



Failed Attempts to halt the Janjaweed of RSF militia's war against the people of Sudan:

From Geneva to London

Embassy of Sudan-Nairobi

سفارة جمهورية السودان - نيروبي



The Charge' d'Affaires Blog



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Despite repeated diplomatic efforts, the conflict in Sudan remains unresolved. The war, waged by the Rapid Support Forces militia (RSF), against the people of Sudan, has descended into one of the most brutal, genocidal and destructive aggression in the region. From Geneva to London, international initiatives have been launched with the stated aim of stopping the war, but they continue to fall short. The most recent example is the final communiqué issued at the London meeting on Sudan, which, like the U.S.-led Geneva initiative, repeated the same foundational errors.

The international community must come to terms with a difficult truth: no mediation effort will succeed unless it acknowledges the real context of this war, the asymmetric nature of the conflict, and the RSF's campaign of terror.

A Pattern of Diplomatic Failure

The U.S. initiative in Geneva on August 14, 2024, was a major step toward brokering a ceasefire. However, when evaluated against the United Nations' principles of effective mediation, preparedness, consent, impartiality, inclusivity, and adherence to international law, it quickly became clear that the process was flawed from the outset.

The same can now be said of the London meeting, which, rather than correcting past mistakes, reinforced them.

Lack of Preparedness and Political Will

Mediation cannot be effective without adequate preparation. The Geneva talks were hastily organised with only three weeks' notice, leaving insufficient time for logistical, political, and diplomatic groundwork. Similarly, the London communiqué gave the appearance of activity without addressing the deep structural issues that continued to fuel the war. Diplomatic momentum must be matched by political will, seriousness, and an understanding of the conflict's complexity.

Ignoring the Asymmetry of the Conflict

The failure to recognize the fundamental asymmetry in the conflict between a national army defending state institutions and a militia engaged in widespread atrocities has been a fatal flaw in both Geneva and London. By treating the RSF militia and SAF as morally and legally equivalent actors, mediators have undermined the principle of transparency and further alienated victims of RSF violence.

The RSF's militia campaign has involved ethnic cleansing, sexual violence, looting, and the occupation of civilian homes and public institutions. These crimes are not isolated incidents, they are part of a strategy of terror, fueled by illicit arms flows and financial support. Any mediation process that fails to name and address these realities cannot produce meaningful or just outcomes.

Consent without Legitimacy

The Geneva talks failed to secure the full consent of the main stakeholders, particularly the Sudanese government. Similarly, the London meeting excluded the government of Sudan and the victims of the militia, reducing the process to elite-level negotiations detached from ground realities.

Perceptions of Bias and the Rush for a Quick Fix

Mediators must be seen as impartial, yet both initiatives have been perceived as driven more by the desire for a quick ceasefire than a just and lasting peace. The insistence on short-term de-escalation, without mechanisms to ensure RSF militia withdrawal from occupied areas, stop massacring civilians, adhering to the UNSC resolution calling for lifting the siege on El-Fasher, and accountability for war crimes, signals the mediator's preference for their own interests over justice. This preference only emboldens the perpetrators.

Absent Accountability and International Law

No peace can be sustained without justice. Yet neither the Geneva Initiative nor the London Conference grounded their processes in binding international legal frameworks. Since the RSF's militia atrocities continue with impunity, and without enforcement mechanisms or consequences, ceasefires remain empty declarations. Ignoring international law for the sake of political expediency not only fails the people of Sudan, but it erodes the very foundations of global mediation.

Conclusion: Recognizing the Realities, Recalibrating Mediation

Both the Geneva and London initiatives have failed because they refused to confront the hard truths of Sudan's war. The people of Sudan deserve more than symbolic meetings and empty communiqués. They deserve a process prioritising truth over false parity and justice over convenience.

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