



General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 June 2024

English only

Human Rights Council

Fifty-second session

27 February–31 March 2023

Agenda item 4

Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[5 February 2023]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



The Migration Crisis In The Sudan

Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience (France) and Human Rights Without Frontiers (Brussels) are concerned about the persistent migration crisis experienced by the Sudan and its ability to control the situation.

The Sudan, a dangerous transit country for migrants

The Sudan occupies a crucial geographic position at a crossroads along several migration and trade routes from West and East Africa passing through the territory. This makes the Sudan a constant target for irregular migration from other African countries as a transit point: only 10% of the migrants stay in the Sudan while 90% just cross the country to reach another destination, usually an EU member states. But movements across the Sudan are fraught with risk (1) such as:

- Kidnapping and illegal detention are part of a pattern of severe violations faced by refugees and migrants on the move along all major mixed migration routes;
- Smugglers play a dominant role. The data of Mixed Migration Centre's 4Mi Project (2) indicates that, on average across the seven migration routes covered, smugglers are consistently the most common perpetrators of kidnappings.

The irregular immigration has created a popular market of human trafficking in the region, in which groups of intermediaries are active through the use of social networking sites.

The cost of migrants remaining in the Sudan casts a shadow on the Sudanese national security and constitutes an economic burden as well.

With due haste, the Sudanese government addressed the problems of migrants crossing its territory by seeking to cooperate with neighboring countries and by enacting specific laws to curb this phenomenon, such as the Passport and Immigration Law (2015).

This law was to address the deficiencies of the previous one dating back to 1994. The following articles were amended or added:

Article 9: Entry in and exit from the Sudan, and residence

Article 22: Deportation procedures

Article 29.1: Crime of infiltration

Article 31: Crime of harboring or hiding a foreigner in the Sudan

An increase in insecurity and instability in the country will most likely translate into increased risk for people on the move across the Sudan. They might get stuck in the country, unable to continue their journeys or return, making them potentially vulnerable to situations of exploitation.

In recent years, many reports have highlighted the risks of human traffickers kidnapping and targeting refugees and migrants in eastern Sudan. This phenomenon could potentially increase again amidst further political and societal instability.

Migration and international cooperation

In November 2015, a Summit on Migration, in which the Sudan took part, took place in Valletta, Malta. European and African Heads of State and Government gathered around the objective to strengthen cooperation between Europe and Africa.

A political declaration (3) underlining the concern of participating States and organisations regarding humanitarian consequences of irregular migration and their commitment towards the improvement of the management of migration flows was adopted.

The Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP) (4), which lays down a series of priorities aiming at supporting Valletta Partners with the enhancement of migration governance between Europe and Africa was adopted. The JVAP became the regional framework to address migration policy. It is built around five domains, each addressing a specific area (5):

Development benefits of migration and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement - Legal migration and mobility – Protection and asylum - Prevention of and fight against irregular migration, smuggling of and trafficking in migrants - Return, readmission and reintegration.

One of the two migration dialogues associated to the joint Valletta Action Plan is the Khartoum Process, highlighting the strategic importance of the country for movements from the Horn of Africa toward Europe.

Noteworthy is that Khartoum is hosting the “Regional Operational Centre in support of the Khartoum process and the African Union (AU) Horn of Africa Initiative” (ROCK) (6), a regional project to fight criminal networks involved in human trafficking and smuggling, financed by the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa.

In the past, the Sudanese regime used migration to start normalising relations with Europe as it became an important country in managing mixed migration from the Horn of Africa. The EU, the UN and the current regime in power in Khartoum should pursue their cooperation on migration management to guarantee security and stability in the region.

Between 2017 and 2020, the Sudanese authorities stopped thousands of migrants crossing their country on their way to Libya, one of the favorite roads of African migrants to Europe, and arrested dozens of traffickers in human beings.

Their cooperation resulted in the decline of migrants' numbers, especially to Europe. According to a report of the European Border Protection Agency (Frontex) issued in January 2019, there was a decline in the number of people crossing the European borders illegally.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Considering the history of the cooperation between the Sudanese authorities, UN agencies and international organizations on humanitarian issues in the Sudan,

Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience urges the UN and its agencies as well as the EU and its member states to help him provide the Sudan with the needed financial, logistical and technical resources:

- to combat irregular immigration and trafficking in human beings;
- to train Sudanese forces combating irregular immigration and securing borders;
- to uphold their commitments to help refugees and help services in the camps;
- to provide the necessary training courses in the fields of humanitarian work and assistance to the victims of human trafficking;
- to pursue the training on civil protection and how to deal with IDPs in the camps;
- to provide shelter to the refugees until the reasons leading to the asylum no longer subsist;
- to organize the voluntary repatriation to the countries of origin and to resettle in a third country
- to provide psychological support and social services to victims, medical services, legal services and protection;
- to go on ensuring the safety of refugees and asylum-seekers;
- to continue sending aid to the Sudanese Commission for Refugees so that the migrants can receive food, health, education, accommodation, housing, drinking water, etc.

Human Rights Without Frontiers, NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.

1. Mixed Migration Centre, Everyone's prey. Kidnapping and extortionate detention in mixed migration, Briefing Paper July 2019. <https://bit.ly/40sGcsA>

2. Ibid.

3. 2015 Valletta Summit on Migration,

https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21841/political_decl_en.pdf

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Regional Operational Center in Khartoum in support of the Khartoum Process and AU-Horn Africa Initiative

<https://www.civipol.fr/en/projects/regional-operational-center-khartoum-support-khartoum-process-and-au-horn-africa>

7. Frontex, Migratory Routes,

<https://frontex.europa.eu/we-know/migratory-routes/central-mediterranean-route/>