



ماعت للسلام والتنمية وحقوق الإنسان
Maat For Peace, Development, and Human Rights

The Reality of Peace and the Human Rights Situation in the Arab Region

Case Study of the States of Palestine and Sudan

**On the Sidelines of the International Day
of Living Together in Peace**



Edited and reviewed:

Dr. Sherif Abdel Hamid

Prepared by:

Nesreen Hossban



Introduction

Peace is a basic foundation upon which societies and peoples are built, and without it, countries cannot rise and flourish with the qualities of development and prosperity. Accordingly, the General Assembly declared May 16 of each year “International Day for Living Together in Peace,” in the context of its keenness to “mobilize the efforts of the international community to promote peace, tolerance, solidarity, understanding, and interdependence, and to express the desire of members of society to live and work together, united despite their differences to build a world that enjoys peace, solidarity and harmony¹” Despite these motivational efforts to mobilize people towards advancing peace and global harmony, some countries were not spared from armed conflicts that resulted in decades of devastation and instability, while the citizen was the main victim of those conflicts, which did not take into account the limits of international law obligated to protect innocent civilians and their public facilities during times of war and crisis.

And no area in the Arab region was free from experiencing these conditions during a certain period of time, and some of them are still experiencing these conditions until today, as is the case in the states of Palestine and Sudan, while the former suffers from an Israeli occupation that has lasted for more than 75 years and its fires flared up again on October 7. 2023, the other suffers from a civil war that has been raging for more than a year after it was ignited by armed militias in mid-April 2023.

The situation did not stop at the point of “conflict” Rather, these crises went beyond this scope, leading to the commission of “war crimes and the crime of genocide,” destroying not only the rights of the two peoples, but also entire generations, eliminating their dignity, their lives, their hopes, and their future, as described by the United Nations expert on the human rights situation in Sudan, “it is the destruction of a country in a way that is humiliating to people²” while the United Nations Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory expressed these crimes by saying that “the occupied Palestinian territory is surrounded by a cycle of violence that cannot be stopped, and no Palestinian is safe under Absolute Israeli control”.³

¹ اليوم الدولي للعيش معاً في سلام، الأمم المتحدة، <https://tinyurl.com/y2v3umzm>

² السودان يعاني من "اللاإنسانية"، الخبير المعني بشأن حالة حقوق الإنسان في السودان رضوان نويصر، الأمم المتحدة، <https://tinyurl.com/365xpaep>

³ مقرر أممية: شهادات من الأرض الفلسطينية المحتلة تظهر عمقا جديدا للفظائع في غزة، الأمم المتحدة، <https://tinyurl.com/4ycffuda>

In this context, Maat Association for Peace, Development and Human Rights sought to shed light on the violations that the Arab region is suffering from and which make any attempts to impose peace in the region incapable. This comes out of its belief in the importance of documenting these violations in an effort to mobilize the international community to support the Arab efforts made in this area. In addition to the need to listen to the voices of civil society, which plays a vital role in these two crises in order to strengthen global solidarity to stop wars and establish peace and harmony.

First: Armed conflicts in the Arab region and their impact on the human rights situation (the two-state model of Palestine and Sudan)

During the past year, the Arab region witnessed two of the most violent and brutal conflicts, violating all international rules and laws that contradict the permissibility of the blood of innocents, premeditated murder, and other inhumane violations committed against the Sudanese and Palestinian peoples. The two countries suffer from an almost non-existent human rights situation, and the perpetrators are not subject to any type of punishment that deters such actions, in light of urgent calls and mounting denunciations to stop the fighting and violence immediately in order to preserve the remaining lives.

• The human rights situation in Sudan:

The Sudanese war is entering its thirteenth month after it began in mid-April 2023, with it reaching more than 70% of the country's area. The war has left no room to provide any situation that allows preserving even the basic rights of individuals, not to mention violating them in the most heinous ways that harm civilians to the extent of war crimes and crimes against humanity ranged from premeditated murder, forced detention, the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, and child recruitment ⁴.

- War crimes, including genocide, caused the deaths of more than 17,000 people according to announced numbers, while the real numbers for the total of deaths are expected to be higher than that⁵. This is in addition to the displacement of more than 11 million people from 9 states, with about 8.1 million Sudanese fleeing their homes, including 1.8 million who fled outside the country.⁶
- It is difficult for the Sudanese people to enjoy the most basic rights, including their right to food, health, education, and housing, after war attacks targeted all state

⁴ مفوض حقوق الإنسان: مأساة السودان في طي النسيان وعلى المجتمع الدولي العمل لمنع مزيد من الفوضى، الأمم المتحدة، <https://tinyurl.com/3vuzjhz3>

⁵ عام من الحرب.. السودان ينزف والاقتصاد ينهار، سكاي نيوز عربية، أبريل 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/56d68j8c>

⁶ 365 يوماً من الدمار والخسائر.. السودان يتكبد خسائر فادحة بعد مرور سنة على الحرب، اليوم السابع، مارس 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/pua3cbk3>

facilities indiscriminately, as about 10% of residential buildings, 40% of markets, and 60% of vital buildings and installations in the capital were bombed. Including the Presidential Palace, parts of the Army General Command, a number of museums, historical buildings, ministries, and governmental and private bodies, some of which burned completely. More than 70% of the schools, universities, institutes, and specialized higher governmental and private colleges in Khartoum were completely or partially vandalized, which exposed 19 million Sudanese students to loss an entire academic year. A full academic year. Moreover, more than 60% of the country's regions suffer from a scarcity of electricity, water, and communications services.⁷

- More than a third of the country's population suffers from acute hunger at a rate of 17.7 million, which exceeds acute food insecurity, in addition to the presence of increasing indicators and warnings of a possible famine in the country, according to the Famine Early Warning System Network, as there are 4.9 million people on the brink of famine. This will result in the proportion of children under the age of five and pregnant and lactating women suffering from acute malnutrition reaching 4.9 million in 2024.⁸
- With regard to public health, widespread diseases have become an associated part of life, in addition to limited or almost non-existent access to basic health services and supplies. As of February 2024, the number of people infected with cholera reached more than 10,000, 5,000 cases of measles, about 8,000 cases of dengue fever, and more than 1.2 million clinical cases of malaria⁹. Hospitals and health centers were not spared the scourge of war, as about 70 to 80% of hospitals in the states affected by the conflict are not functioning, in addition to the lack of medical and operating supplies due to attacks or theft and looting, which leads to the withdrawal of medical teams.¹⁰
- According to documentation by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, there are 60 incidents of conflict-related sexual violence, involving at least 120 victims across the country, the vast majority of whom are women and girls, with the Rapid Support Forces documented committing 81% of these crimes. This

⁷ عام من الحرب.. السودان ينزف والاقتصاد ينهار، مرجع سبق ذكره

⁸ تقرير عن الوضع في السودان، unocha، <https://tinyurl.com/5b5ckw98>

⁹ الصحة العالمية: تردى النظام الصحي وانتشار الأمراض المعدية في السودان، اليوم السابع، فبراير 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/wbb6rrzy>

¹⁰ «الصحة العالمية» لـ«الشرق الأوسط»: مستشفيات السودان على شفا الانهيار، الشرق الأوسط، أبريل 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/2nc5fnba>

came with the office indicating that “these numbers do not largely reflect reality.”¹¹

- **The human rights situation in Palestine**

The Gaza Strip has witnessed Israeli aggressive attacks in an unprecedented manner for nearly eight months, after they began last October 7. The violation of the rights of the Palestinian citizen did not come as a natural result of the course of the war, but rather was a deliberate policy by the occupation forces, as they deliberately destroyed any path that could cling to this citizen can complete his normal life, whether with housing, health, education, or other basic rights that have not left a single day in 7 months without being violated.

- The death toll as a result of the aggressive attacks on the Gaza Strip reached more than 34,971 dead and 78,641 wounded, in addition to the presence of more than 10,000 people still under the rubble and have not been recovered yet¹². Among other crimes against humanity committed by the occupation forces are cases of mass arbitrary detention and torture inside prisons, including of women and children¹³, in addition to the escalation of rape and sexual violence against women in Gaza.¹⁴
- According to the last census conducted in January at the beginning of the year, the number of people displaced as a result of the attacks reached about 1.9 million people, a percentage that includes 85% of the total population of the Strip at the end of 2023, which makes this large number present in very limited spaces in a way that threatens people’s enjoyment of their basic rights “the right to adequate housing”¹⁵ in addition to this large number, at the beginning of April, approximately 150,000 people were displaced from Rafah, out of 300,000 in various parts of the Strip, after the threats they received from the

¹¹ مفوض حقوق الإنسان: مأساة السودان في طي النسيان وعلى المجتمع الدولي العمل لمنع مزيد من الفوضى، مرجع سبق ذكره
¹² غزة.. حصيلة القتلى ترتفع إلى 34971 منذ اندلاع الحرب، سكاى نيوز عربية، مايو 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/7u6d2ka7>
¹³ بعد تلقيها شهادات ومعلومات صادمة عن الاعتقال التعسفي، مؤسسات حقوق الإنسان الفلسطينية تدين عمليات التنكيل والتعذيب بحق مئات المعتقلين الفلسطينيين من قطاع غزة، الميزان، ديسمبر 2023. <https://tinyurl.com/5ya32bt6>
¹⁴ قلق أممي من تزايد حالات اغتصاب يرتكبها جنود الاحتلال في غزة، جريدة القدس، مارس 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/yp3jtk2r>
¹⁵ عدد النازحين داخل غزة يبلغ نحو 1.9 مليون شخص.. وسفير فلسطين بالقاهرة: القطاع يعيش كارثة إنسانية، بوابة الأهرام، يناير 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/mut64rjt>

Israeli army to evacuate the place in order to begin expanding its military operations there.¹⁶

- 88,868 buildings were destroyed, ranging from 31,198 buildings completely to 16,908 severely damaged buildings and 40,762 moderately damaged buildings. This represents about 35% of the total buildings in the Gaza Strip, and an estimated 121,400 damaged housing units.¹⁷
- As for food security, the acute food insecurity threshold of famine has been exceeded. There are 1.1 million people in Gaza, who have completely exhausted their food supplies and coping capacities and are suffering from catastrophic hunger and starvation, which constitutes half of the population in Gaza, which has caused High death rate due to hunger.¹⁸
- With regard to the health system, the occupation deliberately destroyed it completely. It targeted 36 hospitals and approximately 160 health care centers¹⁹, leaving 84% of the health facilities in Gaza destroyed, with the direct targeting and executions of medical personnel, which claimed the lives of 484 of its members²⁰, leaving more than 730 thousand people in the Gaza and North Gaza regions without real health services.²¹
- The occupation forces eliminated the right of more than 368 thousand students to education by completely or partially destroying 7 universities, 97 schools completely, and 295 other schools partially, and 75% of the school buildings were damaged. The occupation also destroyed 215 nursery schools, equivalent to half of their number in the sector.²²

¹⁶ بسبب العدوان على غزة.. 90% من القطاع الخاص و15% بالحكومي فقدوا وظائفهم | الاحتلال يواصل التوغل شمالي القطاع وجنوبه ويأمر بإخلاء مناطق جديدة، مدى مصر، مايو 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/2rts8xk2>

¹⁷ إسرائيل تطوق رفح الفلسطينية.. الأعمار الصناعية تكشف موجة النزوح الفلسطيني الجديد، القاهرة الإخبارية، مايو 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/3j32mjky>

¹⁸ تقرير دولي: المجاعة وشيكة في شمال غزة وجميع السكان يواجهون أزمة جوع كارثية، الأمم المتحدة، <https://tinyurl.com/57pxunzv>
¹⁹ " حرب على المستشفيات" .. إستراتيجية اعتمدها قوات الاحتلال في عدوانها على القطاع، الجزيرة، أبريل 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/yc47sm8j>

²⁰ أكثر من مليون إصابة بأمراض معدية في غزة.. و32 مستشفى خارج الخدمة، الشرق، أبريل 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/2pz6eu3t>

²¹ صحة غزة: الجيش الإسرائيلي نفذ إعدامات مباشرة للكوادر الطبية والمرضى بمجمع الشفاء الطبي، RT Online، أبريل 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/yc3mnusm>

²² التعليم في غزة بعد مرور 7 أشهر من الحرب.. نسف المدارس والجامعات واغتيال العقول، شفقنا، مايو 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/57tsm8d6>

"Statistics of the human rights situation in the two countries"

	Palestine	Sudan
Total deaths	35 thousand	17 thousand
Total displacement	1.9 million displaced people	11 million displaced people
Destroyed buildings	About 35% of the total buildings in the Gaza Strip were destroyed	10% of residential buildings, 40% of markets, and 60% of vital buildings and installations were bombed
Health institutions	84% of health facilities were destroyed	About 70 to 80% of hospitals were destroyed
Educational institutions	7 universities were completely destroyed, 97 schools were completely destroyed, 295 other schools were partially destroyed, and 215 nursery schools were destroyed.	Destroying 70% of schools, universities, institutes and higher colleges
Food security	1.1 million people are on the brink of famine	4.9 million on the brink of famine

Second: Arab efforts to support the foundations of peace building in the region

The impact of the war on the two countries was not limited to just their borders, but the echo of the war was heard to all countries of the world, specifically the neighboring countries in the Arab region, and due to the intensity of the damage expected from the continuation of the war in the two countries on the possibility of achieving peace in the region, the group of Arab countries sought to make wide-ranging efforts and enter into negotiations with western countries regarding a basic and main goal and the first basic pillar in building peace in the region, which is a "ceasefire".

The most important of these efforts in light of the aggressive attacks on the Gaza Strip are:

- On November 11, 2023, the Arab Islamic Summit held its extraordinary session, which was held in Riyadh specifically to discuss developments in the situation in the Palestinian Gaza Strip. The summit's draft resolution included several axes, including the following²³:
 1. Breaking the siege of Gaza, and imposing the immediate entry of Arab, Islamic, and international humanitarian aid convoys, including food, medicine, and fuel, into the Strip.
 2. Supporting all steps Egypt takes to confront the consequences of the brutal Israeli aggression on Gaza, and supporting its efforts to bring aid into the Gaza Strip in an immediate, sustainable and sufficient manner.
 3. Demanding the Security Council to take a decisive and binding decision that imposes a cessation of aggression and curbs the colonial occupation authority that violates international law.
 4. Calling on all countries to stop exporting weapons and ammunition to the occupation authorities that are used by their army and terrorist settlers to kill the Palestinian people.
 5. Requesting the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to initiate an immediate investigation into the war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Israel against the Palestinian people, assigning the General Secretariats of the organization and the League to follow up on its implementation, and establishing a joint specialized legal monitoring unit that documents the Israeli crimes committed in the Gaza Strip Since October 7th.
- On March 20, 2024, the foreign ministers of Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia met with US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken in Cairo, to discuss truce negotiations, ways to stop the ongoing Israeli war on Gaza, and the necessity of introducing aid to the Strip while developing an Arab vision for a peace plan to a comprehensive regional plan that begins with ending the war on the Gaza Strip and then launching a path that leads to the establishment of a Palestinian state, in exchange for broad Arab normalization with Israel .²⁴

²³ مشروع قرار «القمة العربية الإسلامية» يدعو لكسر حصار غزة، الشرق الأوسط، نوفمبر 2023. <https://tinyurl.com/3r92xmet>

²⁴ وزراء خارجية عرب يلتقون بـبليكن في القاهرة لبحث وقف إطلاق النار في قطاع غزة، RT Online، مارس 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/2nj5uyem>

- On April 3, 2024, the Council of the League of Arab States held an extraordinary session at the level of permanent delegates, headed by Mauritania, the current President of the League Council, and at the request of the State of Palestine and the support of a number of Arab countries. The meeting touched on a range of issues²⁵:
 1. Arab and international action to stop the crime of genocide and the policy of starvation and displacement committed by Israel against the Palestinian people.
 2. Arab and international action within the framework of the political solution to the Palestinian issue.
 3. Arab and international action in light of the ongoing Israeli threats of an imminent invasion of the city of Rafah, which is home to more than 1.5 million displaced Palestinians and citizens, in addition to Israel’s intransigence and refusal to implement Security Council resolutions related to the ceasefire and the entry of humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip, the latest of which is Resolution No. (2728).), which demanded an immediate ceasefire during the holy month of Ramadan.

Some Arab efforts were directed towards resolving the Sudanese crisis, as follows:

- Cairo presented four ceasefire initiatives, the first of which was one day after the outbreak of war on April 16, and then developed them later, and included several axes²⁶:
 1. A ceasefire according to a timetable that allows the withdrawal of the forces of both parties from the streets and facilities, provided that a committee from the European Union and the African Union is established to monitor this process.
 2. Forming another committee for both sides of the Sudanese military component regarding resuming discussions on the integration process between them, and removing the points of disagreement that caused the clashes.
 3. Forming an Arab-African committee whose tasks will be to bring viewpoints closer together, by arranging a meeting in a neutral capital.

²⁵ بدء اجتماع مجلس الجامعة العربية لبحث التحرك لوقف الجرائم الإسرائيلية ضد الفلسطينيين، وكالة أنباء الشرق الأوسط، أبريل 2024.

<https://tinyurl.com/3szpn5re>

²⁶ الدور العربي في السودان ملامح الدور وفرص التأثير في الأزمة، شؤون عربية، ديسمبر 2023. <https://tinyurl.com/yhdafe6w>

- The Arab League held a meeting of permanent delegates at the Arab League headquarters regarding these clashes, in addition to holding three emergency meetings to discuss the Sudanese issue at the level of Arab foreign ministers²⁷ On May 1, 2024, the League of Arab States issued Resolution No. 8913, issued by its Council meeting in its resumed session chaired by Egypt, regarding developments in the situation in the Republic of Sudan, which emphasized²⁸:
 1. Immediately cease all hostilities, without restrictions or conditions, and strengthen adherence to the truce.
 2. Condemning in the strongest terms the targeting of civilians and civilian facilities, especially medical ones, and the killing of civilians, regardless of their nationalities, and warning of the consequences and repercussions of such actions.
 3. Demanding the preservation of the sanctity of diplomatic missions and the safety and security of the crews working in them, in line with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961, and warning against any violation of them in what is considered a violation of the rules of international law.
 4. Member States’ readiness to provide all forms of emergency humanitarian support, medical and food aid through specialized ministerial councils and in coordination with national Sudanese authorities and international and regional organizations.
- The “Jeddah Platform,” sponsored by the governments of Saudi Arabia and the United States, which achieved some successes that almost brought the country closer to peace through indirect negotiations between the delegations of the army and the Rapid Support, such as the May 11 round in which it was agreed to withdraw the Rapid Support from residential homes for Sudanese citizens and hospitals.²⁹

Despite these efforts, it can be said that the Arab League has failed to carry out the role assigned to it to resolve major Arab issues, at the forefront of which is the Palestinian and Sudanese issue, for many reasons, including the defect in its organizational structure and the expansion of its administrative apparatus, systems, and organizations.

²⁷ المرجع السابق

²⁸ الجامعة العربية تصدر قرارا بشأن السودان.. وتدعو لوقف الأعمال القتالية، اليوم السابع، مايو 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/mv6pi8rx>

²⁹ هل ينجح «منبر جدة» في إنهاء الحرب بالسودان؟، التغيير، مايو 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/yjfvzpb>

Third: The role of Arab civil society in the peacebuilding process in the Arab region

Civil society continues to prove day after day that it is a major player in the peacebuilding plan, and it confirms this in all ways through its effective roles that we witness in all wars and crises, including its extremely important role in the crisis of the states of Palestine and Sudan.

- **Civil society during the Israeli attacks on Gaza:**

Since the first days of the war, 108 civil society organizations began denouncing what they classified as a “war crime” at the hands of the occupation forces and all countries cooperating with them. They also continued to call on the international community to protect civilians and put pressure on Israel to comply with international law stipulated in the Geneva Conventions.³⁰

After the campaigns of discrimination and racism that content supporting the Palestinian cause was subjected to, it began monitoring these violations, as the Arab Center for the Development of Social Media documented, in the first four days of the attacks, 19,000 tweets of a violent nature out of 23,000 tweets in the Hebrew language on the Twitter platform. It was not limited to just documentation, but it charged social media companies with the need to recognize their critical role and responsibility in the region, and to adhere to the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, as well as international laws related to protecting human rights to freedom of expression, to ensure respect and protection of Palestinian voices on their platforms.³¹

- **Civil society during the Sudanese crisis:**

Civil society has been working on the internal and external arenas, launching urgent appeals to the international community to denounce the suffering of the people and raise warnings of a humanitarian catastrophe in Sudan due to the war, in addition to documenting the violations and crimes occurring on the ground. The matter was not limited to inside Sudan, but Sudanese organizations also worked from abroad, such as an organization based in Uganda, which documented cooperation with the United Nations Integrated Mission to Support the Transitional Phase in Sudan (UNITAMS) through a number of joint activities.³²

³⁰ منظمات المجتمع المدني الفلسطيني تدعو الى حماية الشعب الفلسطيني، أمان، أكتوبر 2023. <https://tinyurl.com/3dwam9yx>
³¹ بيان مشترك من منظمات المجتمع المدني: نداء عاجل إلى شركات التكنولوجيا لاحترام الحقوق الرقمية الفلسطينية في أوقات الأزمات، حملة، المركز العربي لتطوير الإعلام الاجتماعي، أكتوبر 2023. <https://tinyurl.com/2hwzs849>
³² يونيتامس، الأمم المتحدة، <https://rb.gv/yf79r>

As for the internal level, in the first days of the war, it tried to reach a temporary truce between the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces that would last for 10 days, during which they could provide corridors for civilians to cross, and even create buffer zones for them to live within 10 kilometers³³. This is in addition to a number of campaigns promoting war violations of the rights of the Sudanese people and employing social media for this purpose.

- **White flags campaign in Sudan**

A group of journalists and activists worked to organize this campaign with the aim of calling for peace and stopping the ongoing war in the country. The campaign takes several forms, such as raising white flags on rooftops and marching with them in car convoys, or changing personal photos on personal accounts on social media to an image of the white flag.³⁴

Fourth: Recommendations

- We call for the necessity of an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in both countries as one of the first pillars of peace in the Arab region.
- The Arab League must take more stringent decisions to challenge these violations that affect all humanitarian laws and treaties and prevent any attempts to bring about peace.
- The need for the international community to put pressure on the warring parties and impose strict sanctions that combat the war crimes and crimes against humanity they commit.
- International support must be mobilized and provided to all Palestinian and Sudanese civil society organizations and their representatives in general in order to support their efforts, which is considered a basic condition for supporting the peace-building process in the Arab region.
- Arab countries must take into account, within the framework of their efforts, the importance of supporting affected victims and not neglect their duty to contain these innocent people by providing support in all possible ways.

³³ دعوات بالسودان لهدنة جديدة تمتد 10 أيام.. وفتح ممرات أمنية، العربية، أبريل 2023. <https://rb.gy/mx2fd>

³⁴ اشتباكات السودان: تفاعل مع حملة "الأعلام البيضاء" للمطالبة بوقف الحرب، بي بي سي نيوز عربية، يونيو 2023. <https://tinyurl.com/ycep9svz>