

UN Fact Finding Mission report on El Fasher: Sudan Core Group foreign ministers' statement

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Statement from the foreign ministers of the Sudan Core Group on the UN Fact Finding Mission (FFM) report on El Fasher.

Statement by foreign ministers of the Sudan Core Group at the Human Rights' Council:

The Foreign Ministers of the Sudan Core Group at the Human Rights' Council - Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom - express our collective outrage and profound sorrow at the findings of the Fact-Finding Mission's report on El Fasher.

The report speaks of the heinous acts committed by the RSF during their 18-month siege of El Fasher with food and humanitarian supply routes systematically obstructed and markets attacked. It describes attacks on medical facilities and critical infrastructure, and the trapping of civilians to prevent escape. The conditions became so challenging, starving inhabitants resorted to eating livestock feed to survive.

The report details the final offensive on El Fasher, describing how the RSF executed civilians throughout the city and turned El Fasher University and the El-Saudi Hospital into mass killing sites. Witnesses describe being told "we will exterminate you", and of pregnant women being shot in their bellies. Civilians were massacred as they tried to escape the city. It provides shocking testimony of women and girls who suffered horrific sexual and gender-based violence, including gang rape.

The report sets out horrendous violence which was aimed primarily at the Fur and Zaghawa communities, as part of what the FFM assessed to be the deliberate attempt to bring about the "physical destruction" of these communities, "in whole or in part". The FFM concludes that RSF led violence in El Fasher constitutes War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity, and bears "the hallmarks of genocide".

The International Criminal Court and the High Commissioner for Human Rights have also communicated that their initial assessments indicate that crimes against humanity and war crimes were committed in El Fasher.

The report concludes that in the absence of effective prevention and accountability, "the risk of further genocidal violence remains acute". We, the international community, must redouble our efforts to prevent a repeat of the atrocities committed in El Fasher, and the Sudan Core Group calls on the parties to the conflict to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law. We implore all states to consider closely the important recommendations the report lays out: Civilians must be protected; the UN arms embargo must be expanded and enforced; and restrictions of humanitarian access and accountability mechanisms must end.

The Sudan Core Group commends the FFM for its vital work in exposing the horrors

that took place in El Fasher, and beyond. The scale and depravity of the horrors described should shock the conscience of us all.

The Sudan Core Group expresses its deep and enduring solidarity for the victims of atrocities in Sudan.

Furthermore, the warring parties must urgently agree an immediate and sustainable ceasefire, allow unfettered humanitarian access, cease from violating International Humanitarian Law and ensure the protection of civilians.

The Sudan Core Group calls on the warring parties to the conflict to provide full access for further international justice mechanisms, to affected areas and populations.

This report is a call to action. In response - the Sudan Core Group announces its intention to establish a coalition of likeminded states and regional institutions committed to working together to prevent further atrocities in Sudan and support the Sudanese people to lay the foundations for eventual justice. They have waited long enough.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/un-fact-finding-mission-report-on-el-fasher-sudan-core-group-foreign-ministers-statement>