

Against Fascism and Military Build-up – A Voice from Sudan

Welcome everyone, and thank you to the organizers of this important gathering under the theme: “Do You Care? Against Fascism and Military Build-up.”

I come from Sudan, from the heart of a long and ongoing struggle. Our generation — those of us born in the late 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s — has lived through the darkest periods of fascist rule in Sudan under the regime of the National Congress Party, also known as the Islamists, led by Omar al-Bashir. Those were years of dictatorship and oppression, where we were ruled by force and weaponry. Armed militias were formed to instill fear across the country — the same militias that ignited the war on April 15, 2023, a war that is still ongoing today.

But we did not remain silent. In 2019, the Sudanese people rose up in mass protests demanding freedom, peace, and justice. Women stood at the front lines of this revolution — not just as participants, but as leaders. Their chants, courage, and resistance inspired the world. But they paid a heavy price. Many women were confronted with brutal violence: they were beaten, shot, raped, and killed. During the June 3rd massacre at the sit-in in Khartoum, women were among those humiliated and assaulted by security forces. And yet, they never stopped demanding a civilian government and a future free from tyranny.

Women in Sudan, especially during al-Bashir's rule, suffered doubly. Representation of women in education, politics, and decision-making was extremely weak — barely reaching 25% to 30% at best, and that only in major cities. In smaller towns and conflict-affected areas, representation was almost nonexistent.

In Darfur, since 2003, women have lived in deeply tragic humanitarian conditions. They have been the first victims of war, and the most affected by it. They've endured loss, and been subjected to physical, sexual, and psychological violence. Women have become the primary breadwinners for their families, carrying out exhausting work in the absence of safety and support.

Today, some of them are in refugee camps outside Sudan, grieving, struggling with the trauma of war, and facing extremely harsh living conditions. Others are trapped inside Sudan, being bombarded daily by over a thousand shells, living in constant fear, surviving on neem tree leaves, and dying of hunger and disease.

And even though Sudanese women in general play crucial roles in education, healthcare, the economy, and technology, women in Darfur remain left behind — held back by ongoing wars and a lack of empowerment and representation.

All of this is caused by our dictatorial military systems — regimes that do not serve the people, but only seek to protect themselves and their own interests, silencing every free voice with violence and repression.

That's why we must not stay silent. We must not allow fascism to persist, or let military build-up rule our lives and futures. I am here today to say: we reject fascism. We reject wars. And we stand with women, with freedom, and with justice.

I urge you to care. To listen to the voices of people who are fighting — especially the voices of women. Because if the world does not care, fascism will not end.

Thank you.