https://www.africanews.com/2023/06/01/car-touadera-supporters-march-in-bangui-to-back-constitutional-vote/>

¹⁵ Human Rights Watch, "Referendum Threatens Democracy in Central African Republic," 31 July 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/07/31/referendum-threatens-democracy-central-african-republic>

¹⁶ UN News, "MINUSCA chief to Security Council: Decade-long cycle of conflict can be broken," 20 June 2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/06/1137947>

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Le Monde, "Video investigation: Documents reveal Wagner's lies in the Central African Republic," 18 June 2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/video/2023/06/18/video-investigation-documents-reveal-wagner-s-lies-in-the-central-african-republic_6033533_4.html

¹⁹ UN News, "MINUSCA chief to Security Council: Decade-long cycle of conflict can be broken," 20 June 2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/06/1137947>

instated General Abdourahmane “Omar” Tchiani as the country’s new leader. This is the country’s fifth coup since its independence in 1960 and the latest in a string of coups in West Africa in recent years.²⁰ Olayinka Ajala, a senior lecturer in Politics and International Relations at Leeds Beckett University, noted that Bazoum’s ethnicity and legitimacy didn’t sit well with the military and the presence of foreign troops was seen as a threat to their capacity. At the same time, he argues, the inability of regional blocks such as ECOWAS and the African Union to take a strong stand against the military coups, may have contributed to the coup.²¹

Niger is suffering from ongoing instability. Extreme poverty rates are above 40% and Islamist insurgency continues to wreak havoc despite assistance from French and American troops.²² Islamist extremist violence intensified in neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso political coups there,²³ raising concerns of a similar escalation in Niger. Moreover, increasing poverty as a result of drought raises further concerns.

Thousands of Nigeriens gathered in the capital Niamey to show their support for the coup, carrying portraits of the now-ruling National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland (CNSP) leaders and waving Russian flags.²⁴ Ousted President Bazoum spoke from detention presenting the situation differently to the military, speaking about an improving security situation creating the safest conditions in the country in the past 15 years, and expressing fear of what could happen if financial aid were to be cut off.²⁵ President Bazoum was elected in 2021 in what was the country’s first peaceful democratic transfer of power since its independence.

International response:

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) held an emergency summit and gave the military junta a seven-day deadline to release the president and restore democratic governance. The block threatened to take all measures necessary to ensure the president is reinstated, including the use of force.²⁶ On 10 August, noting that the deadline had expired,

²⁰ Council of Foreign Relations, “The Niger Coup Could Threaten the Entire Sahel,” 3 August 2023, <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/niger-coup-could-threaten-entire-sahel>

²¹ The Conversation, “What caused the coup in Niger? An expert outlines three driving factors,” 31 July 2023, <https://theconversation.com/what-caused-the-coup-in-niger-an-expert-outlines-three-driving-factors-210721>

²² Ibid.

²³ BBC, “Mali and Burkina Faso: Did the coups halt jihadist attacks?,” 30 July 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-62052598>

²⁴ The Guardian, “Niger: thousands gather for rally to cheer generals who led coup,” 6 August 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/aug/06/niger-thousands-gather-for-rally-to-cheer-generals-who-led-coup>

²⁵ Washington Post, “Opinion President of Niger: My country is under attack and I’ve been taken hostage,” 3 August 2023, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2023/08/03/mohamed-bazoum-coup-niger-democracy/?utm_campaign=wp_todays_worldview&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&wp_isrc=nl_todayworld

²⁶ ECOWAS, Press Release: Final communique – Extraordinary Summit of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government on the political situation in Niger (latest version), 30 July 2023, <https://ecowas.int/final-communique-fifty-first-extraordinary-summit-of-the-ecowas-authority-of-heads-of-state-and-government-on-the-political-situation-in-niger/>

ECOWAS authorized sanctions and deployment of its standby force.²⁷ Mali and Burkina Faso, both under military rule, said they would send a joint military delegation in solidarity.²⁸

Sierra Leone:

The ruling Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) won the general elections on 24 June where President Julius Maada Bio was declared the winner in the first round.²⁹ Election-related violence rose throughout the country from the start of the official campaign period on 23 May. In June violent political event numbers more than doubled the monthly average over the past year.³⁰ Most of the violence was carried out by suspected SLPP supporters against members of the opposition All People's Congress' (APC), including an attack on the APC district chairman in Bendugu town.³¹ In June, there were eight violent events recorded between the two groups resulting in two fatalities and security forces made numerous arrests targeting APC supporters and raided the APC headquarters in Freetown during a post-election press conference.³² Party members noted incidents of violence and voter suppression in some regions on election day,³³ and riots took place days after the elections as both presidential candidates declared themselves winners despite a lack of official results.³⁴ European Union observers criticised the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone for lack of transparency.³⁵

As soon as the SLPP's Julius Maada Bio was officially declared the winner the APC disputed the results³⁶ and demanded the resignation of the election commission chief and a rerun of the vote within six months,³⁷ The party however, said they will not challenge the results in court because of the judiciary's "lack of impartiality and competence".³⁸ SLPP also won 80 of

²⁷ ECOWAS, Second Extraordinary Summit of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government on the Political Situation in Niger," 10 August 2023.

²⁸ RFI, "Mali, Burkina Faso send joint delegation to Niamey 'in solidarity' with Niger," 7 August 2023, <https://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20230807-mali-and-burkina-faso-sending-joint-delegation-to-niamey-in-solidarity-with-niger>

²⁹ Associated Press, "Sierra Leone's president wins second term without need for runoff, election commission announces," 27 June 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/sierra-leone-bio-kamara-presidential-election-winner-7aa073252405a08fb78821548bdeb9bc>

³⁰ ACLED Data, Regional overview Africa June 2023, <https://acleddata.com/2023/07/06/regional-overview-africa-june-2023/>

³¹ ACLED Data, Regional Overview Africa May 2023, <https://acleddata.com/2023/06/07/regional-overview-africa-may-2023/>

³² ACLED Data, Regional overview Africa June 2023, <https://acleddata.com/2023/07/06/regional-overview-africa-june-2023/>

³³ BBC, "Sierra Leone election results: Julius Maada Bio leading Samura Kamara," 27 June 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-65972744>

³⁴ Vatican News, "Violence erupts as Sierra Leone awaits electoral results," 26 June 2023, <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/world/news/2023-06/sierra-leone-elections-violence.html>

³⁵ European Union Election Observation Mission Sierra Leone 2023, The EU EOM calls on Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone to promptly publish disaggregated results data at polling station level, to ensure transparency and public scrutiny, 28 June 2023, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eom-sierra-leone-2023/eu-eom-calls-electoral-commission-sierra-leone-promptly-publish-disaggregated_en?s=410315

³⁶ Associated Press, "Sierra Leone's president wins second term without need for runoff, election commission announces," 27 June 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/sierra-leone-bio-kamara-presidential-election-winner-7aa073252405a08fb78821548bdeb9bc>

³⁷ BBC, "Sierra Leone opposition MPs boycott their swearing-in," 13 July 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/c302m85q5mlt/sierra-leone>

³⁸ Barrons, "Sierra Leone Parliament Opens To Opposition Boycott," 13 July 2023, <https://www.barrons.com/news/sierra-leone-parliament-opens-to-opposition-boycott-92bc503a>

parliamentary seats out of a total of 149, meanwhile APC only won 54, APC members of parliament boycotted the parliamentary swearing-in ceremony and only one opposition MP was sworn in.³⁹

Sierra Leone has seen waves of violence in recent months, especially since the August 2022 protests in which over 25 people were killed while protesting the rising cost of living and economic hardship.⁴⁰ Civil war survivors have expressed concern that the elections could reignite violence and that the youth have been agitated since the protests last year with many saying that they are ready to take-up arms if necessary.⁴¹ In this context, there is a legitimate concern that the electoral violence may be a catalyst for the instigation of other forms of violence in a country where approximately 60% of its population - exceeding 7 million individuals - live in poverty, and wherein youth unemployment ranks among the highest in West Africa.⁴²

Sudan

24 July marked 100 days of conflict.⁴³ The situation remains devastating, and an estimated 3.9 million have been displaced, either internally or across international boundaries.⁴⁴ Women and children constitute the majority of the displaced, comprising 90% of arrivals in Chad.⁴⁵ Rape and sexual violence have been committed by both the Sudanese Armed Force (SAF), led by Abdel Fattah Abdelrahman al-Burhan, the *de facto* leader of the country, and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, with Save the Children estimating that verified figures by the Sudanese government's Combating Violence against Women (CVAW) believed represent only 2% of total cases.⁴⁶ The Strategic Initiative for the Horn of Africa (SIHA) has reported that women have been abducted by the RSF for ransom, and in some cases trafficked in markets.⁴⁷

Fighting has continued, and the military situation remains fluid. On 14 July, the SAF successfully recaptured the eastern side of the al-Halfaya bridge in Omdurman.

³⁹ BBC, "Sierra Leone opposition MPs boycott their swearing-in," 13 July 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/c302m85q5mlt/sierra-leone>

⁴⁰ BBC, "Observers warn against poll violence in Sierra Leone," 23 June 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/c302m85q5mlt/sierra-leone>

⁴¹ VOA, "Sierra Leone's Civil War Survivors Rally Youth Against Election Violence," 21 June 2023, <https://www.voanews.com/a/sierra-leone-s-civil-war-survivors-rally-youth-against-election-violence-/7147405.html>

⁴² Associated Press, "Sierra Leone's president wins second term without need for runoff, election commission announces," 27 June 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/sierra-leone-bio-kamara-presidential-election-winner-7aa073252405a08fb78821548bdeb9bc>

⁴³ UN High Commissioner for Refugees, "UNHCR urges end to Sudan conflict 100 days on, amid growing displacement", 24 July 2023, <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press-releases/unhcr-urges-end-sudan-conflict-100-days-amid-growing-displacement>.

⁴⁴ UNOCHA, Sudan Situation Report, 7 August 2023, <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/sudan/>

⁴⁵ UN High Commissioner for Refugees, "Women and children make up almost 90 percent of Sudanese refugees fleeing to Chad — nearly half of all new arrivals are children", 24 July 2023, <https://www.unrefugees.org/news/women-and-children-displaced-from-sudan-seek-safety-in-new-countries-and-former-hometowns/>.

⁴⁶ Save the Children, "Children as young as 12 raped and assaulted, as sexual violence rips through the country," 7 July 2023, <https://www.savethechildren.net/news/sudan-children-young-12-raped-and-assaulted-sexual-violence-rips-through-country>

⁴⁷ Sudan Tribune, "RSF are accused of Kidnapping, enslaving Sudanese females", 1 August 2023.

Simultaneously, the RSF ambushed the SAF in Khartoum North on el-Ingaz Street and in Sharg an Neel in Hattab.⁴⁸

The SAF has air power,⁴⁹ but RSF's manoeuvrability, rapidly shifting checkpoints, and anti-aircraft guns have led to them controlling large parts of the capital.⁵⁰ Both sides have recently deployed drones.⁵¹ Other armed actors, such as the Abdelaziz al Hilu faction of the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement - North (SPLM-N) have clashed with the SAF in South Kordofan, taking control of numerous SAF bases, and opening a new frontline in Blue Nile. In Darfur, the Abdul Wahid al- Nur faction of the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army has clashed with the RSF in Jebel Marra.⁵² The RSF has effectively mobilised the support of tribal militias, with tribal leaders asking their brethren in SAF members to leave their posts and join the RSF.⁵³

From 1 - 31 July, the Armed Conflict and Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) documented 1,906 violent incidents and 6,258 reported fatalities.⁵⁴

A number of serious violations were committed in June and July. Some of the most devastating incidents were the killing of the West Darfur governor, Khamis Abdullah Abbakar by the RSF, shortly after he was featured describing RSF actions as genocide and appealing for international intervention.⁵⁵ Video of his arrest was captured and the beating was distributed widely on Whatsapp. In violence following Khamis' death, at least 87 civilians, mostly members of the Masalit ethnic group, were killed by the RSF, and later found in a mass grave, and it was also reported that local civilians were forced to carry their bodies.⁵⁶ At least 17 members of resistance committees organising local aid efforts and engaging with local ceasefire committees and human rights defenders in North Darfur, Khartoum, Aljazeera, and Northern State have been arrested and detained by either the SAF or RSF, with at least 7 facing

⁴⁸ ACLED, "Sudan at a Glance: 17 June -14 July 2023", 21 July 2023, <https://acleddata.com/2023/07/21/sudan-situation-update-july-2023-the-saf-faces-setbacks-as-armed-groups-overtake-territory-across-the-country/>

⁴⁹ The New York Times, "Chaos in Sudan: Who Is Battling for Power, and Why It Hasn't Stopped", 10 July 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/article/sudan-khartoum-military.html#:~:text=The%20army%2C%20which%20has%20access,officials%20and%20residents%20say.>

⁵⁰ Middle East Eye, "Air strikes and guerrilla fighting: The tactics deployed by Sudan's warring sides", 9 May 2023, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/sudan-crisis-warring-sides-tactics-deployed-air-strikes-guerrilla-fighting.>

⁵¹ The New Arab, "Will RSF drones tip the balance of Sudan's war?", 26 June 2023, <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/will-rsf-drones-tip-balance-sudans-war>

⁵² ACLED, "Dashboard", 10 August 2023, <https://acleddata.com/2023/07/21/sudan-situation-update-july-2023-the-saf-faces-setbacks-as-armed-groups-overtake-territory-across-the-country/>

⁵³ The New Arab, 'Sudan: Darfur tribes 'pledge allegiance' to RSF in move that could tip scales in war-torn Sudan,' 6 July 2023

⁵⁴ ACLED, "Sudan at a Glance: 17 June -14 July 2023", 21 July 2023, <https://acleddata.com/2023/07/21/sudan-situation-update-july-2023-the-saf-faces-setbacks-as-armed-groups-overtake-territory-across-the-country/>

⁵⁵ African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies, "Sudan: At least 1000 people have been killed, several others injured and thousands displaced in Darfur region as the armed conflict between RSF and SAF continues", 21 July 2023.

⁵⁶ UN Office for the Commissioner for Human Rights, "Sudan: At least 87 buried in mass grave in Darfur as Rapid Support Forces deny victims decent burial", [burialshttps://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/07/sudan-least-87-buried-mass-grave-darfur-rapid-support-forces-deny-victims](https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/07/sudan-least-87-buried-mass-grave-darfur-rapid-support-forces-deny-victims)

criminal charges of espionage, which can carry the death penalty.⁵⁷ Serious concerns exist for all detainees, given the long and well-documented history of the use of torture and ill-treatment of detainees in SAF custody and well documented RSF violations.⁵⁸

The humanitarian situation is dire, and compounded by a large increase of the number of people in need of humanitarian aid from the beginning of January 2023, from 15.8 million people or a third of the population, to 24.7 million after the outbreak of the conflict.⁵⁹ For Sudanese unable to afford to leave the country, basic supplies and fuel prices have skyrocketed, with prices of basic goods increasing by over 130% and fuel prices increasing more than ten times.⁶⁰

International Response

Numerous international efforts are underway to respond to the situation in Sudan. A number of parallel processes are underway in Jeddah, IGAD and Cairo with limited success.

The Jeddah process was suspended in early June, but SAF negotiators have since returned and there appears to be a new opening for negotiations. US-Saudi negotiators are reportedly pushing the parties to agree to a ceasefire of at least three months.

The AU is supporting an IGAD-led process chaired by Kenyan President William Ruto, in cooperation with a quartet of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Sudan. Although SAF has accused Ruto of being biased towards the RSF, IGAD has continued to support this process.

In July 13, a meeting of Sudan's neighbours met in Cairo and created a Ministerial Mechanism to explore approaches to resolving the crisis in consultation with the other initiatives.⁶¹

⁵⁷ African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies, "Human rights defenders and activists arrested, detained and falsely charged for their work in Sudan", 31 July 2023, <https://www.acjps.org/human-rights-defenders-and-activists-arrested-detained-and-falsely-charged-for-their-work-in-sudan/>.

⁵⁸ For example, Amnesty International, "Sudan: Dozens Held Without Charge", 27 June 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/11/27/sudan-dozens-held-without-charge-0>

⁵⁹ The Center for Disaster Philanthropy, "Sudan Humanitarian Crisis", 5 July 2023, <https://disasterphilanthropy.org/disasters/sudan-humanitarian-crisis/>

⁶⁰ AP News, "UN humanitarian chief in Sudan, seeking guarantees on aid", 3 May 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/sudan-humanitarian-port-un-displaced-evacuations-a5458a5f75b98a9c09b8621cb870b394>

⁶¹ Sudan Transparency and Policy Tracker, Monitor #5, 1 August 2023, https://sudantransparency.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/SCM_5.pdf