

Foreword

Abdel Fatah al-Burhan

Chairman of the Sovereignty Council of Sudan

Sudan



A Framework on the Sudan Crisis: Sovereignty, Legitimacy, and Reconstruction

Sudan today is facing not only an internal conflict, but also a broader test concerning state sovereignty, the society's sense of unity, and the future of the regional order. The crisis we are experiencing cannot be read merely as a confrontation between two armed formations. As state authority has been damaged, the security architecture has eroded, public services have been disrupted, and debates over external actors' interventions have deepened, the crisis has evolved into a "foundational moment" that will shape Sudan's political future.

Within this framework, my first priority is the preservation of Sudan's territorial integrity and the continuity of the state. The will of the Sudanese people must prevail over any militia logic and over networks of power connected to personal interests or external ties. The historical and constitutional responsibility of the Sudanese Armed Forces is to prevent faits accomplis that could drive the country toward fragmentation and to restore the minimum security environment that can make a civilian transition possible. This is not to make war an end in itself; it is to recognize that a lasting political solution cannot be built without eliminating the reality of "armed rebellion" that generated the war in the first place.

Why do we say "security first"?

Calls for a ceasefire and negotiations in Sudan are, of course, important. Yet in a context where the gun has taken politics hostage on the ground, a negotiating table gains meaning only through certain principles.

At the outset of the war, we were open in good faith to negotiation initiatives in order to prevent Sudan's fragmentation and to stop the bloodshed; for this reason, we participated in the talks in Jeddah. However, for good-faith efforts to yield results, there is a basic condition: armed formations must abandon any claim to parallel sovereignty vis-à-vis the state's legitimate authority.

Even today, the essence of our conditions has not changed: withdrawal from occupied areas, the removal of heavy weapons from the equation, and the termination of any separate power center operating outside the state's chain of command. Without these conditions, a ceasefire cannot become more than a temporary pause; it freezes the conflict but does not resolve it. Our aim is not to "manage" the conflict, but to return Sudan to the line of an institutional state.

The Issue of External Interference and Regional Calculations

It is impossible to deny the impact of external support networks in prolonging the Sudan crisis and increasing its cost. Sudan's position is clear: Sudan belongs to the Sudanese. A solution must not be shaped by an externally imposed equation, but by Sudanese-Sudanese dialogue and national priorities.

In this context, our assessment that certain external actors have been supporting the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) at various levels has been reinforced by realities on the ground and by the findings at our disposal. As long as external support continues, the war economy is nourished, ending the war becomes more difficult, and the repair of the social fabric is delayed. Sudan's national security cannot be turned into a "carrier line" for regional rivalries.

The Humanitarian Catastrophe: The Heaviest Face of the Crisis

Civilians are paying the highest price of this war. Millions have been displaced; cities have been worn down, infrastructure has collapsed, and essential ser-

vices have come to a standstill. International data indicate that the number of people forcibly displaced since the outbreak of the conflict has reached into the tens of millions. This picture shows that Sudan is not only undergoing a security crisis, but also a development and state-capacity crisis.

For this reason, “humanitarian diplomacy” is not a slogan for us, but a necessity: ensuring humanitarian access, restoring health services, protecting displaced persons, and making education and food systems functional again. Local initiatives and volunteer networks that sustain social resilience also play a vital role in this process; preserving this capacity is a precondition for Sudan’s reconstruction.

Strategic Partnership With Türkiye: The Post-War Horizon

As I emphasized during my engagements in Ankara, relations between Türkiye and Sudan are historical and rooted in fraternity. Türkiye’s keeping the Sudan issue on the international agenda and demonstrating solidarity with the Sudanese people is a stance whose value is understood even more clearly in difficult times.

The period ahead is not only about the cessation of fighting; it is also Sudan’s reconstruction period. This reconstruction will encompass a very wide range of areas, from infrastructure to energy, from agriculture to ports, and from health and mining to education. Türkiye’s institutional capacity, private-sector dynamism, and experience working in the field offer a meaningful basis for partnership in Sudan’s recovery. This is why we are considering facilitative steps such as improvements in the visa regime for businesspeople that would open the way for investment and trade.

Regional Order and The Principle of Sovereignty: The Somaliland Example

Finally, we observe that steps which erode the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity in our region generate instability in the long term. Debates that begin in one place through “recognition” can turn into precedents that encourage separatism in other geographies. I believe such developments may affect not only one country, but the entire regional balance.

Sudan’s objective is clear: to re-establish the state’s legitimate authority, ensure the protection of civilians, and move toward an inclusive political process on a secure basis. Cooperation with friendly countries is important in this process; however, the compass of the solution will be Sudan’s sovereignty and the shared future of the Sudanese people.

In this context, I hope that this piece will serve as a foreword to the Türkiye–Sudan themed issue to be published in our journal. I trust that the perspective articulated here—centered on Sudan’s sovereignty, territorial integrity, social cohesion, and reconstruction—will provide a shared intellectual ground for academic circles, policymakers, and practitioners alike, and contribute to constructive debate and sustainable solutions. I am firmly confident that Türkiye–Sudan relations, shaped by historical ties, mutual respect, and solidarity, will deepen further in the period ahead and evolve toward a more advanced level of strategic cooperation. It is my sincere hope that this issue will not only help illuminate the complexities of today’s crises, but also offer a modest contribution to the construction of a more stable, just, and shared future for Sudan and the wider region.

ALMANAC
DIPLOMATIQUE