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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Humanitarian situation in Sudan - presentation by IRC

Following the meeting of the Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA) of 19-20 December 2023, delegations will find in Annex the presentation made by the International Rescue Committee ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾.

¹ International Rescue Committee Inc, identification number in the EU Transparency Register: 336765244362-96.

² This document contains a presentation by an external stakeholder and the views expressed therein are solely those of the third party it originates from. This document cannot be regarded as stating an official position of the Council. It does not reflect the views of the Council or of its members.



Sudan Situation Updates

Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA) -20 December 2023

- More than seven months since the start of the conflict, the fighting has engulfed more than half of the country and humanitarian needs have reached near catastrophic levels, with no signs of improvement. Unfortunately, the worst is yet to come.
 - In the last few days, RSF forces launched an incursion into Wad Madani, in northern Al Jazira State, and the town—which had been previously spared from fighting and was housing hundreds of thousands of IDPs from Khartoum has turned into a battlefield, leading to more displacement and interrupting humanitarian operations.
 - Today, about half of the country's population—almost 25 million people—need humanitarian assistance. Nearly 18 million people across Sudan are facing acute hunger (IPC3+) – more than double the number at the same time a year ago, and nearly 5 million people are on the brink of famine.
 - Sudan faces the world's largest displacement crisis; more than 5 million people are displaced within the country, and an additional 1.4 million have sought refuge in neighboring countries that are already facing their own set of challenges.
 - The hostilities have resulted in extensive damage to critical infrastructure and facilities, including water and healthcare, the collapse of banking and financial services, frequent interruptions to electricity supply and telecommunication services and widespread looting.
 - Millions of people – especially in Khartoum, Darfur and Kordofan – lack access to food, water, shelter, electricity, education, health care and nutrition. As the humanitarian situation deteriorates, the communities' coping capacity has weakened.
 - Poor hygiene conditions and limited access to healthcare services for displaced people has led to a sharp increase in cholera and severe malnutrition cases.
 - Deepening poverty could also drive acute risks for children as at least 10,400 schools in conflict-affected areas are shuttered, leaving an estimated 19 million children without education and at risk of abuse or exploitation
 - The crisis in Sudan likely to have a significant destabilizing impact on the wider region and have impacts more globally in terms of informal migration.



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- Despite many challenges, NGOs continue to provide life-saving assistance to the vulnerable people they can reach.
 - In the first 6 months, INGOs alone have reached over 3.7 million people with life saving assistance. *(Between April and 15 October, 154 humanitarian partners reached about 4.5 million people with life-saving assistance).*
 - Since the start of the conflict, at IRC we have adapted our programmes and scaled up our response to address the increased humanitarian needs by refocusing on needs-based emergency responses to internally displaced persons (IDPs).
 - We've established a new response in Al Jazirah State, and a logistics and coordination office in Port Sudan. We're also in the process of commencing emergency response in White Nile State through multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) and WASH services to IDPs, refugees and host communities.
 - In Khartoum, we've been able to provide support to effected populations by working through community-based groups, referred to locally as Emergency Response Rooms.
- Recognizing the global trends, organizational shifts and competing humanitarian crises - compelling prioritization of humanitarian needs and difficult decisions around programming in an extremely challenging environment, however , we're also calling for additional support from donors to strengthen the ongoing response efforts across Sudan, with a focus on tackling the unfolding health and malnutrition crisis.
- The humanitarian appeal for Sudan remains grossly underfunded, with only about 39% of the funds needed available. Yet the cost of operating in Sudan has increased manifold since the start of the conflict.



- We are seeing grave violations of human rights and of international humanitarian principles take place daily and greater leadership is required from the EU to ensure access and protection of civilians, and to bring an end to the conflict.
 - More than 3,000 severe violations of child rights have been reported in the country, with most of these cases taking place in Darfur, a region that has a tragic history of ethnic cleansing and genocide. Since the conflict started, around 12,000 people have been killed, many of whom are children.
 - Increased diplomatic engagement by the EU with Sudanese authorities and regional actors who are contributing to this conflict, is required, to prevent atrocities and to address the myriad of impediments humanitarian organizations face in accessing people in need.
 - Humanitarian organizations like our own continue to face immense obstacles to reach people in need. Partly, that's because of on-going conflict and insecurity, but in addition to that cumbersome bureaucratic requirements are hindering aid efforts.
 - Parties to the conflict recently committed to facilitating humanitarian access, but we've yet to really see those commitments translate into practice.
 - In addition, the EU must continue support to civil society, who have not only taken on a critical role in provision of life-saving assistance but who continue to promote human rights, support localized mediation efforts, challenge hate speech and are essential for both conflict mediation and later accountability efforts. As the EU scales up much needed humanitarian funding it is important to not lose sight of the continued need to support local peacebuilding initiatives.
 - The EU should support both existing mechanisms such as the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) and new monitoring initiatives to ensure that violations are monitored, documented and can be investigated at one point to ensure requisite accountability. At present the existing systems do not function at the level of need and increased resources and capacity are required.
 - Ultimately, what the people of Sudan need is an end to the conflict: they need peace. Unfortunately, efforts to resolve the conflict have failed to lead to a ceasefire, and active conflict is ongoing.
 - We've been calling for an end to hostilities and the lifting of all barriers preventing populations from accessing humanitarian aid. Importantly, parties to the conflict have a duty to protect civilians and critical infrastructure, and we urge them to meet their obligations under international human rights and humanitarian laws.



Thank you!

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