

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF ULAANBAATAR
MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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COMMITTEE BACKGROUND GUIDE

United Nations Human Rights Council

UNHRC

TOPIC:

**Addressing the Ongoing Genocide in Sudan:
Accountability, Protection, and the Responsibility to Protect**

Conference Year: 2026

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01 - Committee Introduction

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is the principal intergovernmental body within the United Nations system responsible for the promotion and protection of all human rights around the globe. Established in 2006 by the UN General Assembly to replace the former Commission on Human Rights, the UNHRC is mandated to address situations of human rights violations and make recommendations in response.

The Council is composed of 47 Member States elected by the General Assembly through direct and secret ballot. It meets in Geneva, Switzerland, holding no fewer than three sessions per year, including a main session lasting ten weeks. The UNHRC conducts the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), through which it assesses the human rights situations in all 193 UN Member States.

In Model United Nations, the UNHRC distinguishes itself through its deeply humanitarian focus, requiring delegates to engage with international human rights law, humanitarian principles, and geopolitical realities simultaneously. Debates in this committee are morally urgent, legally nuanced, and politically complex — demanding both compassion and rigorous analytical thinking.

This session's topic — the ongoing genocide in Sudan — represents one of the most severe and urgent human rights crises of the twenty-first century. Delegates will be called upon to act as defenders of human dignity, engineers of accountability, and architects of protection.

02 - Country Allocations

The following twenty Member States have been allocated for this session of the UNHRC:

01 United States of America

02 Russian Federation

03 People's Republic of China

04 United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

05 French Republic

06 Republic of Sudan

07 Republic of South Sudan

08 Republic of Chad

09 Republic of Uganda

10 Central African Republic

11 Republic of Kenya

12 Federal Republic of Ethiopia

13 Republic of South Africa

14 Arab Republic of Egypt

15 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

16 State of Qatar

17 Federative Republic of Brazil

18 Federal Republic of Germany

19 Republic of India

20 United Arab Emirates

03 - Topic Introduction

Addressing the Ongoing Genocide in Sudan: Accountability, Protection, and the Responsibility to Protect

The United Nations Human Rights Council convenes at perhaps the most critical juncture in Sudan's contemporary history. What began in April 2023 as an armed conflict between Sudan's national military — the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) — and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) — has rapidly and catastrophically deteriorated into what independent UN investigators, humanitarian organizations, and legal scholars now characterize as genocide, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity on a massive scale.

Sudan today represents the world's largest displacement crisis. Over 10 million people have been forced from their homes, surpassing even the displacement figures of Ukraine, Syria, and Afghanistan. More than 1.8 million Sudanese refugees have flooded into Chad, Ethiopia, Egypt, and South Sudan — nations already strained by their own humanitarian challenges. The Darfur region, which experienced the first genocide of the twenty-first century between 2003 and 2010, is once again at the epicenter of mass atrocities.

"We are on the verge of losing an entire generation of Sudanese children to starvation, violence, and displacement. The world cannot afford to look away again."

— Volker Türk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2024

04 - Historical Context: Why Darfur Bleeds Again

To understand the present crisis, delegates must understand the unhealed wounds of Sudan's past. The Darfur genocide of 2003–2010, in which the Janjaweed militias — the direct predecessor of today's RSF — killed an estimated 300,000 people and displaced 2.5 million, established a grim template. Despite the International Criminal Court's (ICC) indictment of former President Omar al-Bashir for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in 2009 and 2010, justice was never delivered. Al-Bashir remained in power until 2019, shielded by the African Union and regional powers resistant to ICC jurisdiction.

The RSF, commanded by General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo — known as 'Hemedti' — evolved directly from the Janjaweed. When the 2023 conflict erupted, the RSF did not merely engage in warfare; it replicated the patterns of the 2003 genocide with devastating precision: targeting civilians along ethnic lines, systematically destroying villages, using sexual violence as a weapon of war, and deliberately obstructing humanitarian access.

05 - The Active Zone: 2023–2024 Atrocities

Mass Atrocities in Darfur

The city of El Fasher — the last major urban center in Darfur not under RSF control — has been under sustained siege since May 2024. UN investigators documented the massacre of over 10,000 civilians in El Geneina, West Darfur, in June 2023. Survivors described RSF fighters conducting door-to-door killings, targeting members of the Masalit ethnic community. Sexual violence has been deployed systematically, with the UN recording thousands of cases across Darfur, Khartoum, and Kordofan.

The Famine Dimension

In August 2024, the UN's Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) declared famine in the Zamzam camp in North Darfur — the first famine declaration anywhere in the world in years. An estimated 25 million Sudanese — more than half the population — face acute food insecurity. Humanitarian organizations have

documented deliberate obstruction of aid convoys as a military tactic, constituting a potential war crime under international humanitarian law.

The Accountability Vacuum

Despite the scale of atrocities, accountability mechanisms remain paralyzed. Sudan is not a party to the Rome Statute in a cooperative sense; the government has historically refused to surrender al-Bashir to the ICC. Russia and China have used their Security Council veto power to block robust UN action. The African Union's Peace and Security Council has called for ceasefires that have been systematically violated. The result is an accountability vacuum that has emboldened perpetrators and deepened the suffering of victims.

06 - Strategic Pillars: Where Law Meets Humanity

1. The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) Framework

The Responsibility to Protect doctrine, adopted unanimously by world leaders at the 2005 UN World Summit, establishes three pillars: the state's primary responsibility to protect its own population; the international community's responsibility to assist states in meeting this obligation; and the international community's responsibility to take collective action when a state manifestly fails to protect its population.

Sudan represents a textbook Pillar III scenario. The SAF and RSF — both state and para-state actors — are themselves the primary perpetrators of atrocities. Yet R2P's operationalization remains deeply contested. The tension between state sovereignty and humanitarian intervention continues to paralyze collective action, as evidenced by the Security Council's failure to authorize a protection force for El Fasher.

Countries such as Russia, China, and several African Union members argue that intervention in Sudan without explicit government consent constitutes a violation of sovereignty under Article 2(7) of the UN Charter. Conversely, Western states and human rights organizations contend that when a government turns its weapons on its own people, sovereignty cannot be used as a shield against accountability. Delegates must navigate this fundamental tension in every resolution clause they draft.

2. International Humanitarian Law and War Crimes Documentation

The four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols establish the foundational rules of armed conflict, prohibiting attacks on civilians, the use of starvation as a weapon, and sexual violence. The Rome Statute of the ICC further codifies genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes as subject to international prosecution.

In Sudan, the challenge is not the absence of legal frameworks but the catastrophic failure of enforcement. UN investigators and the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan have documented sufficient evidence of war crimes and crimes against humanity to trigger ICC jurisdiction. The key debate is whether the Security Council will refer the situation — and whether states will cooperate.

3. Humanitarian Access and the 'Aid as a Weapon' Doctrine

One of the most devastating dimensions of the Sudan crisis is the deliberate obstruction of humanitarian aid. The RSF has systematically looted WFP warehouses, blocked convoys, and targeted humanitarian workers. The SAF has imposed bureaucratic barriers that effectively prevent aid from reaching besieged populations.

International humanitarian law obligates all parties to an armed conflict to allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief. Deliberate obstruction may constitute a war crime. The UNHRC must consider mechanisms to monitor, document, and respond to such obstruction.

4. The Protection of Civilians and Safe Zones

The concept of humanitarian corridors and safe zones has been proposed as a protection mechanism for civilians trapped in conflict areas. However, the experience of Srebrenica — where a UN 'safe area' became the site of a mass massacre — serves as a sobering reminder that safe zones without robust enforcement mechanisms can create a false sense of security.

Delegates should consider what a meaningful civilian protection framework for Sudan would look like, taking into account the logistical realities of the terrain, the absence of a neutral armed force, and the political obstacles to any international military presence.

5. Accountability Mechanisms and Transitional Justice

Accountability is not only a moral imperative — it is a prevention tool. Impunity breeds repetition, as Sudan's own history tragically demonstrates. The UNHRC must consider a full spectrum of accountability mechanisms: ICC

referral, creation of an independent international tribunal, hybrid courts with Sudanese participation, truth and reconciliation commissions, and reparations frameworks.

A key challenge is ensuring that accountability processes do not become obstacles to peace negotiations. Some argue that ICC indictments deter warring parties from engaging in peace talks. Others argue that justice and peace are not mutually exclusive — and that lasting peace without accountability is merely an armistice.

07 - Important Definitions

Genocide	As defined by the 1948 Genocide Convention: acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group. Includes killing, causing serious bodily or mental harm, and deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about physical destruction.
Responsibility to Protect (R2P)	A global political commitment adopted in 2005 establishing that sovereignty entails responsibility; when a state fails to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, or crimes against humanity, the international community has a responsibility to act.
Crimes Against Humanity	Widespread or systematic attacks directed against civilian populations, including murder, extermination, deportation, torture, rape, and persecution. Does not require proof of genocidal intent but must be part of a systematic or widespread attack.
Ethnic Cleansing	The making of an area ethnically homogeneous by using force or intimidation to remove persons of given groups from the area. Not a stand-alone legal term in international law but may constitute genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes.
Rapid Support Forces (RSF)	A Sudanese paramilitary organization commanded by General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo ('Hemedti'), evolved from the Janjaweed militias responsible for the 2003–2010 Darfur genocide. Currently engaged in active conflict with the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF).
Universal Periodic Review (UPR)	A mechanism of the UNHRC through which the human rights records of all 193 UN Member States are reviewed every 4.5 years.
Humanitarian Corridor	A route through which humanitarian organizations can deliver aid to affected populations in conflict zones, typically requiring agreement or ceasefire between belligerent parties.
International Humanitarian Law (IHL)	The branch of international law governing the conduct of armed conflict, protecting those not or no longer participating in hostilities. Key instruments include the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols.
Famine (IPC Phase 5)	The most severe phase of food insecurity in the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification. Declared when starvation, death, destitution, and extremely critical levels of acute malnutrition are evident.
Rome Statute	The 1998 treaty establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC), which has jurisdiction over genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression.
Special Procedures	Independent human rights experts mandated by the UNHRC to report and advise on human rights from a thematic or country-specific perspective. Include Special Rapporteurs, Independent Experts, and Working Groups.
Internally Displaced Person (IDP)	A person who has been forced to flee their home but remains within their country's borders, as opposed to a refugee who has crossed an international border.

08 - Country Positions Overview

Delegates are strongly encouraged to conduct thorough independent research beyond the brief overviews provided below. Accurately representing your country's foreign policy, historical stances, and strategic interests is essential to strong committee performance.

United States of America

Strong advocate for accountability and R2P. Supports ICC referral and targeted sanctions. Balancing geopolitical interests in the Horn of Africa. Research: USAID humanitarian funding; history of Sudan policy under different administrations; stance on sanctions.

Russian Federation

Opposes external intervention citing sovereignty. Has blocked Security Council referrals. Maintains economic and military ties with Sudan. Research: Russia-Sudan military cooperation; veto history on Sudan resolutions; Wagner Group presence in the region.

People's Republic of China

Major trading partner with Sudan; large oil interests. Advocates 'African solutions for African problems.' Resistant to ICC referral. Research: China-Sudan oil agreements; arms transfers; AU-first approach to conflict resolution.

United Kingdom

Strong support for accountability and humanitarian access. Historical colonial ties with Sudan inform engagement. Research: UK Sudan sanctions regime; FCDO humanitarian funding; co-sponsorship of UNHRC resolutions.

French Republic

Active in the Sahel region; strong R2P advocate. Concerned about regional destabilization. Research: Operation Barkhane regional context; French aid operations; EU humanitarian response.

Republic of Sudan

Government (SAF) denies genocide characterization. Seeks legitimacy and reconstruction support while managing its relationship with the ICC. Research: SAF's position on the RSF; transitional government legitimacy; ICC non-cooperation history.

Republic of South Sudan

Hosts over 800,000 Sudanese refugees. Deeply affected by spillover conflict. Historically complex relationship with Khartoum. Research: Refugee burden; border security; oil pipeline dependency; peace deal history.

Republic of Chad

Hosts the largest number of Sudanese refugees (over 600,000). Itself a fragile state with limited capacity. Calls for international burden-sharing. Research: Lake Chad Basin crisis; refugee camps; own internal instability; cross-border RSF presence.

Republic of Uganda

Hosts significant refugee populations. Strong advocate for regional humanitarian response. Has engaged with the ICC (arrested Dominic Ongwen). Research: Uganda's refugee policy; ICC cooperation history; AU Peace and Security Council position.

Central African Republic

Severely affected by regional instability. Limited state capacity but firsthand understanding of how conflicts metastasize regionally. Research: Wagner Group presence in CAR; spillover violence; humanitarian access challenges.

Republic of Kenya

Regional economic hub; has hosted peace talks. Advocates for African-led mediation under the AU framework. Research: Kenya's mediation role; Nairobi talks; IGAD framework; economic interest in regional stability.

Federal Republic of Ethiopia

Internally managing post-Tigray reconstruction while navigating Sudan border tensions. Research: Ethiopia-Sudan border disputes; IGAD membership; own human rights record under international scrutiny.

Republic of South Africa

Strong AU alignment; historically supports African-led solutions. Complex history with ICC following the Bashir arrest controversy. Research: AU-ICC tension; South Africa's R2P position; 2015 Bashir arrest controversy.

Arab Republic of Egypt

Significant concerns about Nile water security and border stability. Hosts over 500,000 Sudanese refugees. Generally opposes external intervention. Research: GERD context; Egypt-Sudan relations; refugee policy and border management.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Historically a key financier of Sudanese political actors. Hosted the Jeddah peace talks. Strategic interest in Red Sea access. Research: Jeddah talks; RSF financial ties; Red Sea security; Gulf involvement in Sudan.

State of Qatar

Has funded humanitarian operations and mediated in past Sudanese conflicts. Generally supports multilateral approaches. Research: Qatar's mediation history in Darfur; humanitarian funding; Al Jazeera coverage and press freedom dimensions.

Federative Republic of Brazil

Strong international humanitarian law advocate. Active in UN human rights mechanisms. Consistent R2P supporter in multilateral forums. Research: Brazil's UNHRC voting record; south-south cooperation; humanitarian principles stance.

Federal Republic of Germany

Major donor to the humanitarian response; strong accountability advocate. Plays a coordination role within the EU. Research: Germany's ICC support; humanitarian funding levels; EU arms embargo on Sudan.

Republic of India

Non-interventionist tradition; large diaspora community with Sudan ties. Tends to abstain on coercive measures. Research: India-Sudan economic ties; India's UNSC voting history; peacekeeping contributions to UNAMID.

United Arab Emirates

Accused by UN investigators of supplying weapons to the RSF. Significant economic interests in Sudan. Occupies a sensitive and contested position in this committee. Research: UN Panel of Experts findings on UAE-RSF arms transfers; UAE denial; humanitarian aid as counter-narrative.

09 - Questions to Consider

These questions are designed to guide your research and preparation. Strong delegates will be able to address these questions with specific evidence, legal citations, and well-reasoned policy positions during committee sessions.

1. Genocide Determination

The Genocide Convention requires proof of specific intent (*dolus specialis*) to destroy a group 'in whole or in part.' Given the documented patterns of RSF conduct in Darfur — targeted killings of Masalit civilians, sexual violence as a systematic tool, destruction of villages along ethnic lines — does the evidence satisfy the legal threshold for genocide? What are the implications of a formal genocide determination for state obligations under the Convention?

2. The R2P Operationalization Problem

R2P's Pillar III authorizes collective action when states manifestly fail to protect their populations. However, Security Council paralysis due to P5 vetoes has repeatedly prevented action. Should the UNHRC recommend the use of the 'Uniting for Peace' resolution mechanism (General Assembly Resolution 377) to bypass the Security Council? What are the risks and precedents of such an action?

3. The Accountability-Peace Trade-off

Some peace mediators argue that ICC indictments and accountability demands deter warring parties from negotiating peace. Others contend that sustainable peace cannot be built on impunity. How should the UNHRC balance the immediate need to stop the killing with the long-term imperative of justice? Is sequencing possible — a ceasefire now, accountability later?

4. Humanitarian Access as a Legal Obligation

Both the RSF and SAF have been documented obstructing humanitarian aid. Under IHL, deliberate starvation of civilians is a war crime. What mechanisms can the UNHRC establish or strengthen to monitor humanitarian access in real time, and what consequences can be recommended for parties that systematically obstruct aid?

5. The Regional Burden

Chad, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Egypt host millions of Sudanese refugees, straining their own fragile systems. Sudan now represents the world's largest displacement crisis. What binding or non-binding mechanisms can the UNHRC recommend to ensure equitable burden-sharing among host countries? How does the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol apply?

6. Arms Embargo and Third-Party Responsibility

UN Panel of Experts reports have documented arms transfers to the RSF from third-party states. International arms trade law, including the Arms Trade Treaty, prohibits transfers when there is knowledge that weapons will be used in genocide or crimes against humanity. What accountability frameworks should the UNHRC recommend for states found to have supplied weapons used in atrocities?

7. The Protection of Women and Children

Sexual violence has been systematically deployed in the Sudan conflict. The UN has documented mass rape, sexual slavery, and forced pregnancy. How can the UNHRC strengthen the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (Women, Peace, and Security) and Resolution 1820 (sexual violence in conflict) in the Sudan context?

8. The Legacy of Impunity and Prevention

The 2003–2010 Darfur genocide was characterized by near-total impunity. Al-Bashir was indicted but never surrendered. The RSF evolved from the same perpetrators. How does the UNHRC address the direct causal link between historical impunity and current atrocities? What structural prevention mechanisms — beyond reactive responses — can be established to break this cycle?

10 - Awards Criteria

The awards will be given by the DAIS Team based on the following criteria:

01	Has done thorough research regarding the topics and is able to answer questions regarding the topic on the spot.
02	Shows the mastery of public speaking, delivers one's speech with confidence, asks relevant questions from fellow delegates, and correctly answers factual questions asked by fellow delegates.
03	Is diplomatic, not judgmental towards the representatives of the committee, is polite, and respects fellow delegates as well as the DAIS team.
04	Shows outstanding negotiation and debating skills.
05	Represents their role as a delegate accurately. It is a typical mistake for MUN beginners to try to assert their personal opinion instead of representing ideas that are in favour of their country's policy and ideology.
06	Follows the rules of the conference.
07	Has comprehended the rules and procedures of MUNs and is active during committee sessions.
08	Submits position paper on time.

■ **IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Use of any forms of Artificial Intelligence (AI) will not be permitted. Any delegate who is detected to have used AI for their position papers will be disqualified from the consideration of awards.

It is not a requirement to: be a part of the winning bloc; be on the sponsor/signatures list on the final resolution paper; or pass a resolution.

We as the DAIS Team promise to be honest and not favour any delegation.

11 - Final Remarks

Position papers are not mandatory; however, you must submit one to be considered for an award. Position papers should outline your country's stance on the topic, provide relevant background, and propose solutions. They should be concise, factual, and representative of your assigned country's actual policy position.

We strongly advise all delegates to conduct further independent research to ensure that you represent your allocated country accurately and provide viable, evidence-based solutions to the crisis in Sudan. The depth of this topic demands genuine intellectual engagement — surface-level knowledge will not suffice in a room full of well-prepared peers.

Do not hesitate to reach out to the DAIS Team with questions before the conference. Most importantly — use your own voice during the sessions. The Sudan crisis involves real people: over 10 million displaced, millions facing famine, thousands of victims of sexual violence and massacre. The best delegate in this room will be the one who brings both rigorous preparation and genuine human empathy to every speech they deliver.

"The world has never turned away from Sudan without consequence. This committee is your opportunity to ensure it does not happen again."

— The DAIS Team, ISUMUN 2026

References

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2. UN OCHA Sudan: <https://www.unocha.org/sudan>
3. International Criminal Court — Situation in Darfur: <https://www.icc-cpi.int/darfur>
4. UN Genocide Convention (1948): <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide-convention.shtml>
5. World Food Programme Sudan: <https://www.wfp.org/countries/sudan>
6. Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect: <https://www.globalr2p.org>
7. Human Rights Watch — Sudan: <https://www.hrw.org/africa/sudan>
8. Amnesty International Sudan: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/east-africa-the-horn-and-great-lakes/sudan>
9. UNHCR Sudan Emergency: <https://www.unhcr.org/sudan-emergency>
10. UN Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/fact-finding-missions/ffm-sudan>

Best of all to our delegates.

Your Chair: Munkh-Orgil Enkhtugs | Co-Chair: Enkh-Uchral Gantsetseg

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