

SUDAN

More than 1,000 university students were arrested, more than 15 killed and more than 450 injured in 2009-2012, mostly in demonstrations on campus or in education-related protests. Many of the injuries resulted from security forces using excessive force. There were dozens of incidents of attacks on, and military use of, schools.¹⁴⁵⁷

CONTEXT

In Sudan's western region of Darfur, fighting between government forces and pro-government militia and rebels over the past decade has left 300,000 people dead and more than two million displaced,¹⁴⁵⁸ with schools set on fire and looted and students and teachers targeted by armed groups.¹⁴⁵⁹

Sudan's protracted civil war between the government and southern rebels ended in 2005 with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which paved the way for South Sudan's independence in July 2011.¹⁴⁶⁰ However, unresolved secession issues have led to cross-border violence, particularly in the three disputed areas of Abyei, Blue Nile and South Kordofan.¹⁴⁶¹

Students, teachers, schools and universities have been targeted during decades of conflict and instability. The government exercises tight control over higher education, appointing public university vice-chancellors and determining the curriculum.¹⁴⁶²

As of 2011, approximately 72 per cent of adults were literate.¹⁴⁶³ In 2009, before the secession of the South, gross enrolment at primary level was 73 per cent¹⁴⁶⁴ and 39 per cent at secondary level.¹⁴⁶⁵ Tertiary gross enrolment was 6 per cent in 2000.¹⁴⁶⁶

ATTACKS ON SCHOOLS

There were different accounts of how many schools were attacked during 2009-2012. According to Arry Organization for Human Rights and Development, 48 schools were destroyed in attacks by government forces in South Kordofan between April 2011 and February 2012, but it was not specified if these were targeted attacks.¹⁴⁶⁷ Other UN, human rights and media reports documented 12 cases of schools or education buildings being destroyed, damaged or looted, including primary and secondary schools and a teacher training institute, in the areas of Darfur, Abyei, Blue Nile and South Kordofan during 2009-2012, but again it was not specified how many were targeted.¹⁴⁶⁸

According to the UN, three instances of burning, looting and destruction of schools occurred between January 2009 and February 2011.¹⁴⁶⁹ For example, militia attacked a school in Tawila, North Darfur, in September 2010, killing four children who had sought refuge there.¹⁴⁷⁰ The reported number of schools bombed or shelled then increased between June 2011 and April 2012 as fighting intensified between the government and the rebel Sudan Movement/Army-North People's Liberation (SPLM/A-N) in Blue Nile and South Kordofan.¹⁴⁷¹ and aerial bombing of civilian targets by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) took a significant toll,¹⁴⁷² although it has not been verified whether the schools were deliberately targeted. For example, in August 2011, an SAF Antonov bomber dropped four bombs on Al Masha Secondary School in Kauda1473 and in February 2012, the SAF destroyed two buildings of a bible school in the village of Heiban, dropping two bombs into its compound.¹⁴⁷⁴ Mortar shelling, for which the SPLM-N claimed responsibility and which the UN criticized as indiscriminate, also damaged one school in Kadugli in October 2012.¹⁴⁷⁵



The UN estimated that as of December 2011, 137,900 schoolchildren in South Kordofan were missing out on education because their schools had been damaged, destroyed or were still dangerous because explosive remnants of past fighting remained on site, or were being used as shelters by armed forces and IDPs. However, it is not specified how many schools were damaged or destroyed in targeted attacks.1476

ATTACKS ON SCHOOL STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATION PERSONNEL

Media and human rights reports suggest that at least 29 school students, two teachers and one head teacher were killed and another three students and a head teacher's assistant were wounded in attacks in 2009-2012 by rebels, soldiers or unidentified armed men in the Darfur region, though the motives were not known in all cases.¹⁴⁷⁷

In some incidents, the perpetrators appeared to be members of armed groups. For example, a group of armed men killed two Fur high school students from Tournato village on their way to pay their school fees at Kass High School on 13 December 2009.1478 Members of a militia allegedly killed a primary school student in Zam Zam camp in North Darfur in December 2012, while he was studying with six classmates who escaped unharmed.1479 In October 2011, four armed men reportedly shot and killed the head teacher of Shagra Eltadamoun primary school and wounded his assistant while they were on their way to submit the names and fees of students sitting for the national primary examinations.¹⁴⁸⁰ In one of the most serious incidents, but not necessarily a targeted one, suspected pro-government militia reportedly killed 18 schoolchildren when they opened fire in a market next to the elementary school in Tabra, North Darfur, in September 2010.1481

In other incidents, teachers and students were killed, injured or arrested by government authorities. On 31 July 2012, at least six secondary school students, aged 16 to 18, were killed and more than 50 other people injured during confrontations between police and anti-government protesters during reportedly largely peaceful demonstrations in Nyala. According to Human Rights Watch, the protests started at the schools and spread into the streets with protesters burning tyres. Schools were reported to have been closed temporarily following the incident.¹⁴⁸² On 1 November 2012, the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) reportedly arrested and tortured a dozen secondary school and university students in Nyala, South Darfur. One of them received acid burns on his hand.¹⁴⁸³ Relatives said the victims were given electric shocks using water and car batteries.¹⁴⁸⁴ The students were accused of stealing money from the NISS agents¹⁴⁸⁵ but their families said the real motive for their arrest was their presumed participation in the Nyala protests.¹⁴⁸⁶

In another incident on 19 December 2012, police used teargas and batons to disperse teachers protesting against low wages and alleged corruption in the Ministry of Education.¹⁴⁸⁷

MILITARY USE OF SCHOOLS

According to the UN, as of February 2011, three schools were used by the SAF in South Kordofan, including one primary school in El Buram town which was occupied despite the fact that pupils were attending classes nearby.1488 Military use of schools in El Buram by the SAF continued throughout 2011.¹⁴⁸⁹

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ATTACKS ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Attacks on higher education students, academics and personnel

A compilation of human rights and media reports suggests that 15 or more university students were killed¹⁴⁹⁰ and at least 479 were injured,¹⁴⁹¹ many when police and security forces used excessive force against students demonstrating on campus over university policies,¹⁴⁹² including limits on political and cultural activity on campus and the charging of tuition fees for Darfuri students from which they were supposed to be exempted by government agreement.¹⁴⁹³

These incidents took place across the country including in Gedaref, Kassala, Khartoum, Nyala, Port Sudan and River Nile state. Furthermore, according to figures compiled for this study from over 50 human rights and media reports, at least 1,040 students¹⁴⁹⁴ were arrested by security agents, the majority of them in protests related to education or which began at, or took place at, education institutions. Many reported torture or intimidation during their detention.¹⁴⁹⁵ Two academics, one university staff member and a group of researchers were also reported to have been arrested during 2009-2012.1496 In addition, a group of seven Southern Sudanese students was reportedly abducted and forcibly conscripted in Khartoum by Southern militias and taken to a training camp outside Khartoum, but it is unclear if they were abducted at or en route to or from campus.¹⁴⁹⁷

More than half of the arrests were made during a series of student protests and police violence that began at the University of Khartoum in December 2011. Over the course of two months, raids on student residences and arrests led to dozens of student injuries and at least 552 student arrests during protests sparked initially by the displacement resulting from construction of the Merowe Dam.1498 Riot police initially injured at least 20 students and arrested scores during a campus rally on 22 December 2011. They raided dormitories and detained 16 more students that evening and arrested more than 100 students in a student residential compound the next morning as demonstrations continued.1499 Some students were injured in the arrests.¹⁵⁰⁰ Several days later, police reportedly took into custody at least 70 more when they broke up another sit-in, using tear gas, batons and warning shots to disperse students.1501 The university was closed on 29 December but the sit-in continued. By 1 January 2012, three student leaders and at least four other students had been arrested.1502 More than 300 students continuing to stay at the university were reportedly arrested on 17 February 2012 in pre-dawn raids on dormitories. The university remained closed until mid-March 2012.¹⁵⁰³

Student demonstrations were similarly suppressed at Gezira University in early December 2012, when authorities shut down the university after four Darfuri students were found drowned in a nearby canal. The four had been arrested, along with at least 50 other students, while participating in a peaceful sit-in over tuition fees, according to the Darfur Students Association (DSA).¹⁵⁰⁴ Dozens of other students were reportedly injured in the first sit-in,¹⁵⁰⁵ and an additional 60 were injured in fighting between police and students during the demonstrations that occurred after the bodies were found.1506 The violence spread to other universities. On 11 December 2012, in protests at Omdurman Islamic University in Khartoum over the same issue, around 140 students were arrested, another 180 injured, 450 student rooms burned down, and laptops and mobile phones allegedly looted by security agents and supporters of Sudan's ruling National Congress Party (NCP).1507



Other students were similarly targeted during and after protests or meetings at academic institutions. Examples include the arrest on 20 April 2011 of 17 students affiliated with the United Popular Front, a political party supporting Abdul Wahid Al Nour, a Darfuri rebel leader, from the campus of their university, Al Nilein, after they held a demonstration calling for regime change in Khartoum;¹⁵⁰⁸ and the arrest on 17 January 2012 of 11 student members of the Democratic Unionist Party following a public talk at the Faculty of Engineering in the University of the Nile Valley in Al Damer.¹⁵⁰⁹ Forty-two Darfuri students reportedly resigned from the Red Sea University in protest over arrests and harassment by security services.¹⁵¹⁰

Students, primarily of Darfuri background, were attacked at academic events and in academic spaces and sometimes subsequently tortured or killed. On 11 March 2009, for example, a group identified as current and former students and NISS officials disrupted an authorized student forum attended by approximately 200 students at Dilling University. Ten students were injured after being hit with sticks and iron bars.¹⁵¹¹

Additionally, on 11 June 2009, 15 female Darfuri students at the University of Khartoum were assaulted by men dressed in black abayas, who had reportedly entered their dormitory. The NISS detained many of the women who had been assaulted, along with others living in the same dormitory. Five of those injured sought medical treatment at a hospital but police forced them to leave.¹⁵¹²

In other cases, students of Darfuri origin and Darfur activists were allegedly tortured by state agents. For instance, the NISS seized a Darfuri student of the Department of Education at the University of Khartoum in front of the campus in early February 2010. His body, found the next day in a street in Khartoum, showed signs of torture, and the NISS sought to have it buried without an autopsy, according to Amnesty International.¹⁵¹³ Similarly, the body of another student, reportedly abducted by NISS agents from the University of Khartoum and found on 18 June 2011, showed signs of torture; the previous day, the student had delivered a speech about the situation in Darfur. The NISS denied involvement.¹⁵¹⁴

Disputes between rival student movements also turned violent. Between October 2010 and May 2012, several clashes occurred between students supporting rival political movements that left at least 20 students wounded,¹⁵¹⁵ one of them critically. For example, at Nyala University, some eight students were injured in violence between NCP-affiliated students, who were supported by security personnel, and pro-Sudan Liberation Movement students.1516

In another incident, on 24 May 2010, an armed group believed to be an NCP-influenced student organization broke up an engagement party in the female dormitories at Dalnaj University, allegedly at the request of a dormitory supervisor. The group beat the women with iron sticks and critically wounded a third-year student in the Faculty of Science. According to the Sudan Human Rights Monitor, the student was reportedly denied medical care by the Students Support Fund and the dormitory administration, and later died. The next day, a group of students demonstrating in solidarity with their peers was fired at with live ammunition and tear gas by police forces. Two students were killed and at least 20 injured.¹⁵¹⁷

Security services also targeted professors, researchers and campus speakers perceived to be undertaking controversial research or making anti-



government remarks. According to the African Centre for Peace and Justice Studies, on 24 November 2011, the NISS arrested and raided the offices of members of an AIDS prevention group from Al Gezira University that had just carried out a survey on the prevalence of HIV and AIDS. The members were released later in the day, but all reports and data related to the survey conducted were confiscated and the Director-General of the Ministry of Health suspended the research.¹⁵¹⁸ On 20 February 2012, NISS agents arrested Professor Mohamed Zain Al-bideen, Dean of the College of Higher Education at the University of Al Zaiem Al Azhari in Omdurman, while leaving his university office, and interrogated him about an article he had written that was critical of Sudan's President. He was held for 15 days in a small cell and denied contact with his family as well as a lawyer, before being released without charge.¹⁵¹⁹

ATTACKS ON EDUCATION IN 2013

During the first half of 2013, SAF aerial bombardment of civilian targets, primarily in South Kordofan but also in North Darfur, damaged or destroyed several schools, injuring at least one student in the process;¹⁵²⁰ shelling in the area of Dresa, north-east of East Jebel Marra, North Darfur, reportedly razed one school to the ground in January.¹⁵²¹ It is not known if these were targeted attacks.

A number of schools in Al Sareif Beni Hussein locality in North Darfur were reportedly damaged or destroyed by looting and arson during fighting between the Beni Hussein and Abbala tribes in the first half of the year.¹⁵²²

Media sources reported that at least one secondary school student was shot dead and another 10 or more injured as police armed with tear gas and live ammunition attempted to disperse protesters demonstrating over the increased cost of requirements for sitting for the Sudan Secondary School Leaving Certificate.1523 Another student was killed and four more were injured outside a National Service centre while waiting to obtain a seal required for their university applications when a soldier fired live ammunition after students had reportedly become impatient over delays and perceived corruption.¹⁵²⁴

Arrests and injury of university students by security forces continued in 2013. By the end of September, at least 11 university students had been injured¹⁵²⁵ and another 65 arrested.¹⁵²⁶

In one incident in May, nine students sustained injuries after being shot on the main campus of El Fasher University, North Darfur. The students had reportedly been attending a meeting when an estimated 70 armed student militia members entered the campus, trying to garner support for a government 'mobilization' campaign against armed opposition groups. When the students failed to react, clashes broke out and the militia group began firing into the air, wounding one student. As students attempted to flee, they were met at the campus gate by police and NISS forces who began firing live ammunition into the crowd, wounding eight more.¹⁵²⁷

In September, some 22 Darfuri students were arrested and several injured after security forces stormed the campus of the University of Peace in Babanusa, West Kordofan, to break up a sit-in protesting against a university policy requiring Darfuri students to pay tuition fees, despite a political agreement¹⁵²⁸ exempting them from doing so. The police reportedly used live ammunition, tear gas, batons and air rifles against protesters.¹⁵²⁹ The university subsequently banned 30 Darfuri students



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from the university for a period ranging from one to two years.¹⁵³⁰

ENDNOTES SUDAN

¹⁴⁵⁷ This profile covers attacks on education 2009-2012, with an additional section on attacks in 2013.

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¹⁴⁵⁹ See for example: Brendan O'Malley, Education under Attack 2010 (Paris: UNESCO, 2010), 228-9; UNSC, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General, A/63/785–S/2009/158, 26 March 2009; and US Department of State, 2008 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Sudan (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, 25 February 2009).

¹⁴⁶⁰ For the sake of consistency, the information covered in this profile pertains to the geography of Sudan at the time of writing, even for the 2.5 years prior to the independence of South Sudan. The autonomous region of Southern Sudan pre-independence and South Sudan since independence are covered in a separate profile.

¹⁴⁶¹ "Sudan Conflict Profile," Peace Direct; and "Sudan Profile,"BBC News, last updated 26 October 2013.

¹⁴⁶² US Department of State, 2012 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices -Sudan (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, 2013).

¹⁴⁶³ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, "Education (all levels) Profile – Sudan," UIS Statistics in Brief (2011).

¹⁴⁶⁴ The World Bank, "School enrollment – primary (% gross)," The World Bank Data (2009).

¹⁴⁶⁵ The World Bank, "School enrollment – secondary (% gross),"
 The World Bank Data (2009).

¹⁴⁶⁶ The World Bank, "School enrollment – tertiary (% gross)," The World Bank Data (2000).

¹⁴⁶⁷ Arry Organization for Human Rights and Development, Nuba Mountains Peoples: Alone in the Face of Death - Nuba Mountains Crisis Comprehensive Report (April 2011- February 2012), (Arry, 5 March 2012), 4.

¹⁴⁶⁸ UNSC, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in the Sudan, S/2011/413, 5 July 2011, paras 53-54 (b), (c); UNSC, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General, A/66/782-S/2012/261, 26 April 2012, paras 112 and 117; Amnesty International, "We can run away from bombs, but not from hunger": Sudan's Refugees in South Sudan (Amnesty International, June 2012), 10, 21; "SAF Antonov drops four bombs in Al Masha Secondary School, Kauda," 22 August 2011; HRW, "Sudan: Southern Kordofan Civilians Tell of Air Strike Horror," 30 August 2011; HRW, Under Siege : Indiscriminate Bombing and Abuses in Sudan's Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States (New York: HRW, December 2012), 23-4; Enough Project, "Sudan Army Targets School in Latest Attack on Civilians," 3 February 2012; CNN Wire Staff, "Bombs hit evangelical Bible school in Sudan, group says," CNN, 3 February 2012; HRW, "Sudan: Crisis Conditions in Southern Kordofan," 4 May 2012; HRW, "Sudan: Blue Nile Civilians Describe Attacks, Abuses," 23 April 2012; Eric Sande, "Sudan: Education under Threat in South Kordofan," News from Africa, 26 April 2012; "Six civilians killed in rebel attack on South Kordofan's capital," Sudan Tribune, 8 October 2012; "Sudan: Mortar Attack in Kadugli Kills and Injures Dozens," Radio Dabanga, 9 October 2012; "Mortar attack on South Kordofan capital, one woman killed," Sudan Tribune, 8 October 2012.

¹⁴⁶⁹ UNSC, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in the Sudan, S/2011/413, 5 July 2011, paras 53-4.

1470 Ibid., para 54 (c)

¹⁴⁷¹ The SPLA-N is the armed wing of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), an opposition group in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, which was aligned with South Sudan's ruling party, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), and its military arm, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), before South Sudan's independence in July 2011. When Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack

the country split, those affiliated with the SPLM/A in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states became the SPLM/A-North.

¹⁴⁷² United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), Report on the Human Rights Situation during the Violence in Southern Kordofan, Sudan (UNMIS, June 2011),3; HRW, "Sudan: Southern Kordofan Civilians Tell of Air Strike Horror," 30 August2011; and HRW, "Sudan: Blue Nile Civilians Describe Attacks, Abuses," 23 April 2012.

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¹⁴⁷⁷ African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS), Sudan Human Rights Monitor December 2009-May 2010 (ACJPS, 2010), 13; "UN Human Rights Envoy to Sudan Urges Darfur Attack Probe," Sudan Tribune, 14 September 2010; HRW, Darfur in the Shadows: The Sudanese Government's Ongoing Attacks on Civilians and Human Rights (New York: HRW, June 2011), 21; "Sudan: School Headmaster Shot Dead Near El Fasher," Radio Dabanga, 24 October 2011; "Sudan: Student Killed in West Darfur," Radio Dabanga, 1 November 2011; "Sudan: Religion Teacher Killed in Brutal Attack in Serba," Radio Dabanga, 16 February 2012; "Eight killed during anti-government demos in Nyala of Sudan's Darfur region," Sudan Tribune, 31 July 2012; HRW, "Sudan: Police Fatally Shoot Darfur Protesters - Investigate and Prosecute Authorities Responsible," 3 August2012; "Sudan's justice minister orders to probe death of Nyala protesters," Sudan Tribune, 2 August 2012; "Schools shut after 8 killed in Sudan demo," AFP, 1 August 2012; "UN concerned over reports of human rights violations in Sudan, South Sudan," UN News Centre, 11 December 2012; "Sudanese Soldier Kills Secondary School

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¹⁴⁷⁸ ACJPS, Sudan Human Rights Monitor: December 2009 – May 2010, 13.

¹⁴⁷⁹ "Sudan: Abu Tira Forces Allegedly Kill Student," Radio Dabanga, 15 December 2012.

¹⁴⁸⁰ "Sudan: School Headmaster Shot Dead Near El Fasher," Radio Dabanga, 24 October 2011.

¹⁴⁸¹ "UN human right envoy to Sudan urges Darfur attack probe,"Sudan Tribune, 14 September 2010.

¹⁴⁸² "Eight Killed during Anti-Government Demos in Nyala of Sudan's Darfur Region," Sudan Tribune, 31 July 2012; HRW, "Sudan: Police Fatally Shoot Darfur Protesters - Investigate and Prosecute Authorities Responsible," 3 August 2012; "Sudan's Justice Minister Orders To Probe Death of Nyala Protesters," Sudan Tribune, 2 August 2012; "Schools Shut after 8 Killed in Sudan Demo," AFP, 1 August 2012; and "UN Concerned over Reports of Human Rights Violations in Sudan, South Sudan," UN News Centre, 11 December 2012.

¹⁴⁸³ ACJPS, Sudan Human Rights Monitor: October 2012 – February 2013, 16.

¹⁴⁸⁴ "Sudan: Students Reportedly Tortured in Nyala," Radio Dabanga, 17 November 2012.

¹⁴⁸⁵ ACJPS, Sudan Human Rights Monitor: October 2012 – February 2013, 16.

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¹⁴⁸⁷ "Sudan's Police Break up Schoolteachers' Protest," Sudan Tribune, 19 December 2012.

¹⁴⁸⁸ UNSC, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in the Sudan, S/2011/413, 5 July 2011, para 53.

¹⁴⁸⁹ UNSC, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General, A/66/782–S/2012/261, 26 April 2012, para 117.

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