

“Stopping the Bloodshed: U.S. Response to Crimes Against Humanity in Sudan”

Hearing Remarks by Chairman Chris Smith (R-NJ)

Africa Subcommittee, Washington, DC—December 11, 2025

Last week, I had the honor of attending President Trump’s convening of two African leaders to bring an end to decades of bloodshed and war in eastern Congo. It is through the President’s leadership, and the tireless efforts of his staff, that the leaders were able to sign an historic accord—[the Washington Accords for Peace and Prosperity](#)—the gravity of which, we hope, will result in a lasting peace between Rwanda and the DRC.

The President is a man of peace, peace through strength, and I am encouraged by his focus and engagement on Sudan.

Sudan is under the darkest of clouds, a catastrophe that has, for far too long, been met with paralysis by the international community.

The people of Sudan have been subjected to unbearable pain, suffering, and loss of life—even slavery—for decades. Three decades ago, I [chaired a hearing in 1996 on the scourge of slavery in Sudan and Mauritania](#), where we heard testimony that chilled the soul.

I went to Khartoum in August of 2005 and met with President Omar al Bashir and other government officials to press for an end to the genocide in

Darfur. The meeting was necessarily contentious. Bashir denied any wrongdoing or complicity in the Darfur genocide. In 2009, however, Bashir was charged by the International Criminal Court (ICC) with committing war crimes and crimes against humanity, and in 2010, he was the first person ever charged for the crime of genocide.

After meetings with Bashir and other government officials, my staff director, Greg Simkins, and I visited two refugee camps in Darfur—Kalma camp and stayed overnight at another, Mukjar—an experience that profoundly motivated me to do more to end the mass violence. When our helicopter landed at the remote Mukjar camp, thousands of women and children danced, clapped, and sang beautiful traditional African songs. The people of Darfur have a remarkable generosity and spirit—and it was awe-inspiring.

Just about everyone we spoke with, however, especially the women, told us personal stories of rape, senseless beatings, and massacres by the Janjaweed and Sudanese militias

Former Trump Administration Africa Director in the National Security Council, Nicole Widdersheim of Human Rights Watch—one of our witnesses today—lived and worked in Sudan for seven years and was on that trip to Mukjar.

Ambassador—then-U.S. Senator—Sam Brownback, along with Congressman Frank Wolf, were the first members of Congress to visit Darfur in June of 2004. Their historic trip—followed by aggressive advocacy for the vulnerable and the victims—helped galvanize efforts to end the violence.

Former Chair of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom Tony Perkins has also led a delegation to Sudan in 2020, and today will testify that

“both the RSF and the SAF have a common enemy in Christians... Christians have been denied food aid and told, unless you leave your Christianity, no food for you.”

Ken Isaacs of Samaritan's Purse, who testified at our subcommittee [hearing this past May 22nd](#), will testify that “Today, the humanitarian situation in Sudan has deteriorated further...” and that “what’s happening in Sudan is a manmade famine” with “twenty-one million people facing acute food insecurity, and 6.5 million in or near famine...”

History is not just repeating itself in Sudan, it is compounding. President Trump called Sudan "the most violent place on Earth" and "the single biggest Humanitarian Crisis," and said "tremendous atrocities are taking place."

Today, Sudan is in a state of collapse. We are witnessing a genocide that echoes the horrors of the early 2000s, perpetrated by the very same actors who soaked the soil of Darfur in blood two decades ago.

The Catholic Bishops of Sudan and South Sudan said: “We find ourselves deeply disturbed by the ongoing devastating conflicts and the dishonoured peace agreements in both nations, especially with the worsening situation in 2025. It is alarming that dialogue is no longer seen as a vehicle for harmony, healing, reconciliation, and unity,” the prelates write.

The Bishops call out politicians in Sudan and South Sudan for their astonishing lack of respect for human dignity.

There will never be peace in Sudan until there is accountability for the atrocities committed by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan of the Sudanese Armed

Forces (SAF) and Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, known to the world as "Hemedti," of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

These two have ravaged Sudan with utter impunity. Their bloody records are littered with war, arbitrary killings, detentions, abductions, and the mass rape of women and children. We have received credible reports of child soldier recruitment and the deliberate destruction of civilian infrastructure, including just last week, a bombing of a World Food Program convoy, which is not an isolated incident. This is the sixth bombing of a World Food Program convoy in Sudan.

Just last week, over 100 civilians – including at least 63 children – were killed in South Kordofan state when the RSF attacked a kindergarten. To compound the horror, the RSF then reportedly attacked the first responders and ambulances as they rushed wounded children to local hospitals. Since this conflict erupted in April 2023, estimates suggest as many as 150,000 people have been slaughtered, and more than 10 million have been displaced.

These are not just numbers. Each murdered civilian, each child starved to death in the Zamzam camp, each woman violated in El Geneina, is a person whose life has been taken or irrevocably shattered.

I was deeply disappointed by the previous administration's delays in imposing robust sanctions and allowing the fight to spin out of control from the beginning. For too long, we dithered while Burhan and Hemedti cemented their power. It was unconscionable that Burhan was allowed to travel to New York and be received by the UN Secretary-General, granting legitimacy to a man with massive amounts of blood on his hands.

We must also be clear-eyed about the external actors fueling this fire. On Tuesday, the Department of the Treasury announced sanctions on a Colombian-led transnational network of hundreds of former Colombian military personnel, who have traveled to Sudan to fight alongside the RSF since 2024.

It is the illicit flow of Sudanese gold, smuggled by the RSF through the United Arab Emirates, that is directly funding Hemedti's war machine. We cannot turn a blind eye to the UAE's role in supplying weapons that kill innocent Sudanese civilians. Simultaneously, we see the malign influence of Russia seeking naval access to Port Sudan, and reports of Iranian drones bolstering the SAF. Sudan has become a playground for foreign powers, while its people serve as the collateral damage.

Today's hearing is a global call to action. We must demand an immediate cessation of hostilities.

External financing and arms flow must stop. The UAE must cease all support for the RSF, and Turkey and Iran must halt military assistance to the SAF.

Crimes against humanity—particularly by the RSF—including mass rape, ethnic targeting, and systematic looting must be investigated, and perpetrators held accountable. RSF should be designated a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO).