

## **Annex II: Response from the Rapid Support Forces to Human Rights Watch, July 22, 2024**

**COPY FROM EMAIL:**

Rapid Support Forces Command  
Office of the Official Spokesperson  
Khartoum, Sudan

July 22, 2024

Human Rights Watch  
350 Fifth Avenue, 34th Floor  
New York, NY 10118-3299

Dear Ms. Laetitia Bader:

Greetings.

Subject: Request for Response to Human Rights Watch Conclusions on Allegations of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Related to the Conflict in Khartoum

First and foremost, we express our sincere gratitude for reaching out to us regarding your conclusions on allegations of sexual and gender-based violence in Khartoum.

The Rapid Support Forces, both before and after the war, has always taken all necessary measures to prevent sexual violence and all other forms of violence that constitute human rights violations. These measures were emphasized immediately after the outbreak of the war on April 15, 2023, either through direct instructions to field commanders on the ground via standing orders, or through statements and declarations from the Rapid Support Forces' leadership from the bases to the top leadership.

The Rapid Support Forces is strictly committed to all international conventions and treaties related to human rights and international humanitarian law. They recognize the sanctity of

not attacking health institutions, hospitals, medical centers, or medical personnel during armed conflicts.

The Rapid Support Forces does not occupy any hospitals or medical centers in the three cities of Khartoum State. On the contrary, despite the systematic destruction of hospitals and medical centers by the armed forces through repeated aerial bombardment, the Rapid Support Forces, through its medical unit, has sought to open medical centers in collaboration with neighborhood committees in various parts of Khartoum to provide medical and health care to Sudanese residents in those areas. In this regard, our troops have opened and are helping to operate 54 hospitals and health centers in Khartoum State.

The Rapid Support Forces, through the Ground Monitoring and Negative Phenomena Control Committee, works to follow up on any violations or abuses and prosecute the perpetrators.

Regarding sexual violence and all other violations reported in incidents in West Darfur State, an investigation committee was formed in West Darfur State under Resolution No. 13 of 2023 by the Rapid Support Forces Command (see attachments).

In line with the recommendations of the United Nations Secretary-General regarding sexual violence, human rights, and international humanitarian law, the Rapid Support Forces Commander issued Standing Order No. 6, dated April 19, 2023 (see attachments), to ensure no assault on personal dignity, including sexual violence.

The Rapid Support Forces fully understands that stopping human rights violations, which unfortunately cannot be entirely avoided in wars, requires stopping the war itself. Therefore, the Rapid Support Forces has responded positively and complied with all international calls for a peaceful ceasefire. In this regard, they participated in the Jeddah Platform negotiations with the armed forces, sponsored by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States of America, which began on May 6, 2023, less than a month after the conflict broke out. The Rapid Support Forces also participated in the Geneva negotiations, which began on Thursday, July 11, 2024, mediated by the United Nations, to reach a potential ceasefire to facilitate humanitarian aid and protect civilians from human rights violations.

Regarding the independent international fact-finding mission, the Rapid Support Forces is fully prepared to cooperate with the United Nations fact-finding mission and are in contact with them. The Rapid Support Forces has repeatedly called for the necessity of forming this mission, welcomed the decision to form it, and expressed their complete readiness to cooperate with it to uncover all the facts related to the war in Sudan.

They have committed in all their statements to cooperate with the international mission, either by sharing information with them or allowing the mission team to visit areas under the control of the Rapid Support Forces to conduct their investigations.

Please find attached the following documents:

- The measures taken by the Rapid Support Forces.
- Code of conduct.
- Rules of engagement.
- The decision to form the investigation committee on the incidents in West Darfur State.
- Standing Order No. 6 issued by the Rapid Support Forces Commander.

We, once again, express our sincere gratitude for reaching out to us regarding your conclusions on allegations of sexual and gender-based violence in Khartoum. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any further questions or need additional information.

With my sincere thanks and appreciation,  
Lt. Col. Al-Fateh Qurashi

Official Spokesperson of the Rapid Support Forces  
General Command of the Rapid Support Forces  
Khartoum, Sudan