

Statement at 49th session of the UN Human Rights Council

Item 2 : EID on HC oral update on the Sudan

Speaker: Salma El Hosseiny

Mr. President,

This is a joint statement.¹

We highlight the continued violence facing Sudanese women and Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs).

Since October 25th, 2021, Sudanese women have been living under a military coup. Women groups and WHRDs led the resistance against the military takeover of power, demanding democratic transformation and end of state militarization. In the last three months, 2 women protesters were killed, dozens injured, detained and prosecuted.

At least 13 women were raped following protests on December 19th, 2021. No investigation was conducted. Dozens of women protesters reported sexual harassment during protests and inside detention. A new wave of arrests in January/February 2022 resulted in the arrest of more than 160 detainees, majority of detainees were released. But at least 20 remain in detention. Cases against a few of them are fabricated, and they are denied access to a fair trial.

Women in conflict areas of Darfur and Nuba Mountains are facing rising violence. Militia attacks and intercommunal conflicts have resulted in displacement of thousands of families in the last 3 months, mostly women and children. Darfur region witnessed increased reports of sexual violence perpetuated against women and girls in the last three months.

The military coup led an unprecedented crackdown on activists and WHRDs through surveillance, detention and restriction of freedom of speech, association and assembly.

We call on the Council to prioritize protection and security of women and WHRDs in Sudan and ensure that the situation remains on its agenda. We call for independent, impartial investigations into cases of sexual violence, killings and arbitrary detentions of activists. In order for their efforts in achieving gender equality, peace and protection from violence to be realized, Sudanese WHRDs need to be supported.

¹ International Service for Human Rights, Nora Center for Combating Sexual Violence, Regional Coalition for Women Human Rights Defenders in MENA, Sudanese Women Rights Action.