



Security Council briefing on Sudan under 'Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict' (2417), 20 March 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt

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Thank you, President, and I also thank OCHA Director Wosornu, FAO Deputy Director-General Martina, and Deputy Executive Director Skau for their timely and comprehensive briefings.

Over the past eleven months, violence in Sudan has culminated in mass displacement, malnutrition, inter-ethnic, and sexual and gender-based violence emergency.

As we have heard today, crop harvests in 2024 are expected to be below average. Many farmers in conflict-affected have suffered loss of farming assets and land, or forced to abandon their properties.

Food prices are soaring, aggravated by reduced quantities of food, and destruction of food production assets.

Vulnerable groups are particularly at risk. Almost three-quarters of a million children are projected to suffer severe acute malnutrition, all while missing a year of education.



The humanitarian response to this crisis has been beleaguered by a lack of resources, safety, and security constraints. Systematic impediments to aid access over borders and frontlines by the parties have compounded the situation.

Since the start of the conflict, 20 aid workers have been killed and 33 injured. Nearly 150 warehouses and offices have been looted.

Humanitarian aid workers have been denied permission to travel, and suffered violent attacks. Any violence against humanitarian aid workers is deplorable and completely unacceptable.

Crossline delivery of humanitarian aid in Sudan has also been severely constrained, particularly to Khartoum, Kordofan, and Al Jazirah. Host communities who welcomed millions are now exhausted and in need of urgent support.

In this regard, any humanitarian scale up needs all possible border crossing points to remain open and accessible for humanitarians.

UN agencies and INGOs must reach those most in need first. Unfortunately, in many areas of most concern, there is little to no international humanitarian presence.



Cross-border operations from Chad to Darfur have proved vital as the routes from Port Sudan are either unavailable or impractical.

While Malta welcomes the recent changes in aid delivery modalities announced by the Sudanese authorities, we recall the necessity to have multiple crossing points available.

Humanitarians need greater resourcing, a lifting of the barriers they face to reach populations, as well as guarantees of safety and security from the parties.

President

Malta calls on the parties to the conflict to implement Resolution 2724. The demand of a ceasefire for the holy month of Ramadan not only has not been implemented, but we are witnessing an increase in violence and suffering.

They must also abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law, which includes a prohibition of the use of starvation of the civilian population as a method of warfare. Parties must also protect vital goods, infrastructure, and services to ensure the civilian population's essential needs are met.



They must also commit to sustained humanitarian dialogue to facilitate crossline and cross-border humanitarian access, and ensure there is rapid, unimpeded, and safe flows of humanitarian aid to all civilians no matter where they are in the country.

The international community must do its part and scale up multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance as part of a comprehensive protection and famine aversion response in Sudan.

The upcoming humanitarian pledging conference for Sudan that will take place in France next month will be an important opportunity that should not be missed.

To conclude, President, it is imperative that we, the members of this Council, re-double our efforts to rapidly end this conflict. The people of Sudan are in a desperate situation, as have heard today. This is one of the worst humanitarian disasters in recent memory. We cannot and must not fail the people of Sudan.

I thank you.