JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rules 144(5) and 132(4) of the Rules of Procedure

replacing the following motions:
B9-0068/2022 (The Left)
B9-0070/2022 (Verts/ALE)
B9-0078/2022 (Renew)
B9-0080/2022 (S&D)
B9-0081/2022 (ECR)
B9-0082/2022 (PPE)

on the political crisis in Sudan
(2022/2504(RSP))

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on behalf of the Renew Group
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Anna Fotyga, Assita Kanko, Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Adam Bielan, Alexandr Vondra, Angel Dzhambazki, Bogdan Rzońca, Carlo Fidanza, Elżbieta Rafalska, Eugen Jurzyca, Evžen Tošenovský, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Ladišlav Ilčić, Raffaele Fitto, Ryszard Czarnecki, Valdemar Tomasevski, Veronika Vrecionová, Vincenzo Sofo, Witold Jan Waszczukowski
on behalf of the ECR Group
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on behalf of The Left Group
Fabio Massimo Castaldo
European Parliament resolution on the political crisis in Sudan
(2022/2504(RSP))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to its previous resolutions on Sudan,
– having regard to the UN Security Council discussion on Sudan of 12 January 2022,
– having regard to the statement of 4 January 2022 by the EU, the UK, Norway and the US following the resignation of the Sudanese Prime Minister,
– having regard to statement attributable to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sudan of 8 January 2022 on the announcement of talks on political transition in Sudan,
– having regard to the statement of 21 November 2021 by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on the political agreement reached in Sudan,
– having regard to the statement of 18 January 2022 by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) on the latest situation in Sudan,
– having regard to the statement of 18 November 2021 by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights condemning the killings of peaceful protesters in Sudan,
– having regard to UN Security Council resolution 2524 (2020) establishing the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS),
– having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, to which Sudan is party,
– having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
– having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights,
– having regard to the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials,
– having regard to the Sudan Constitutional Declaration of August 2019,
– having regard to the Cotonou Agreement¹,
– having regard to the Juba Agreement for Peace in Sudan of October 2020,

– having regard to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,
– having regard to the joint Africa-EU strategy,
– having regard to the resolution of 11 March 2021 of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) and the EU on democracy and respect for constitutions in EU and ACP countries,
– having regard to Rule 144(5) and 132(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas prior to the coup of 25 October 2021, Sudanese military and civilian leaders had been sharing power since August 2019 after authoritarian leader Omar al-Bashir was ousted following demonstrations demanding civilian rule; whereas the power-sharing agreement between the military and civilian actors led to the establishment of the Sovereignty Council as the country’s collective head of state;

B. whereas the Sovereignty Council was originally made up of five civilians chosen by the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC), five military representatives chosen by the Transitional Military Council (TMC), and one civilian selected by agreement between the FFC and TMC; whereas in accordance with the 2019 Sudanese Constitutional Declaration, for the first 21 months of the 39-month transitional period, the chair of the Sovereignty Council was to be chosen by the five military members of the council, and for the following 18 months, the chair was to be chosen by the five civilian members selected by the FFC; whereas the transition from the current chair, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, to civilian rule was supposed to happen on 9 December 2021; whereas in line with the constitutional document governing the transition period, general elections are set to take place in Sudan by July 2023;

C. whereas the 2019 power sharing agreement was shattered on 25 October 2021 when military leader General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan staged a coup, declared a state of emergency, dissolved the power-sharing Sovereignty Council, sacked the civilian government and temporarily detained Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok and his ministerial team as well as other activists and political figures, sparking international condemnation and widespread protests in Sudan; whereas this coup put an end to the transfer to a civilian-led Sovereignty Council;

D. whereas on 21 November 2021, Hamdok signed an agreement with General al-Burhan, releasing him from house arrest and allowing him to continue as prime minister; whereas Hamdok agreed to resume his position in order to continue democratic reforms and to lead a new technocratic cabinet until elections could be held; whereas many pro-democracy activists, civil society groups and civilian leaders rejected this agreement; whereas Prime Minister Hamdok resigned on 2 January 2022 following nationwide pro-democracy protests, citing resistance by the military generals to increased civilian rule;

E. whereas General al-Burhan appointed figures linked to the al-Bashir regime to key positions including in government-owned media and the central bank, and dismissed the attorney general and the leaders of a committee probing illicit financial gains made during
the three-decade reign of al-Bashir; whereas on 24 December 2021, al-Burhan granted the intelligence services, the Rapid Support Forces and the army the powers to search, detain, interrogate and confiscate property, powers which were previously only granted to the police and prosecutors; whereas members of these forces were also granted immunity from prosecution, which can only be lifted by the leaders of the Sovereignty Council itself;

F. whereas following the military coup of 25 October 2021, citizens continue to organise peaceful mass demonstrations against the military, which has continued to respond with violence and extreme force, including the use of live ammunition, tear gas and stun grenades, leading to the death of at least 70 protesters with hundreds more injured and imprisoned;

G. whereas security forces are reported to have used sexual violence, with the UN currently investigating reports by 13 women and girls who were reportedly victims of rape or gang rape, while other women were sexually harassed by security forces during demonstrations in Khartoum on 19 December 2021; whereas there have been widespread internet shutdowns and disruption of communications in addition to reports of journalists targeted and arbitrarily arrested and attacked;

H. whereas Sudanese women and young people played a key role in the country’s move towards democracy; whereas women, in particular during the earlier days of the democracy movement, have repeatedly fallen victim to violence, including sexual violence, and the perpetrators of these inhuman crimes have still not been punished;

I. whereas there have been alarming reports of security forces entering hospitals to arrest protestors, prevent injured people from receiving treatment, and threaten and intimidate medical personnel; whereas the World Health Organisation has reported 15 attacks on healthcare workers and health facilities since November 2021;

J. whereas the response to the protests violates the right to freedom of assembly, association and expression, the right to personal liberty and the prohibition of torture and ill-treatment, among other fundamental rights, which are guaranteed in regional and international treaties to which Sudan is party;

K. whereas the human rights situation in Sudan continues to deteriorate and Sudanese civil society activists have increasingly been targeted in recent months; whereas several activists have reportedly gone missing and their remains have later been found with clear signs of torture; whereas citizens, human rights defenders, activists, journalists and political leaders have been arbitrarily arrested and held in incommunicado detention;

L. whereas on 8 January 2022, UNITAMS launched consultations to restore the democratic transition with the aim of inviting the military, rebel groups, political parties, protest movements, civil society and women’s groups to take part in the process; whereas although this has been broadly welcomed both in Sudan and internationally, some parts of society remain firmly opposed to any power-sharing arrangement with military figures;
M. whereas Sudanese citizens continue to face spiralling inflation, with the UN World Food Programme (WFP) reporting a year-on-year increase of more than 300% and extreme rises in the price of fuel and basic commodities, coupled with a lack of basic services, leaving many unable to meet their basic needs and go about their livelihoods, adding to the sense of frustration among protestors; whereas Prime Minister Hamdok played a key role in negotiating debt relief and convincing the US to take Sudan off its list of state sponsors of terrorism; whereas numerous military commanders are reported to control around 250 companies in vital areas of the Sudanese economy, such as gold, rubber and meat exports;

N. whereas in 2021, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) granted Sudan a USD 2.5 billion loan, and together with the World Bank approved Sudan’s request for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative, requiring the adoption of extensive economic reforms, including the elimination of certain subsidies; whereas this risks being undermined by the coup;

O. whereas following the coup, the African Union suspended Sudan from all its activities; whereas several states and multilateral organisations, including the IMF, paused foreign aid and halted disbursements; whereas the EU announced that its support to Sudan will be compromised if constitutional order is not restored; whereas numerous non-EU countries are actively involved in Sudan including through weapon supplies, political support and financial flows linked to raw materials and gold; whereas these countries play a role in the region’s stability and represent different objectives and long-term strategies; whereas their conflicting interests are a challenge for the further development of Sudan and the region and are aggravating already high tensions in the Horn of Africa, which will not be conducive to facilitating a political solution to the situation in Ethiopia;

P. whereas the security situation across Sudan continues to deteriorate, notably in east Darfur where hundreds of civilians have been killed and thousands displaced in addition to large scale displacements and killing in South Kordofan; whereas according to the UN, 6.2 million civilians will be in need of humanitarian assistance in 2022 and, according to the WFP, 2.7 million people are subject to acute food insecurity; whereas the humanitarian situation has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis and by the influx of refugees from the conflict in Ethiopia;

Q. whereas the Sudanese Cabinet had unanimously agreed on 4 August 2021 to become a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), pending approval by the Sovereign Council, and would in so doing be required to hand over all suspects charged by the ICC for crimes committed in Darfur from 2003 to 2004, including former president Omar al-Bashir; whereas there has regrettably been no progress on the establishment of the Darfur special criminal court, as provided for in the Juba Agreement;

R. whereas on 3 June 2021, the UN Security Council extended the mandate of UNITAMS, tasked with assisting the Sudanese authorities during the transition to democracy, until June 2022;

S. whereas since September 2019, the EU, mostly through the EU Emergency Trust Fund
for Africa, has provided more than EUR 88 million in development assistance to support political and economic reforms to contribute to peace and stability in Sudan;

T. whereas on 12 November 2021, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet designated Adama Dieng an expert on human rights in Sudan; whereas Dieng is charged with preparing a written report that the High Commissioner will present to the UN Human Rights Council at its 50th session in June 2022;

1. Deplores the killing of scores of Sudanese protestors and the injuries caused to hundreds more, including the use of sexual violence, at the hands of security services and other armed groups since the 25 October 2021 military coup; underlines the right of the Sudanese people to assemble and exercise their fundamental rights for democracy to be re-established and for their basic needs to be met; calls on all Sudanese stakeholders to respect the rule of law as stipulated in the 2019 Constitutional Declaration;

2. Condemns the military coup of 25 October 2021 and recalls the urgent need for the Sudanese military leadership to recommit to the country’s democratic transition and deliver on the Sudanese people’s demands for freedom, peace and justice; demands that the Sudanese military leadership identify clear timelines and processes for a return to the previously agreed transition, including by establishing the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, creating accountability mechanisms and laying the groundwork for elections;

3. Condemns all acts of violence against peaceful protestors, activists, journalists and all others peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression, association or assembly; calls for the immediate release of those currently in detention without charge or trial, for those facing charges to be allowed full access to legal representation and for the state of emergency to be lifted immediately; calls on the Sudanese authorities to immediately halt all illegal detention and enforced disappearances; recalls that Sudan’s armed forces have no legal authority to detain civilians or carry out law enforcement functions as the powers of arrest and detention of civilians have been limited to the police and prosecutors since 21 January 2021; condemns the continued shutdown of internet services;

4. Strongly condemns the reported attacks by security forces on medical facilities; calls on the Sudanese authorities to allow all injured people to receive treatment; recalls that targeted attacks on healthcare workers, patients and facilities are a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law;

5. Calls for independent investigations into the deaths and associated violence and for the perpetrators to be held accountable; supports calls for an independent international fact-finding mission to investigate reports of violence against protestors since the military coup in October 2021; calls for the EU and its Member States to engage with regional and international bodies to facilitate this and to closely monitor events in the country, ensuring all human rights violations are investigated so that perpetrators can be prosecuted; underlines that similar investigations into crimes committed during both the rule of Omar al-Bashir and the 2019 transition period must continue;
6. Strongly supports efforts by UNITAMS to facilitate discussions to resolve the political crisis; calls on all Sudanese political actors to engage in this dialogue to restore the transition to civilian rule in line with the 2019 Constitutional Declaration and to pursue Sudanese citizens’ desire for greater freedom, democracy, peace, justice and prosperity; is of the firm opinion that the appointment of the new civilian prime minister and cabinet should happen in the light of just such a Sudanese internal dialogue in order to ensure their credibility and acceptance among Sudanese civil society, which has made clear that it denies any form of authoritarian government and wants a true and permanent transition to democracy; calls on all regional actors to act in good faith, support a civilian government and refrain from supporting the Rapid Support Forces, whose members must immediately be removed from policing and law enforcement in the interest of public safety in Sudan;

7. Emphasises that in line with the 2019 Constitutional Declaration, the process of reform must be inclusive and Sudanese-led, identifying clear timelines and processes for establishing the legislative and independent judiciary, creating accountability mechanisms, and conducting inclusive, fair and transparent elections as soon as possible; emphasises that dialogue must be fully inclusive and representative of previously marginalised groups, including women, young people and minorities; calls for the EU and its Member States to actively support this process;

8. Condemns and expresses deep concern over the alarming rise in violence in Darfur and South Kordofan; calls on international monitors to refocus their attention on Darfur and South Kordofan in order to protect the local population from violence, harm and mass displacement;

9. Demands that security services and other armed groups immediately stop using violence against civilians and aid workers across the entire country, in particular in Darfur; condemns the looting of 29 December 2021 by local militia of the UN WFP food warehouse in El Fasher in North Darfur, which contains food designated for hundreds of thousands of food-insecure people in that area, and strongly underlines that humanitarian aid should never be a target in any conflict;

10. Reiterates the call for former President Omar al-Bashir to be held accountable for the human rights violations against Sudanese civilians committed under his authoritarian rule, including genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity; supports his extradition as well as that of former Defence Minister Abdelrahim Mohamed Hussein and former Minister of State for Humanitarian Affairs Ahmed Haroun to the ICC for their complicity in the Darfur war;

11. Reiterates its demand that Sudan should ratify the Rome Statute of the ICC, fully cooperate with the ICC and implement outstanding arrest warrants; calls on Sudan to dismiss officials and security force officers implicated in serious human right violations and war crimes; urges all political actors to prioritise the creation of the Darfur Special Criminal Court as established in the 2006 Juba Declaration on Unity and Integration between the Sudan People’s Liberation Army and the South Sudan Defence Forces;

12. Calls on Sudan to denounce efforts by the Sudanese military to retain ownership and
control of strategic industries and companies, thereby reversing the process of reform; calls on the Commission to establish thorough due diligence mechanisms in relation to dealings with such sectors and to make full use of the provisions in the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime against individuals where appropriate;

13. Condemns the military’s attempt to undermine Sudan’s institutions by removing civil servants who were appointed during the transitional period and replacing them with others aligned with the previous al-Bashir regime; underlines that civil servants dismissed by the regime must be reinstated;

14. Supports the statement of the VP/HR of 18 November 2021 that if constitutional order is not fully restored, there will be serious consequences for EU financial support; underlines the need, however, for continued EU assistance in the provision of basic services such as health and education; welcomes, therefore, the EUR 10 million contribution for life-saving food assistance made to the WFP in Sudan in December 2021 through the Commission’s Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, in addition to the EUR 13 million contribution received at the beginning of 2021;

15. Is concerned that EU cooperation with Sudan on migration is used by the military regime as an excuse to reinforce its ability to control and oppress people, for example by strengthening surveillance capacities, including at borders, and by supplying equipment; calls for the EU to therefore ensure complete transparency with regard to projects involving Sudan in the field of security, including all planned activities and beneficiaries of EU and national funding; stresses the need to continuously examine the EU’s approach to migration, sustainable development, humanitarian aid and good governance, while strengthening civil society and encouraging democratic reforms with the aim of inclusive political development in Sudan;

16. Reiterates its call for an EU-wide ban on the export, sale, update and maintenance of any form of security equipment that can be or is used for internal repression, including internet surveillance technology, to states with deplorable human rights records such as Sudan; urgently demands that other countries in the region follow suit;

17. Calls on the international community to join the EU in supporting civil society and democratic actors, and reminds non-EU countries, especially regional actors with a strong presence and influence in Sudan, of their international responsibility and of the important contribution they could make to a free, peaceful and democratic Sudan which would be in the long-term interest of all the above stakeholders;

18. Calls on the EU delegation to Sudan and the Member States’ representation in Sudan to fully apply the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders, including by requesting prison visits, observing trials, releasing public statements, raising cases with authorities at all levels and issuing emergency visas where appropriate;

19. Calls for active discussion of the situation in Sudan during the next meeting of the EU Foreign Affairs Council on 24 January 2022;
20. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the
governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Sudanese authorities, the African
Union, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Intergovernmental Authority on
Development, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the government and
parliament of Egypt, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU