

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK of Academies & Scholarly Societies



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The Executive Committee of the International Human Rights Network of Academies and Scholarly Societies (IHRN) condemns the widespread human rights abuses that have taken place in Sudan since the outbreak of violence between the Sudan Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces in mid-April. As an alliance of more than 90 national honorary scientific societies that defends the fundamental rights of fellow scientists, scholars, and health professionals worldwide, the IHRN is following with grave concern credible reports of attacks on our colleagues in Sudan, as well as the severe impact of the violence on access to healthcare and education in the country.

The ongoing conflict in Sudan has resulted in hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries and left much of the population in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, including medical support. However, as more than 50 U.N. human rights experts emphasized in a recent statement, health care workers and others seeking to provide lifesaving care in the country have been repeatedly attacked by parties to the conflict. The World Health Organization (WHO) has publicly condemned reported attacks on health personnel, health facilities, and ambulances in Sudan, including military strikes on medical buildings and the hijacking of ambulances containing patients and paramedics. The WHO has also drawn attention to the looting of health facilities and their occupation by military forces. Human rights and medical organizations have reported several cases in which health professionals have been subjected to death threats and abducted as a result of their efforts to provide medical treatment to those in need.

Violence directed against institutions of research and higher education in Sudan presents another grave concern. In April, armed forces seized the country's National Public Health Laboratory in Khartoum, which contains samples of diseases and other biological material, preventing trained laboratory technicians from accessing the laboratory and leading WHO to warn of a biological risk. Hostilities in the country have also led to attacks and looting on university campuses. In one instance, dozens of students at the University of Khartoum were trapped on campus for several days, with one student reportedly killed.

Attacks on protected civilians and civilian infrastructure are prohibited under international human rights and humanitarian law. We join members of the

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rebecca Everly

SECRETARIAT

500 Fifth St. NW Washington,
D.C. 20001
United States of America
Email: hrnetwork@nas.edu
Internationalhrnetwork.org

FOUNDING MEMBERS

François Jacob* – *France*
Max Perutz* – *United Kingdom*
Pieter van Dijk – *Netherlands*
Torsten Wiesel* – *USA*

(*Nobel Laureate)

international human rights community in calling for an end to hostilities in Sudan, the safe provision of health care and humanitarian assistance to all those in need, and the creation of an independent, impartial mechanism to investigate and ensure accountability for abuses in the country.

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