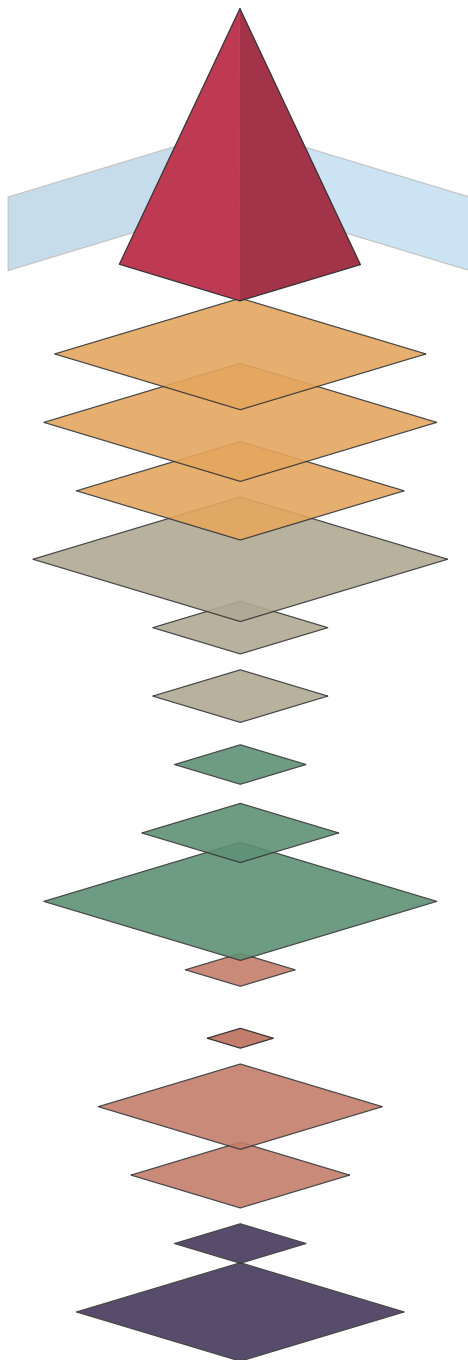
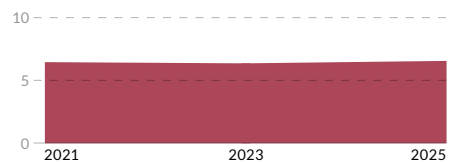


SUDAN



6.63 $\nearrow 0.27$ CRIMINALITY SCORE

27th of 193 countries $\nearrow 6$
8th of 54 African countries -
3rd of 9 East African countries -



CRIMINAL MARKETS **5.67** $\nearrow 0.43$

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	8.50 $\nearrow 0.50$
HUMAN SMUGGLING	9.00 $\nearrow 1.00$
EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING	7.50 $\nearrow 3.00$
ARMS TRAFFICKING	9.50 $\nearrow 0.50$
TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS	4.00 $\nearrow 1.00$
ILLCIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS	4.00 $\nearrow 1.50$
FLORA CRIMES	3.00 $\nearrow 0.50$
FAUNA CRIMES	4.50 $\nearrow 1.00$
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	9.00 $\nearrow 0.50$
HEROIN TRADE	2.50 0.00
COCAINE TRADE	1.50 $\nearrow 1.00$
CANNABIS TRADE	6.50 $\nearrow 1.00$
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	5.00 0.00
CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES	3.00 $\nearrow 0.50$
FINANCIAL CRIMES	7.50 $\nearrow 0.50$



CRIMINAL ACTORS **7.60** $\nearrow 0.10$

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	7.50 $\nearrow 1.00$
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	6.50 $\nearrow 1.00$
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	8.50 0.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	8.00 0.00
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS	7.50 $\nearrow 0.50$



This project was funded in part
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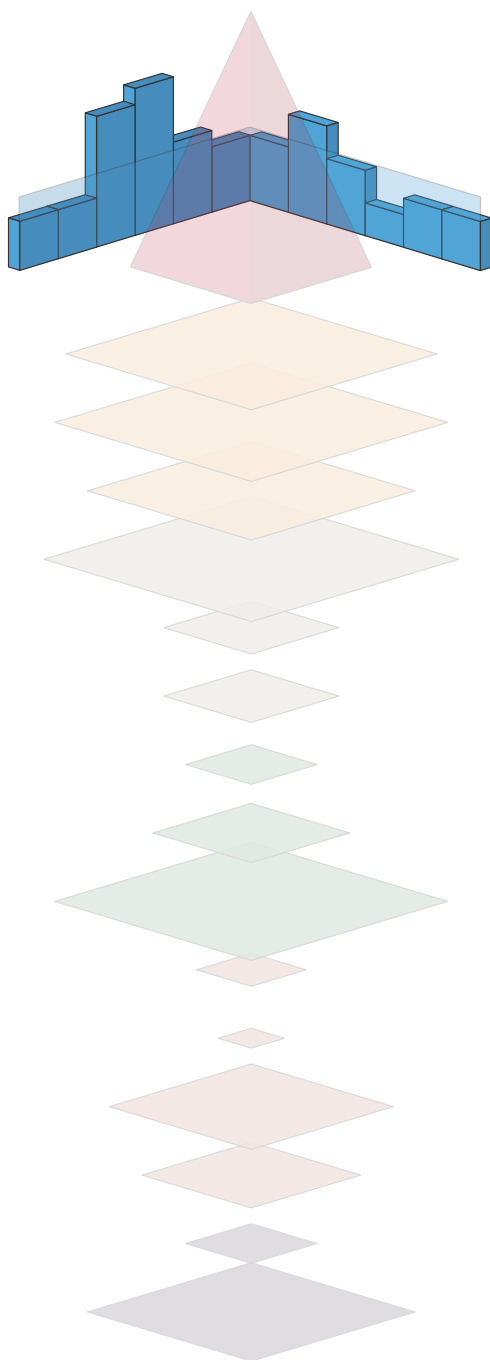


Funded by
the European Union

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SUDAN



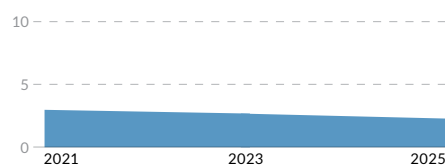
2.25 $\downarrow 0.46$

RESILIENCE SCORE

176th of 193 countries $\downarrow 5$

46th of 54 African countries $\downarrow 4$

6th of 9 East African countries -



POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE **1.50** $\downarrow 0.50$

GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY **1.50** $\downarrow 0.50$

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION **4.00** $\downarrow 1.50$

NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS **4.50** 0.00

JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION **2.50** $\downarrow 0.50$

LAW ENFORCEMENT **2.00** $\downarrow 0.50$

TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY **2.00** $\downarrow 0.50$

ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING **3.00** $\downarrow 0.50$

ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY **2.00** 0.00

VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT **1.00** 0.00

PREVENTION **1.50** $\downarrow 0.50$

NON-STATE ACTORS **1.50** $\downarrow 0.50$



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CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Sudan's human trafficking market is entrenched and has been exacerbated by war and political instability, targeting vulnerable populations, particularly displaced women and children. Victims are exploited in forced labour across sectors such as gold mining, agriculture and brickmaking, as well as sex trafficking. Sudan serves as a key transit country for asylum seekers from Eritrea and Ethiopia, many of whom fall victim to trafficking. The market is intertwined with regional smuggling networks and involves state-embedded actors as well as organized and cross-border criminal syndicates. Recruitment of child soldiers has continued during the reporting period, forced marriage has increased in 2024, including through abductions by armed groups, and sexual slavery is widespread, compounding the exploitation of women and girls.

Sudan also serves as a major source and transit hub for human smuggling, with routes facilitating migration from Eritrea, Ethiopia and South Sudan to Western Asia and Europe. The ongoing conflict has led to high numbers of Sudanese nationals fleeing to Egypt and neighbouring countries, including Chad and South Sudan, or onward to Libya and Tunisia to reach Europe, often through illicit channels owing to restrictive visa policies. Criminal networks, including state-embedded actors, exploit migrants, leading to forced labour and trafficking. The market is linked to other regional crimes, including narcotics smuggling. The conflict has further driven participation in the smuggling market, with informal financial systems sustaining its operations amid economic and political instability.

The extortion and protection racketeering market is deeply linked to the ongoing conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), particularly in Darfur, Al-Jazirah state and tribal border regions, where RSF exerts control. The conflict has displaced millions of people, making them vulnerable to extortion and abduction. Criminal actors, including former state-embedded figures with military expertise, exploit these populations for ransom. Reports indicate that proceeds from extortion finance both domestic and foreign criminal networks. Since April 2023, kidnappings have risen, especially in Darfur, Khartoum and Kordofan, with RSF elements increasingly using these tactics to sustain their operations amid intensified armed confrontations. In RSF-controlled areas, locals reported not only kidnappings but also the imposition of daily 'protection' fees, which the group claimed were to prevent looting.

TRADE

Arms trafficking in Sudan is extensive owing to ongoing conflict, with weapons supplied to military groups, civilians and criminal actors. Despite an arms embargo, foreign-sourced weapons, including those from Russia, China and Türkiye, continue to enter the country via Darfur and the Red Sea. The demand has surged since mid 2023, with shipments arriving biweekly. Inadequately managed maritime borders and weak enforcement have enabled the market's growth, while declining black-market prices indicate an oversupply. Both the SAF and RSF distribute weapons to maintain control, fuelling illicit sales and redistribution. International financial networks, including gold trade, are linked to arms funding, further entrenching the market within regional conflicts.

The counterfeit goods market in Sudan is less developed than in neighbouring countries, with trade mainly occurring in unregulated markets. Local vendors are the primary actors, but limited data makes assessing its full scope challenging. At the same time, Sudan serves as both a transit point and a destination for illicit excisable goods, particularly alcohol and tobacco. Restrictions on alcohol have fuelled a clandestine market, leading to tax losses. Sudan's geographic location also facilitates illicit tobacco trade within East Africa.

ENVIRONMENT

The flora crime market in Sudan is driven by charcoal production and illegal logging, exacerbating deforestation and environmental degradation, particularly in Central Darfur. Armed conflict and economic isolation have increased reliance on charcoal, leading to price fluctuations and further exploitation of forests. The decline in forest cover threatens gum arabic production and accelerates desertification. Foreign actors are involved in smuggling products to neighbouring countries. Conflict has halted efforts to curb deforestation, increasing illicit logging activity and worsening Sudan's vulnerability to climate change and resource scarcity.

The ongoing conflict in Sudan has reduced wildlife monitoring, limiting available data on the market's evolution. Despite Sudan not being a major source of wildlife, its geographic position and regional instability make it a hub for transnational fauna trafficking; however, the market for fauna trafficking has presumably declined since the onset of the war.

Sudan's non-renewable resource crimes market is dominated by gold and oil smuggling, with an overwhelming share of gold production leaving the country illegally, depriving the government of significant revenue. The illicit gold trade

fuels conflict, particularly in Darfur, and has intensified amid clashes between SAF and the RSF. Smuggling networks operate across the Egypt–Sudan border, with foreign actors, including Russian-linked groups, allegedly involved in exchanging gold for military and political support. In addition to the illicit gold trade, the war in Sudan has caused severe fuel shortages, making fuel a central commodity in illicit smuggling networks. Fuel is smuggled into Sudan from Ethiopia, South Sudan, and even from a refinery near Khartoum that was seized by the RSF, which sells fuel on the black market. Smugglers strike deals with both SAF and RSF checkpoints to move fuel through contested areas, passing on the costs to buyers. In addition, fuel is trafficked from eastern Libya by actors linked to the Libyan Arab Armed Forces, moving from coastal depots to southern Libya and then into SAF-controlled areas in Sudan. These operations highlight how fuel smuggling sustains both conflict economies and black markets amid ongoing instability.

DRUGS

The heroin trade in Sudan is a limited issue. Smuggling operations are run mainly through the Red Sea ports. Although drug abuse is increasing, heroin use is still relatively low, with mainly affluent students being affected. West Darfur faces significant challenges in controlling drug trafficking and smuggling owing to insufficient enforcement resources. Foreign actors largely control the heroin market, profiting from local demand. The cocaine trade in Sudan remains fragmented and underdeveloped, with limited prevalence largely confined to affluent student populations. Although substance abuse among Sudanese youth is reportedly on the rise, cocaine use remains relatively limited. Efforts to combat trafficking are hampered by the limited capacity of the General Directorate for Narcotics Control and the National Committee for Combating Narcotics. The outbreak of conflict has further weakened enforcement, obstructing both the monetization and prosecution of cocaine-related crimes. As a result, no official data has been updated for 2023 and 2024.

Sudan is one of Africa's largest producers of cannabis, primarily cultivated in South Darfur's El Radoom locality. Despite its widespread consumption, cannabis is illegal for both recreational and medical use. In addition to domestically cultivated cannabis, trafficked substances also enter Sudan, as evidenced by seizures in Ethiopia en route to Sudan, underscoring the transnational nature of the trade. Cannabis use is prevalent among the youth, especially at universities. However, the ongoing conflict and resulting decline in income have led to a rise in displaced populations, particularly from Khartoum, which contributed to a decrease in both cannabis trade and consumption in Sudan. In addition, the synthetic drug trade, especially involving tramadol and captagon, has become more established in recent years. Manufacturing facilities for captagon have been identified in Khartoum, Blue Nile

and Jabal Awliya, with foreign and domestic actors being involved. Kassala has emerged as a trafficking hub, with drugs entering through the eastern borders or the Red Sea ports. Captagon's popularity is fuelled by its ability to mimic legal medicines – and therefore being easier to disguise. RSF and Darfur rebel movements are implicated in the trade. Despite anti-narcotics efforts, trafficking remains a major issue owing to weak border control.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

Cybercrime is limited in Sudan. Instead, Sudanese criminal actors appear to be increasingly involved internationally, as seen, for example, in the hacking group Anonymous Sudan conducting distributed denial-of-service attacks in the UAE. Despite some governmental efforts to deal with weak cybersecurity infrastructure, the presence of domestic criminal actors engaged in international cybercrimes hinders progress in securing the country's digital landscape.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

Financial crimes in Sudan are widespread, fuelled by corruption and political instability. The country struggles with high levels of corruption, particularly within government bodies and the military, where embezzlement and misuse of funds is common. These criminal activities exacerbate local violence and fuel the ongoing conflict. Furthermore, the recent scandals involving misuse of aid funds threaten to undermine humanitarian efforts. The rise of electronic fraud and illicit financial flows, potentially linked to war financing, further complicates efforts to address the issue. International sanctions have targeted entities suspected of financing the conflict.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

The RSF, originating from the Janjaweed militias, has evolved into a significant power in Sudan, exerting control over around one-third of Sudan, including key regions like Darfur and Khartoum. The group has had a central role in Sudan's political instability, participating in military coups and resisting integration with the regular armed forces. The group maintains tight control over strategic regions and criminal markets such as arms trafficking within Sudan, influencing checkpoints and curfews and restricting civilian movement. In addition, the RSF is involved in human trafficking, the narcotics trade and financial crimes. Their activities, alongside those of the SAF, have criminalized state institutions, exploiting both legitimate and illicit economies to fund their activities.

Sudan also hosts various looser networks engaged in criminal markets such as human trafficking and smuggling, using a 'supermarket principle' for low-cost mass movement of individuals across borders. Social bonds, such as ethnic

and religious ties, are crucial for facilitating transportation and fund transfers within these networks. These groups extend their operations beyond Sudan, with connections in foreign countries, and leverage these social connections to advertise services, share information and optimize routes. The ongoing conflict in Sudan has intensified the smuggling trade, particularly along the Sudan–Egypt border, where the Rashaida tribe controls significant trafficking routes, benefiting from their presence on both sides of the border. Criminal groups, including those linked to the RSF, are involved in illicit gold mining and control key resources.

State-embedded actors in Sudan dominate critical criminal markets such as arms trafficking and gold smuggling. The ongoing conflict has increased demand for weapons, with black markets flourishing. New criminal actors have entered the smuggling networks, profiting from the weapons trade driven by actors working from within the state apparatus. Gold smuggling, which funds internal conflicts, is another major market in which state-embedded actors are involved, with a significant portion of Sudan's gold leaving the country illicitly. These actors also obstruct Sudan's democratization process, using criminal markets to maintain power and influence in the country's instability.

The ongoing crisis has seen foreign actors, notably Russian-linked companies, become involved in resource exploitation, particularly gold smuggling. These foreign entities often collaborate with local criminal networks, such as the RSF, securing gold from artisanal miners and receiving protection in exchange. Foreign influence extends beyond Russia, with actors from the UAE, Chad and other countries being involved in supporting the RSF and prolonging the conflict. Contracts between the RSF and foreign companies that have been engaged in lobbying and strategic dealings to secure operational control in Sudan, are indicative of the level of criminal influence that foreign companies have in Sudan. The interplay between domestic and foreign criminal groups exacerbates Sudan's instability, contributing to a deepened humanitarian crisis and hindering peace efforts.

Private entities often work with domestic criminal actors, such as the RSF, who provide protection and security. This collaboration has allowed the exploitation and export of gold abroad, mainly to Russia, exacerbating Sudan's resource-related crimes. The RSF's involvement extends to unreliable associations with private actors and legitimate businesses. These activities contribute to a complex criminal network, compounding Sudan's instability and hindering efforts toward governance reform.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Sudan's governance faces severe challenges, marked by ongoing conflict between the SAF and the RSF, which has exacerbated instability and human rights abuses. The country's political landscape is dominated by military figures, undermining democratic progress and efforts to address organized crime. State-led corruption and the lack of effective governance have facilitated criminal markets and worsened the humanitarian crisis. Foreign influence exacerbates the situation, with external actors exploiting Sudan's resources. Despite international peace efforts, the absence of a functioning government and the intertwined military and civilian governance impede the country's ability to combat organized crime and restore stability. During the reporting period, Sudan's limited governance also faced significant challenges in combating corruption. Despite the establishment of oversight mechanisms, such as the Sudan Anti-Corruption Committee, political interference and weak institutional capacity hinder their effectiveness. The government has struggled with transparency and legal frameworks, such as the right to information, remain underdeveloped. Key actors, including military and civilian forces, have exploited the country's transitional instability for personal gain, undermining accountability. Furthermore,

the government has restricted civil society groups and faced international criticism for lacking meaningful oversight reforms. Although the budget is published, its inaccessibility and the government's focus on war revenue have compounded corruption issues.

Sudan has ratified key international agreements on organized crime, including the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC). However, despite adopting laws against human trafficking and establishing a national committee to combat trafficking, deep-rooted challenges – particularly political instability – have severely undermined implementation. Although international support, such as from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, has helped raise awareness and build some capacity, serious concerns remain over pervasive corruption and the unreliability of Sudan's law enforcement and judicial systems. These issues significantly weaken international cooperation, especially with regard to information sharing and extradition, and cast doubt on the country's ability to effectively combat organized crime.

Internally, Sudan's legal framework faces significant weaknesses in addressing organized crime, although only certain markets (such as counterfeit goods) are

effectively regulated. Laws such as the Sudanese Penal Code and Trademark Act impose penalties for counterfeit offences, and customs authorities enforce compliance. However, areas such as human trafficking, smuggling and arms trafficking are poorly controlled owing to permeable borders, corruption and ongoing conflict. Despite updates to anti-trafficking laws and the introduction of measures against cybercrimes, enforcement is inconsistent and the lack of clarity of legal terms has been criticised.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Sudan's judiciary faces challenges in addressing organized crime owing to political interference, a lack of resources and ongoing conflict. Courts struggle with inconsistent enforcement of criminal penalties, while the absence of specialist judicial units and the arbitrary dismissal of judges undermine the rule of law. Military decrees and emergency laws further limit judicial independence, especially in cases involving state interests. Prisons are plagued by overcrowding, poor health services and corruption, with torture and inadequate security being reported. The state's control over prisons is compromised and secret detention facilities, allegedly operated by the RSF and rebel groups, raise concerns about human rights abuses. The internal conflict between the SAF and the RSF has diverted focus from addressing organized crime. The RSF controls key regions, weakening law enforcement. Despite efforts to combat human trafficking through a national action plan, law enforcement agencies face widespread distrust, with civilians resorting to self-defence. Reports of human rights violations by military intelligence in the Blue Nile region highlight systemic issues. In addition, crime rates are high in conflict-prone areas such as Darfur and Kordofan, where militias exacerbate the challenges. Law enforcement's capacity and independence are limited, complicating efforts to tackle organized crime effectively.

Sudan's numerous land borders facilitate cross-border organized crime, particularly human smuggling, arms trafficking and the illegal trade of goods such as fuel and gold. The ongoing civil war has exacerbated smuggling, especially between Sudan, Chad and Libya, with armed groups controlling key routes. The Sudanese government struggles to control these borders owing to resource limitations and political instability, relying on militias for enforcement. Vehicle smuggling, especially from Libya, is rife, with stolen vehicles used for illegal mining and other crimes. In addition, Sudan's inadequate cybersecurity infrastructure increases its vulnerability to cybercrime.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Sudan has previously made legal and institutional strides to combat financial crimes, including money laundering, through collaborations with international entities such as the International Monetary Fund and the enactment of relevant

laws. Despite these efforts, illicit financial flows persist, including gold smuggling, with foreign actors, particularly from the UAE, implicated in these activities. Internal actors, including the RSF, play a significant role in facilitating money laundering, further complicating enforcement efforts. Although Sudan has been assessed as largely compliant with anti-money laundering recommendations, challenges in implementation remain, especially following the military coup. In addition, Sudan lacks mechanisms to manage crowdfunding, a potential avenue for financial crimes.

Economic freedom is limited in Sudan, which is further repressed by the ongoing conflict that has led to severe inflation and the loss of international aid, exacerbating economic instability. The military's growing influence over state-owned and private enterprises limits economic growth and free trade. The lack of a strong regulatory framework fosters an informal economy, with governance challenges, poor rule of law and rising taxes further stalling legitimate business activities and economic reforms. Furthermore, a lack of legal safeguards that organize the economy, clientelistic practices and a lack of transparency have transformed the private sector to serve elitist self-interests in key sectors such as telecommunications, energy, transportation, the construction of dams and financial services.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Sudan is facing a severe internal conflict with the RSF, which has displaced millions of people. Displaced individuals live in overcrowded, inadequate conditions, while civil society organizations (CSOs) providing aid have been banned by the government. Despite efforts to support trafficking victims, Sudan struggles with inadequate victim identification, lenient sentencing and limited resources for shelters and care. The government has made some progress in addressing child soldier recruitment, establishing the Child Rights Unit and training officials. However, enforcement is inconsistent, and the Ministry of Defence has not finalized critical child protection protocols. Overall, Sudan faces significant challenges in combating organized crime, particularly human trafficking and smuggling. Despite having a national action plan supported by the UN, ongoing conflict and displacement have exacerbated human smuggling. Sudan was downgraded in the 2024 Trafficking in Persons Report for failing to meet anti-trafficking standards, with no significant government efforts in victim identification, prosecution or protection. Child soldier recruitment by both the SAF and the RSF continues. Border closures and states of emergency have had limited impact on organized crime. The government relies on militias, often involved in smuggling, and lacks transparency in anti-corruption and whistleblowing efforts.

Sudan's CSOs have played a vital role in combating organized crime. However, a recent decree has banned all CSOs, including those aiding victims of the ongoing conflict, owing to their perceived ties to the RSF. This ban has

exacerbated the strained relationship between the state and CSOs, particularly in RSF-controlled areas. Journalists and activists face severe threats, including censorship, unlawful arrests and violence – from both the SAF and the RSF. These actions have raised significant concerns about the erosion of democratic freedoms and human rights in Sudan.

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